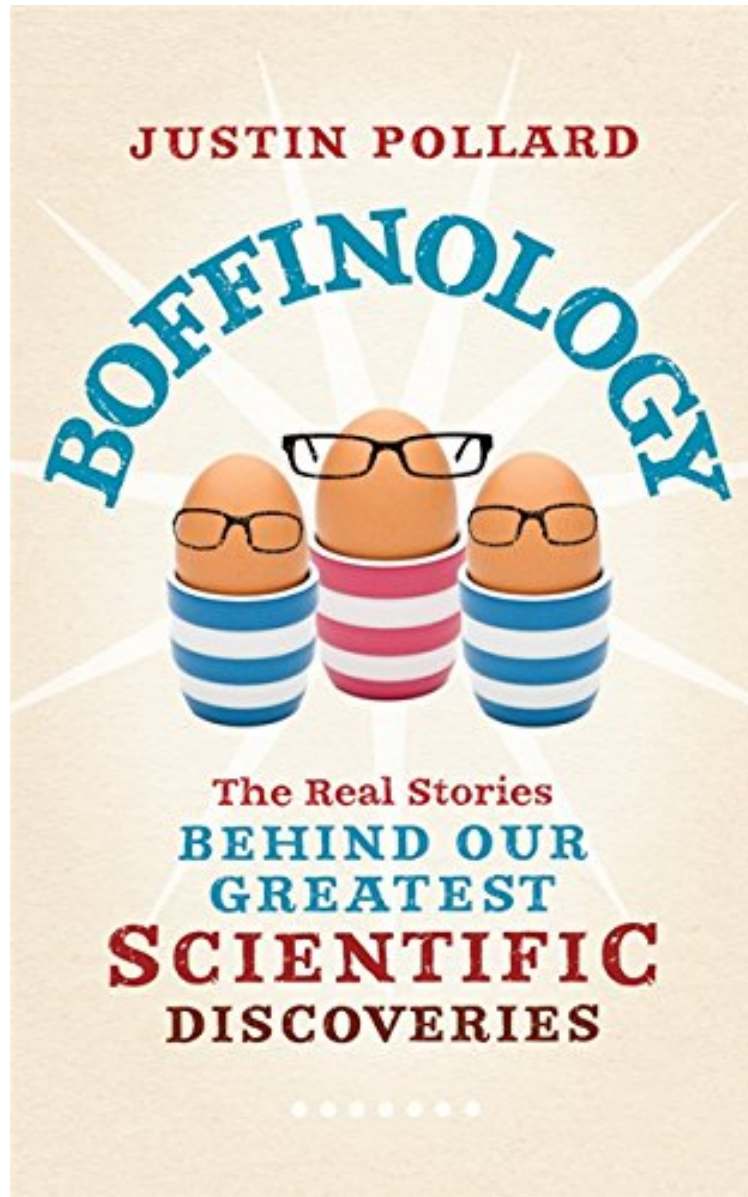


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Justin Pollard

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Justin Pollard : Boffinology: The Real Stories Behind Our Greatest Scientific Discoveries before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Boffinology: The Real Stories Behind Our Greatest Scientific Discoveries:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Light-Hearted and Most Enjoyable Read By George Poirier This is the third book by this author that I've had the pleasure to read, so far; I have not yet been disappointed. The book contains one hundred little snippets about various events in the world of science that have occurred throughout history. These snippets are, on average, about three pages in length and are divided into ten sections of ten stories each. Each such section has a main theme in which the author focuses on a particular field/topic, e.g., physics, chemistry, biology, inventions, accidents, frauds, etc. The timeline roughly spans the period from Ancient Greek times to the twentieth century. I have noticed that a few of these stories have been recounted in other similar works and so may seem familiar to some readers. In my opinion, the author's writing style is one of this book's strongest assets. It is witty, often tongue-in-cheek, occasionally quite humorous, always lively and widely accessible; the author's choice of words in certain key instances is absolutely impeccable. This book should appeal to a very wide readership: from science buffs to those simply wanting to enjoy a light-hearted yet educational read. I highly recommend it!

The history of science is often seen as a story of advancement but nothing could be further from the truth. Science, it is true, has progressed, but rarely in the direction intended and seldom for the reasons given. This has a lot to do with the people responsible. Meet Thales, credited as 'the father of science', whose only real claim to fame is that he often fell into ditches, discover how Archimedes never said Eureka and hated baths anyway and how the most lucrative ancient Greek invention was not democracy but the slot machine. Justin Pollard also fills us in on Issac Newton who liked to disguise himself and lurk in London's less salubrious pubs, how eleven people claimed to have invented the steam engine and why the first website was twelve foot across and made of wood.

'An illuminating read' -- Financial Times 'This approachable and often funny compendium of tales about scientists and their discoveries is also making an important argument: that science is not the stately, dispassionate progress from evidence to theory that some of its self-appointed defenders think' -- Guardian 'Addictive' -- Independent About the Author Justin Pollard read Archaeology and Anthropology at Cambridge. He is a historical writer and consultant in film and TV. His credits include Elizabeth and Atonement and the BBC TV drama The Tudors, as well as more than twenty-five documentary series such as Channel 4's Time Team. He is a writer and researcher for QI and the author of seven books including The Interesting Bits, Charge! and Secret Britain.