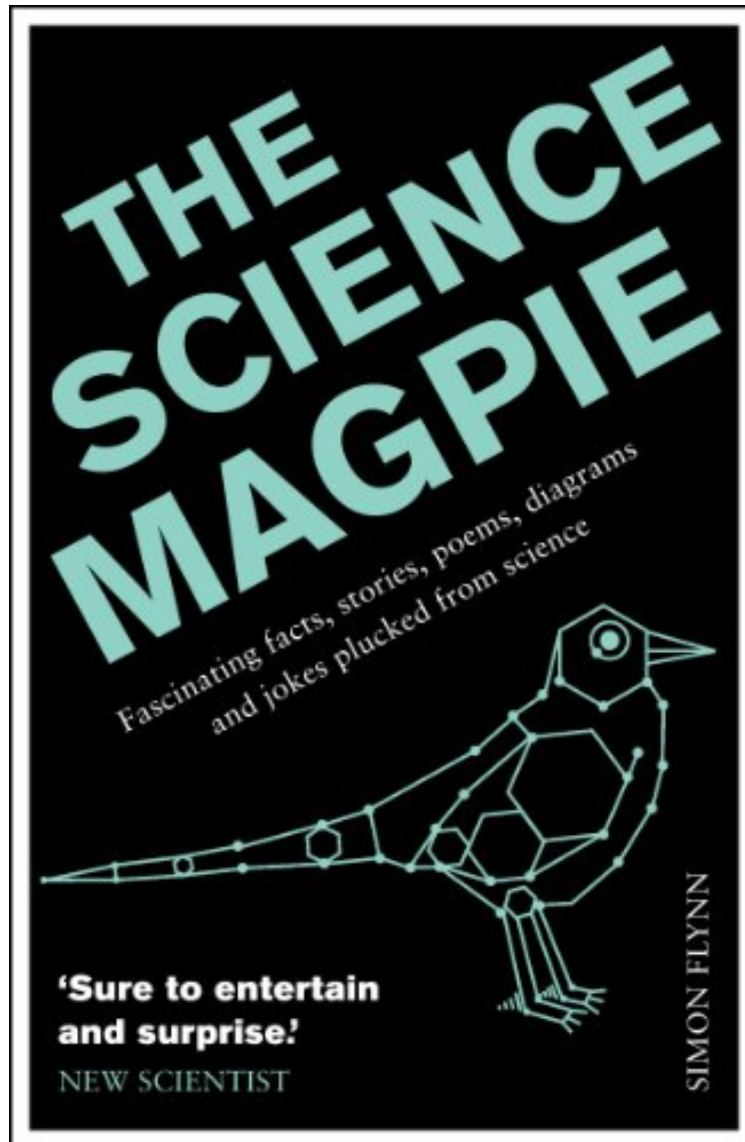


[Mobile book] The Science Magpie: Fascinating Facts, Stories, Poems, Diagrams, and Jokes Plucked from Science

The Science Magpie: Fascinating Facts, Stories, Poems, Diagrams, and Jokes Plucked from Science

Simon Flynn

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Simon Flynn : The Science Magpie: Fascinating Facts, Stories, Poems, Diagrams, and Jokes Plucked from Science before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Science Magpie: Fascinating Facts, Stories, Poems, Diagrams, and Jokes Plucked from Science:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. General interest in Science?By CustomerThis will be of a great read for anyone with a general interest Science; also useful for Science students wishing to broaden their knowledge base and provoke further inquiry.7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A delightful compendium of interesting oddmentsBy Sid NunciussI absolutely loved this book. Miscellanies like this can be very trying if poorly done, with uninspiring or patronising rehashes of familiar stories, a lot of gee-whizzery and jokes that aren't nearly as funny as they think they are. Simon Flynn has avoided all that and produced a delightful pot-pourri of science-related snippets which, for me, gets the tone exactly right. It is enthusiastic and witty without being gushing or flippant and the sheer variety of stuff here is a delight.Each "article" is brief - the longest are five or six pages, covering things like Galileo's dispute with the Holy See, Darwin's impact or Einstein's ideas about Relativity. If you want a detailed examination of any of these things, this isn't the place to look, but for a really well-written, engaging summary of the important points with the odd interesting aside it's brilliant. For example, Flynn makes sure to mention Milton's visit to Galileo while he was under house arrest as well as giving an excellent summary of Galileo's dispute, complete with a translation of his famous Recantation - and all in four short pages. I have studied all this at university and have actually read quite a lot of Galileo's writing and I still found the section fresh and fascinating. Other bits are so varied it's impossible to give an overall flavour, but they include things like radioactive decay, a spoof of Shelley's Ozymandias, the meaning of the Richter Scale, and so on. There are even some good jokes scattered throughout the book. You never know what is coming next - a spoof analysis of the thermodynamics of Hell, a historical summary, a quirky fact, an explanation of the binary system - and this is a great part of the book's charm for me. The science is always spot on. The explanation of Schrodinger's Cat, for example, which is one of the most misunderstood notions in popular science, is accurate, readable and placed in its proper historical context. The only error I noticed in the whole book was Flynn's assertion that a solar eclipse was important in Rider Haggard's King Solomon's Mines, when, as my adolescent memory reminded me, it is in fact a lunar eclipse. I think I can forgive him this single slip, and the only other fault I can find is that the book cries out for an index which is sadly lacking, if only so you can find that little bit you wanted to look at again.I recommend this book very warmly - it's a huge pleasure to dip into and, because of its haphazard structure, has kept me looking at "just one more section" well after I should have gone to sleep. It's neither a reference book nor a serious popular science book. It is a delightful compendium of fairly random bits and pieces by someone with an obvious love of science, and anyone with a curious mind who takes pleasure in scientific oddments as well as important ideas will almost certainly get great pleasure from it.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Review of The science magpie by Simon Flynn- an interesting mixtureBy William P. PalmerReview of The science magpie by Simon Flynn.CITATION: Flynn, S. (2012). The science magpie: A miscellany of paradoxes, explications, lists, lives and ephemera from the wonderful world of science. London: Icon.Reviewer: Dr W. P. PalmerI am unsure on what criteria a book such as this should be reviewed. The book is precisely what it claims to be; that is a 'miscellany of paradoxes, explications, lists, lives and ephemera from the wonderful world of science.' The main criterion should be the selection of items to be included in the book, combined with the criterion that the items are of interest to the general reader. As a very rough guide, I found about a third of the items to be new to me and well worth reading, one third were commonly known but worth repeating and the final third were just space-fillers. The trouble is that different people will categorise items differently, but most people will find something to fascinate them.My favourite piece is by Charles Darwin (p.24), where he is deciding whether to get married or not. He makes the decision in a scientific (?) way. He writes two lists- one stating the advantages of marriage and the other the disadvantages of marriage. It is so serious and so proper as to be hilarious!The science magpie contains 278 pages, numerous black and white illustrations and tables, many jokes (some quite funny) and about 130 different entries in total. I recommend it as a book worth dipping into occasionally to find some entertainment in some little known corner of science.BILL PALMER

"Simon Flynn's cornucopia of curious facts, anecdotes, and quotations . . . is sure to entertain and surprise."—New ScientistFrom the Large Hadron Collider rap to the sins of Isaac Newton, *The Science Magpie* is a compelling collection of scientific curiosities. Expand your knowledge as you view the history of the Earth on the face of a clock, tremble at the power of the Richter scale, and learn how to measure the speed of light.Simon Flynn was the publisher at icon Books for many years and is now a qualified science teacher. He has degrees in chemistry and philosophy.

'Simon Flynn's cornucopia of curious facts, anecdotes and quotations ... is sure to entertain and surprise.' -- New Scientist 'For anyone who likes science and is a fan of Schott's original miscellany, this book is a must. It is full of quirky, interesting scientific facts and anecdotes from across science and its history ... Quite frankly, I loved it. It's great fun and doesn't take itself too seriously.' -- Chemistry World '[A] lighthearted dash through science ... offering lots of curiosities that you will be itching to tell those around you.' -- The Biologist 'Simon Flynn's grab-bag of stories from all branches of science exudes enthusiasm, breathing fresh life into a venerable format.' -- Physics World 'This book is a cabinet of scientific curiosities ... [The Science Magpie] will stimulate good topics of conversation for the pub.' -- BBC FocusAbout the AuthorSimon Flynn: Simon Flynn was a publisher and is now training as science

teacher. He has degrees in Chemistry and Philosophy.