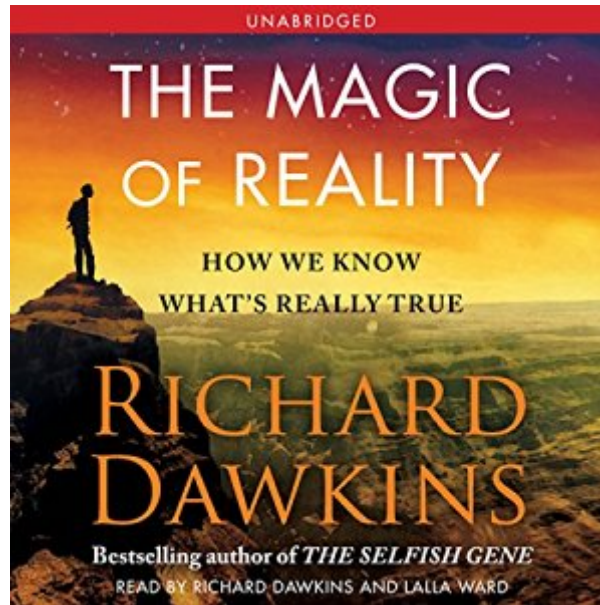


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The Magic Of Reality: How We Know What's Really True



Synopsis

Richard Dawkins, the world's most famous evolutionary biologist, presents a gorgeously lucid, science book examining some of the nature's most fundamental questions both from a mythical and scientific perspective. Science is our most precise and powerful tool for making sense of the world. Before we developed the scientific method, we created rich mythologies to explain the unknown. The pressing questions that primitive men and women asked are the same ones we ask as children. Who was the first person? What is the sun? Why is there night and day? The myths that address these questions are beautiful, but in every case their beauty is exceeded by the scientific truth. With characteristic clarity and verve, Dawkins answers these big questions. Looking first at some of the myths that arose to answer the question, he then, dazzles us with the facts. He looks at the building blocks of matter, the first humans, the sun - explaining the life and death of stars; why there's a night and a day - ranging from our solar system to the inner workings of our planet; what a rainbow really is-going from the rainbow in your backyard to the age of the universe; and finally, he poses a question that still baffles scientists: When did everything begin?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In 1984's film "Ghostbusters," there's a comical scene in which a man is being interviewed for the role of the newest member of the "ghost busting" team, and his interviewer asks him the question, "Do you believe in UFOs, astral projections, mental telepathy, ESP, clairvoyance, spirit photography, telekinetic movement, full trance mediums, the Loch Ness monster and the theory of

Atlantis?" He answers, humorously, "If there's a steady paycheck in it, I'll believe anything you say." If you'd asked me the same question at the age of 12 or 13, I would have said "yes" without any hesitation. In fact, I probably would have added some things. Like most children, I was very curious about how the universe worked and how things had come to be the way they were, and, also like most children, by the time I was in middle school I had outgrown the cute educational kids' shows and picture books about dinosaurs and space. School texts were heavier on bare bones facts than on explaining how scientists knew what they did, and books for adults were dry and simply too difficult to keep up with. (I tried, and abandoned, "The Origin of Species" and "Cosmos" around this time.) Worse yet, I still had the childish tendency to believe most of what adults told me - and to believe virtually all of what I read. In this perfect storm of inquiry and innocence, I was ripe for the plucking for charlatans and pseudo-scientists. And pluck they did! I wasted much of my time during these formative years reading (and believing) that an alien spacecraft crashed in New Mexico in 1947, that populations of plesiosaurs survived in a few scattered lakes around the world (including, of course, Loch Ness), that it was possible to communicate telepathically, that aliens built the pyramids, and so on, and so on...

The Magic of Reality: How We Know What's Really True by Richard Dawkins "The Magic of Reality" is the latest contribution by evolutionary-biologist icon Richard Dawkins. Professor Dawkins is on a mission of education and in this enlightening book he reaches a younger audience by introducing science like only he can. In one of the most beautifully illustrated science books, he takes the reader on a ride on a wide-range of topics of interest that masterfully navigates between myth and what is real. This mesmerizing 272-page book is composed of the following twelve chapters: 1. What is reality? What is magic? , 2. Who was the first person? , 3. Why are there so many different kinds of animals? , 4. What are things made of? , 5. Why do we have night and day, winter and summer? , 6. What is the sun? , 7. What is a rainbow? , 8. When and how did everything begin? , 9. Are we alone? , 10. What is an earthquake? , 11. Why do bad things happen? , and 12. What is a miracle? Positives: 1. A wonderful book on science that is accessible to a younger audience without compromising the science lovers in all of us. Bravo! 2. It's a book written by the great Richard Dawkins, so you know the quality goes in before the product goes out. 3. A true labor of love. The educator in Professor Dawkins comes out and now even our children will benefit from his prodigious knowledge. 4. One of the most beautifully illustrated books you will ever find. Great quality binding only matched by its substance. 5. Science knowledge conveyed in a brilliant, lucid manner. 6. Great format. In each chapter, Professor Dawkins illustrates clearly the difference between the wishful and

what is "really" real.7. What a wonderful way to learn about science.

Richard Dawkins' passion for science and reason has never been more evident than in his latest work, an attempt to convey to "readers of all ages" just how wonderful and magical reality is. The other side of that idea is that no matter how enchanting ancient or modern myths might be, they are not based on reality and they are not nearly as interesting or as exciting as the truth. Dawkins brings this double point home in each of twelve chapters presented as questions, with the myths of many peoples contrasted with reality as determined by science. There will be little controversy over how he handles such questions as What is the sun? What is a rainbow? Why do we have night and day, winter and summer? What is an earthquake? or even Are we alone? Unfortunately, many in America who should read this book probably won't because of their religious beliefs. Those who think Adam was the first person, that the god of Abraham created all animals individually, that the universe was brought into being by the will of some supernatural creator, and that bad things happen because god or the gods are angry with us will reject this or any book that tells the science like it is. Fortunately, the number of people who think the Bible is the word of god and must be taken literally as if it were a science text is not as great in other countries. I imagine the book will do quite well in the UK and other places (in translation) where fundamentalist anti-science is not so great as it is in the U.S. All but two of the chapters focus exclusively on scientific questions. Most chapters begin with a look at some of the traditional myths that have been produced by various cultures around the world. These are followed up with a look at what the science has to say about the subject.

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