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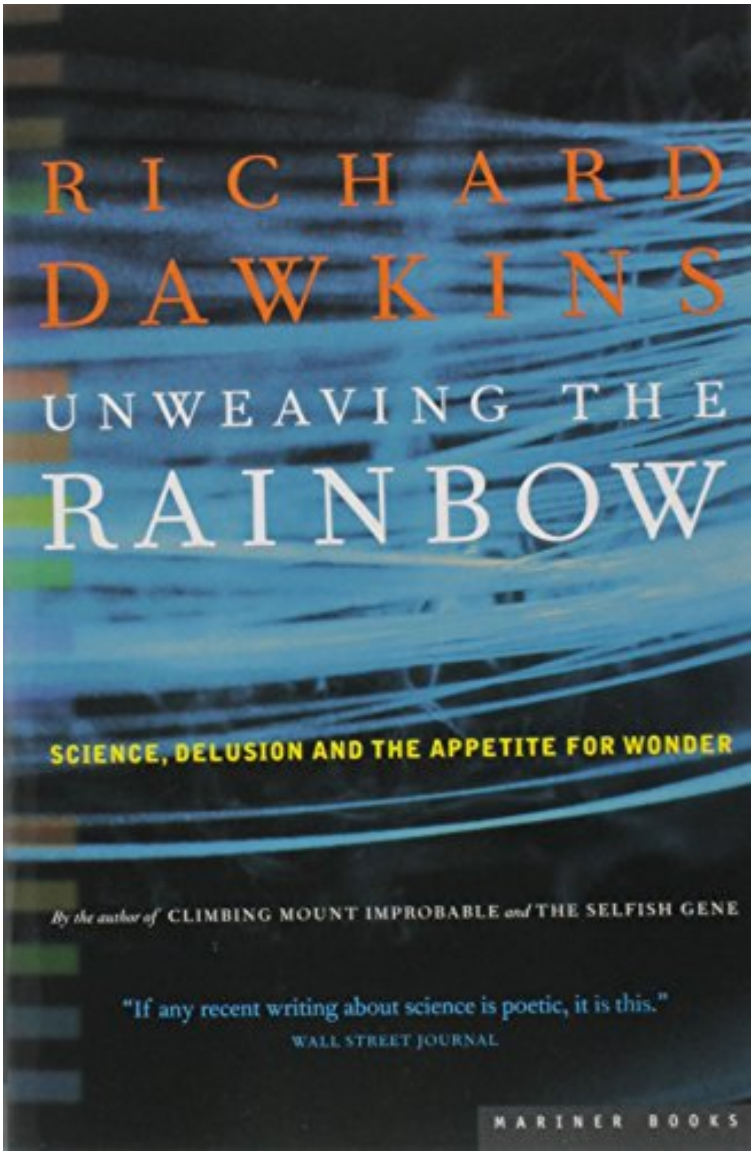

[DOWNLOAD] Unweaving the Rainbow: Science, Delusion and the Appetite for Wonder

Unweaving the Rainbow: Science, Delusion and the Appetite for Wonder

Richard Dawkins : Unweaving the Rainbow: Science, Delusion and the Appetite for Wonder before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Unweaving the Rainbow: Science, Delusion and the Appetite for Wonder:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Rainbow UnwovenBy nakedlaughingWhile Richard Dawkins is a

very polarizing figure in the worlds of atheism, psychology, and politics, he is also a great thinker and writer. Hate him or love him, he's got a strong point of view and is not afraid to voice it. In Unweaving the Rainbow, he explores mystical thinking and the inherent beauty in science. He argues that Newton, having "unwoven the rainbow" actually leaves a legacy of modern astronomy and cosmology wide open. There are plenty of reviews discussing the book topics themselves, but I won't be one of them. All I can say is, with a book like this, it's best to read it for yourself and understand it as it applies to you. This was a fantastic book, in my opinion, and is well worth the read!3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Dawkins Is At His Best When He Sticks To The ScienceBy LindseyHad I not just read "The Bonobo and the Atheist" by Frans De Waal, I might be giving this book a very different review. Dawkins's point in "Unweaving" is that science need not be at odds with poetry, art, and the human sense of wonder; on the contrary, it can provide all the inspiration we need for these things. Dawkins is at his best when he is using his amazing gift for exposition to explain, in terms a layman could understand, the most crucial, complex, and fascinating scientific principles, such as how Newton's discovery of refraction allows us to understand the composition of distant stars, or how the brain turns huge amounts of input from the eyes into a stable, familiar world. These things are Dawkins's forte; when he strays from them to critique the writings of other scientists, he falters. Toward the middle of the book he sets aside a chapter or two to criticize the analogies and metaphors used by other scientists as "bad poetry." With some examples he makes valid points, but with others, he oversteps, as with his criticism of Frans De Waal's supposed reference to apes as role models. Dawkins's "Unweaving" was published in 1998; in De Waal's "The Bonobo and the Atheist," published in March 2013, it becomes clear that this feud has been going on for at least 15 years. Both scientists are brilliant at what they do, and both have very valid points to make in their own defense. Using popular writing to hash out what is clearly a political, not a scientific, conflict is unattractive, and distracts from the real value of the book. But Dawkins redeems himself in the last few chapters leaving this reader, as usual, eager for more.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Dawkins Genius Shines ThroughBy Barbara FrederickThis is a somewhat older of Dawkins' brilliant writings, and as such, one has to make a few allowances. For example, he goes into significant detail about how DNA is used in forensic evidence, but states that the process will be much increased when the human genome project is complete. It is now complete, and I'm sure he is right that it has moved forensics ahead considerably.The title refers to the rainbow of visible light, but Dawkins points out that the same metaphor applies to a great many other processes, including sound, animal tracking, paleontology, and plenty of places where a greater understanding of logic, statistics and other data-based processes can enhance our lives considerably. I was especially taken by the chapter on science in the courtroom.Dawkins may come off as too cynical for some people, but I prefer the term "skeptical", which is a good, solid, rational position to take. I've loved every book of his I've read, and expect to read every one I find.

Did Newton "unweave the rainbow" by reducing it to its prismatic colors, as Keats contended? Did he, in other words, diminish beauty? Far from it, says acclaimed scientist Richard Dawkins; Newton's unweaving is the key to much of modern astronomy and to the breathtaking poetry of modern cosmology. Mysteries don't lose their poetry because they are solved: the solution often is more beautiful than the puzzle, uncovering deeper mysteries. With the wit, insight, and spellbinding prose that have made him a best-selling author, Dawkins takes up the most important and compelling topics in modern science, from astronomy and genetics to language and virtual reality, combining them in a landmark statement of the human appetite for wonder. This is the book Richard Dawkins was meant to write: a brilliant assessment of what science is (and isn't), a tribute to science not because it is useful but because it is uplifting.

.com Why do poets and artists so often disparage science in their work? For that matter, why does so much scientific literature compare poorly with, say, the phone book? After struggling with questions like these for years, biologist Richard Dawkins has taken a wide-ranging view of the subjects of meaning and beauty in Unweaving the Rainbow, a deeply humanistic examination of science, mysticism, and human nature. Notably strong-willed in a profession of bet-hedgers and wait-and-seers, Dawkins carries the reader along on a romp through the natural and cultural worlds, determined that "science, at its best, should leave room for poetry." Inspired by the frequently asked question, "Why do you bother getting up in the morning?" following publication of his book The Selfish Gene, Dawkins set out determined to show that understanding nature's mechanics need not sap one's zest for life. Alternately enlightening and maddening, Unweaving the Rainbow will appeal to all thoughtful readers, whether wild-eyed technophiles or grumpy, cabin-dwelling Luddites. Excoriations of newspaper astrology columns follow quotes from Blake and Shakespeare, which are sandwiched between sparkling, easy-to-follow discussions of probability, behavior, and evolution. In Dawkins's world (and, he hopes, in ours), science is poetry; he ends his journey by referring to his title's author and subject, maintaining that "A Keats and a Newton, listening to each other, might hear the galaxies sing." --Rob LightnerFrom Publishers WeeklyKeats complained that Newton's experiments with prisms had destroyed all the poetry of the rainbow. Not so, says Oxford biologist Dawkins (The Selfish Gene) who, in an eloquent if prickly defense of the scientific enterprise, calls on the "two cultures" of science and poetry to learn from each other. Yet Dawkins cautions against "bad poetic science," i.e., seductive but misleading metaphors, and cites as an example "

'Gaia': the overrated romantic fancy of the whole world as an organism," a hypothesis proposed by atmospheric scientist James Lovelock and bacteriologist Lynn Margulis. Dawkins (continuing a celebrated battle that has been raging in the New York of Books) also lambastes paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould for "bad poetry," rejecting Gould's theory of punctuated equilibrium, which holds that new species emerge during relatively short bursts of evolutionary advance. In these conversational, discursive essays, Dawkins is, as always, an elegant, witty popularizer, whether he is offering a crash course in DNA fingerprinting, explaining the origins of "mad cow disease" in weird proteins that spread like self-replicating viruses or discussing male birdsong as an auditory aphrodisiac for female birds. However, in venturing into realms beyond the immediate purview of science, he reveals his own biases, launching into a predictable, rather superficial assault on paranormal research, UFO reports, astrology and psychic phenomena, all of which he dismisses as products of fraud, illusion, sloppy observation or an exploitation of our natural appetite for wonder. Dawkins is most interesting when he theorizes that our brains have partly taken over from DNA the role of recording the environment, resulting in "virtual worlds" that alter the terrain in which our genes undergo natural selection. Agent, John Brockman. 50,000 first printing; first serial to the Sciences. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Library JournalIn this discussion of scientific methodology, Dawkins quotes liberallyAnot fellow scientists, but poets like Keats, Coleridge, and Dickinson. The message is clear: scientific thinking may be structured and rigorous, but it never lacks a fundamental sense of beauty and wonder. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.