

Science and Technology

Bascomb, Neal. *The New Cool: A Visionary Teacher, His FIRST Robotics Team and the Ultimate Battle of Smarts.* Crown Publishers, 2011.

25,000 fans, 348 teams, 31 high school students, 6 weeks, 3 finalists, and 1 robot. Guided by the enthusiasm of their fearless engineering teacher, follow one team's gripping journey through one of the most demanding robotics competitions in the world.

Blum, Deborah. *The Poisoner's Handbook: Murder and the Birth of Forensic Medicine in Jazz Age New York.* Penguin, 2010.

In Prohibition New York, hundreds of people died from poison in everything from unregulated health tonics to the pie at the local diner. The Head Coroner and dedicated Chief of the forensics lab were the first in the country to insist to the police, to politicians, and to the public that science could make or break a case.

Blumenthal, Karen. *Steve Jobs: The Man Who Thought Different.* Feiwel and Friends, 2012.

This biography of Steve Jobs, founder of Apple, takes the reader from Jobs' humble beginnings to his struggles as CEO of Apple, and to his groundbreaking work that has changed the way everyone uses technology.

Bodanis, David. *E=mc²: A Biography of the World's Most Famous Equation.* Walker, 2000.

Everyone is familiar with Einstein's formula, but Bodanis reveals the history and the scientists whose work was the foundation for this famous equation.

Brown, Mike. *How I Killed Pluto and Why It Had It Coming.* Spiegel & Grau, 2010.

Brown always wanted to discover a planet, but what he actually discovered helped radically change the way we view the solar system. His straightforward account of his life, work, and Pluto's demotion also explains how and why scientists currently study and debate the skies.

Fainaru-Wada, Mark, and Steve Fainaru. *League of Denial: the NFL, Concussions, and the Battle for the Truth.* Crown Archetype, 2013.

Scientists battle for brains, lawyers brawl in the courts, and football players give each other concussions in the name of sport and big business. The Fainaru brothers tackle the hard truths of sports-related brain injuries.

Fink, Sheri. *Five Days at Memorial: Life and Death at a Storm-Ravaged Hospital.* Crown Publishers, 2013.

The aftermath of Hurricane Katrina changed the way people understand the politics of rescue and the overwhelming nature of catastrophe. Fink incisively unpacks the troubling decisions that led to the deaths of seven patients at Baptist Memorial during the storm, raising vital questions about medical ethics and disaster relief.

Fowler, Karen Joy. *We are Completely Beside Ourselves.* G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2013.

At first glance the Cooke family seems normal in every way, but Rosemary keeps secrets too painful to acknowledge, even to herself. Karen Joy Fowler's work questions our depiction of family, memory, and even humanity itself.

George, Rose. *The Big Necessity: The Unmentionable World of Human Waste and Why It Matters.* Metropolitan, 2008.

Why does poop matter? Sanitation is a huge public health issue and has massive implications for economics, growth and development, the environment, agriculture, and even education.

Goldacre, Ben. *Bad Science: Hacks, Quacks, and Big Pharma Flacks.* Faber and Faber, 2010.

Goldacre is on a crusade to raise scientific literacy so people can stop being duped by dubious wording, studies, statistics, and the next big health fad.

Greenberg, Andy. *This Machine Kills Secrets: How WikiLeaks, Cypherpunks and Hacktivists Aim to Free the World's Information.* Dutton, 2012.

From the Pentagon Papers of the seventies to WikiLeaks, Greenberg helps illuminate how these whistleblowers and technology have helped bring these secrets to light.

Kean, Sam. *The Disappearing Spoon: And Other True Tales of Madness, Love, and the History of the World from the Table of Periodic Elements.* Little, Brown and Co., 2010.

Elements are more than just protons and electron shells; they are the sources of practical jokes and obsessions, bitter disputes and great adventures. From hydrogen to ununoctium, Kean explains the elemental joys of the building blocks of chemistry with humor and verve.

Livio, Mario. *Brilliant Blunders: From Darwin to Einstein—Colossal Mistakes from Great Scientists that Changed Our Understanding of Life and the Universe.* Simon and Schuster, 2013.

Even the greatest scientists had bad days. In this book, Livio explores how some of the world's greatest scientific minds missed the mark, but led to greater discoveries.

Ness, Patrick. *The Knife of Never Letting Go.* Candlewick, 2008.

The Ask and the Answer. Candlewick, 2009.

Monsters of Men. Candlewick, 2010.

When Todd and Viola are forced to leave everything familiar behind, their flight across their newly settled planet triggers a long-simmering conflict. Ness explores xenophobia, colonialism, war, reconciliation, and control of access to technology in this gripping trilogy.

Ottaviani, Jim, and Leland Myrick. *Feynman.* First Second, 2011.

Get to know perhaps the most famous personality of nuclear physics: the bongo-playing, safe-cracking, defiantly curious Nobel Prize winner Richard Feynman in this meticulously researched graphic biography.

Quammen, David. *Spillover.* W. W. Norton, 2012.

Viruses are everywhere—mutating, hiding, waiting. When they cross over from animals to humans, they can

cause some of the scariest—and most lethal—diseases (AIDS, Spanish flu, rabies, Ebola). Follow viral detectives as they try to solve these infectious mysteries and prevent the next human pandemic.

Roach, Mary. *Packing for Mars: The Curious Life of Science in the Void.* W. W. Norton, 2010.

Mary Roach asks all the important but practical questions: How do you digest your lunch in space? Go to the bathroom? Get away from a crewmember who's driving you nuts? With her trademark humor and indefatigable curiosity, she looks hard at why humans, who are fundamentally not built for outer space, insist on risking their lives by heading for the stars.

Silver, Nate. *The Signal and the Noise: Why So Many Predictions Fail—But Some Don't.* Penguin, 2012.

Who will win the Super Bowl? Will the stock market rise or fall? Explore the world of prediction science and learn to turn information into knowledge you can use to successfully plan for the future.

Skloot, Rebecca. *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks.* Crown Publishers, 2010.

Henrietta Lacks had no idea that her cells would lead to science's greatest medical breakthroughs, nor did her family have any idea that her cells are still be alive today. Skloot explores the ethics of the scientists who first used Lacks's cells and discovered that they would live forever, as well as the impact of the family's discovery that her cells were alive and being used without the family's permission.

Switek, Brian. *My Beloved Brontosaurus: On the Road with Old Bones, New Science, and Our Favorite Dinosaurs.* Scientific American/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013.

Dinosaurs may have died millions of years ago, but new discoveries and theories are continually changing the way we look at and understand the giant reptiles.

Teresi, Dick. *Lost Discoveries: The Ancient Roots of Modern Science—From the Babylonians to the Maya.* Simon and Schuster, 2002.

Modern science and math didn't start with Newton or Galileo, or even the Ancient Greeks. From around the world and over millennia, curious minds in diverse cultures made fabulous discoveries in fields from math to physics, astronomy to chemistry.

Thwaites, Thomas. *The Toaster Project: or A Heroic Attempt to Build a Simple Electric Appliance from Scratch.* Princeton Architectural Press, 2011.

How hard do you think it is to smelt iron? Make plastic? Create wiring? Thwaites's simple goal—to make himself a cheap mechanical toaster—ends up a frequently frustrating and hilarious look at just how far we are from being able to manufacture the everyday items we take for granted.

Urasawa, Naoki, Osama Tezuka, and others. *Pluto Vol. 1-8.* VIZ Media, 2009.

A re-entry into the world of Osamu Tezuka's legendary 1964 classic *Astro Boy*, *Pluto* follows the clever, conflicted investigator Gesicht as he tracks down the terrorist who has sent an invincible robot to execute the seven best robots in the world.

Weidensaul, Scott. *The Ghost with Trembling Wings: Science, Wishful Thinking, and the Search for Lost Species.* North Point Press, 2002.

Approximately 30,000 species of animals and plants go extinct every year. Follow Weidensaul around the globe to places such as Madagascar, Indonesia, and Peru, as he pursues stories of extinction and, surprisingly, resurrection.

Wohlsen, Marcus. *Biopunk: DIY Scientists Hack the Software of Life*. Current, 2011.

Can the cure for cancer be found in your kitchen? In *Biopunk*, Wohlsen sheds light on a new community of DIY scientists working outside the walls of corporations and universities to solve the world's biggest problems and to "open source" the basic code of life.