



# The Invention of Science: A New History of the Scientific Revolution

By David Wootton

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**The Invention of Science: A New History of the Scientific Revolution** By David Wootton

A companion to such acclaimed works as *The Age of Wonder*, *A Clockwork Universe*, and *Darwin's Ghosts*—a groundbreaking examination of the greatest event in history, the Scientific Revolution, and how it came to change the way we understand ourselves and our world.

We live in a world transformed by scientific discovery. Yet today, science and its practitioners have come under political attack. In this fascinating history spanning continents and centuries, historian David Wootton offers a lively defense of science, revealing why the Scientific Revolution was truly the greatest event in our history.

*The Invention of Science* goes back five hundred years in time to chronicle this crucial transformation, exploring the factors that led to its birth and the people who made it happen. Wootton argues that the Scientific Revolution was actually five separate yet concurrent events that developed independently, but came to intersect and create a new worldview. Here are the brilliant iconoclasts—Galileo, Copernicus, Brahe, Newton, and many more curious minds from across Europe—whose studies of the natural world challenged centuries of religious orthodoxy and ingrained superstition.

From gunpowder technology, the discovery of the new world, movable type printing, perspective painting, and the telescope to the practice of conducting experiments, the laws of nature, and the concept of the fact, Wootton shows how these discoveries codified into a social construct and a system of knowledge. Ultimately, he makes clear the link between scientific discovery and the rise of industrialization—and the birth of the modern world we know.

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### Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

**An Amazon Best Book of December 2015:** Here's a big, fat history of science (spanning from 1572 to 1704) with a very clear thesis: that science, and thus the world, entered the modern age during this precise span. Wootton, the Anniversary Professor of History at the University of York, explores primary texts and detailed history to build his argument that Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe's discovery of a new star in 1572 started a scientific revolution, and that Isaac Newton's 1704 publication of *Opticks* sealed it. What happened in between was a series of discoveries—of gunpowder, movable type, the New World, etc.—that altered our perception of *what is* and, through the Newtonian Revolution, opened our minds to *what might be*. The sheer size of the book allows readers to jump around between essays, but taken as a whole *The Invention of Science* builds a powerful, thoroughly fascinating argument ripe for debate. --Chris Schluep

### Review

"Wootton is a dazzling explicator of difficult ideas whose relish for his material is evident." (Matthew Price, the Boston Globe)

"Wootton tells his tales well and portrays characters vividly. He writes with wit, and his book is full of surprises." (Robert P. Crease, The Wall Street Journal)

"A masterly account of the 'scientific revolution.'" (Financial Times' Best Books of 2015)

"New, encyclopedic history." (Adam Gopnik, the New Yorker)

"Full of insights...even jaded scholars will find it fresh and compelling." (The Economist)

"...perceptive, thought-provoking, deeply erudite and beautifully written." (Nature)

"Vibrant and impressive...The Invention of Science is a marvel of expositional clarity" (Steve Donoghue, The Christian Science Monitor)

"Not only a history of science but a revisionist historiography of science" (Steven Poole, The New Statesman)

"A big bang moment" (Lorraine Daston, The Guardian)

"Extremely well researched and documented...This is bound to become a basic reference in the future." (Adhemar Bultheel, the European Mathematical Society)

"A bracing rediscovery of the marvel that is science" (Booklist, starred review)

"David Wootton's *The Invention of Science* is outstanding. It details how, when and why the philosophical, intellectual and practical frameworks of modern science arose, and it sees off relativism in the process. While dealing wonderfully in broad sweeps, it offers a wealth of entertaining details." (Richard Joyner,

Times Higher Education)

“Fascinating and original ... Wootton is a marvellous writer with an enviously encyclopaedic knowledge, and he has exciting things to say ... a stimulating, well-informed and imaginative account.” (Patricia Fara, Literary Review)

“A superbly lucid examination of a dramatic revolution in human thought that deserves a place on the shelf with Thomas Kuhn and David Deutsch.” (Kirkus Starred Review)

From the Back Cover

We live in a world made by science. How and when did this happen? *The Invention of Science* tells the story of the extraordinary intellectual and cultural revolution that gave birth to modern science, and mounts a major challenge to the prevailing orthodoxy of its history.

Before 1492, all significant knowledge was believed to be already available; there was no concept of progress, as people looked to the past, not the future, for understanding. David Wootton argues that the discovery of America demonstrated that new knowledge was possible: indeed, it introduced the very concept of discovery and opened the way to the invention of science.

The first crucial discovery was Tycho Brahe's nova of 1572: proof that there could be change in the heavens. The invention of the telescope in 1608 rendered the old astronomy obsolete. Evangelista Torricelli's experiment with the vacuum in 1643 led directly to the triumph of the experimental method in the Royal Society of Robert Boyle and Isaac Newton. By 1750, Newtonianism was being celebrated throughout Europe.

This new science did not consist simply of new discoveries or methods. It relied on a new understanding of what knowledge may be, and with this came a fresh language: *discovery, progress, fact, experiment, hypothesis, theory, laws of nature*. Although almost all these terms existed before 1492, their meanings were radically transformed, and they became tools to think scientifically. Now we all speak this language of science that was invented during the Scientific Revolution.

This revolution had its martyrs (Bruno, Galileo), its heroes (Kepler, Boyle), its propagandists (Voltaire, Diderot), and its patient laborers (Gilbert, Hooke). The new culture led to a new rationalism, killing off alchemy, astrology, and the belief in witchcraft. It also led to the invention of the steam engine and to the first Industrial Revolution. Wootton's landmark work changes our understanding of how this great transformation came about, and of what science is.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Nancy Sanchez:**

This *The Invention of Science: A New History of the Scientific Revolution* book is not really ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book is usually information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get information which is getting deeper an individual read a lot of information you will get. This particular *The Invention of Science: A New History of the Scientific Revolution* without we comprehend teach the one who reading through it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't possibly be worry *The Invention of Science: A New History of the Scientific*

Revolution can bring once you are and not make your handbag space or bookshelves' come to be full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even phone. This The Invention of Science: A New History of the Scientific Revolution having excellent arrangement in word in addition to layout, so you will not really feel uninterested in reading.

**Florence Wiggins:**

Typically the book The Invention of Science: A New History of the Scientific Revolution will bring you to the new experience of reading a book. The author style to clarify the idea is very unique. In the event you try to find new book to see, this book very ideal to you. The book The Invention of Science: A New History of the Scientific Revolution is much recommended to you to study. You can also get the e-book in the official web site, so you can easier to read the book.

**Lourdes Tyner:**

Reading a guide tends to be new life style within this era globalization. With reading you can get a lot of information that may give you benefit in your life. Together with book everyone in this world can certainly share their idea. Books can also inspire a lot of people. Lots of author can inspire all their reader with their story or perhaps their experience. Not only situation that share in the publications. But also they write about the information about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your sons or daughters, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors on this planet always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some investigation before they write on their book. One of them is this The Invention of Science: A New History of the Scientific Revolution.

**Patricia Stokes:**

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation or even go to the outside with them friends and family or their friend. Do you realize? Many a lot of people spent they free time just watching TV, or playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity here is look different you can read any book. It is really fun for you personally. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent 24 hours a day to reading a publication. The book The Invention of Science: A New History of the Scientific Revolution it is quite good to read. There are a lot of people who recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. In case you did not have enough space to develop this book you can buy typically the e-book. You can m0ore effortlessly to read this book out of your smart phone. The price is not to cover but this book has high quality.

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