
A Short History Of Nearly Everything By Bill Bryson

I think that a short history of nearly anything is a book that should be read by anyone on earth. This book is a great way of learning about the basic building blocks of science as well as the scientists who discovered such interesting items. I found the book really accessible and funny and all in all an extremely enjoyable book that I would highly recommend. It is a long book but despite other science books, it is really easy to read. Bill Bryson makes it really easy to understand everything, I absolutely loved this book and I'm really happy that I made time to read it.

I will continue by sharing lots of interesting things I learned from the book and how it made me think that the whole world is connected.

If you go outside and grab a handful of soil it will contain up to a million plump yeasts 200000 molds about 10000 protozoans and assorted rotifers, flatworms roundworms, and other microscopic creatures known as Cryptozoa. A large portion of this is still unknown.

A thing I really enjoyed learning from the book was that if you run a finger along dusty shelf sand you are drawing a pattern very largely in dead skin. It is there and it is going to be there for a long time but you are never going to see it.

Funny learning that I took from Bill Bryson's book is that half of the chemical functions that take place in a banana are basically the same as the chemical functions that take place in our body. Yes! We've been part banana since we were born and we didn't even know it.

Regarding marine life, I learned that the organisms capture atmospheric carbon in the form of CO₂ when it falls as rain and they use it to make their shells by locking the carbon in their shelves they keep it from being evaporated into the atmosphere where it would build up dangerously as a greenhouse gas. Little organisms have been saving our lives for years by keeping the planet stable and cool and we don't even know it.

As mentioned also in Carl Sagan's book called "Cosmos", it is said that if you travel downwards into an electron you might find that it contains a universe of its own. I really enjoy the idea of infinity and that the whole universe is infinite with infinite dimensions and infinite possibilities. This really makes me think that we should do just what we are passionate about in life and not care about the people that want to.

E=MC squared, what does it mean? It basically says that mass and energy have an equivalence. They are two forms of the same thing, energy is liberated matter and matter is energy waiting to happen since C to the speed of light times itself is a truly enormous number. What the equation is saying is that there is a huge amount of energy stored within every material thing. If you are an average-sized adult you will contain around seven times 10 to the power of 18 joules of potential energy, enough to explode with the force of 30 large hydrogen bombs. Even a uranium bomb the most energetic thing we have produced yet releases less than 1% of the energy it could release if only we could work out how.

Karl Popper who Steven Weinberg has called the Dean of modern philosophers of science once suggested that there may not in fact be an ultimate theory for physics that rather any explanation will require another explanation producing an infinite chain of more and more fundamental principles. What I could get from this on a personal level is that things change but there are more paths it doesn't mean there is only one good way, there could be more, it all comes from perspective.

An interesting fact about our planet is that 99.99% of all species that have ever lived are no longer with us and we will never know how they looked or the sound they made.

The next lesson was a daily routine hack as well for me, if you want to grow your beard faster according to Bryson how fast a man's beard grows is partly a function of how much he thinks about sex because thinking about sex produces a testosterone surge.

I was really surprised to find out that for every kilogram of shrimp ever harvested about 4 kilograms of fish and other marine creatures are destroyed. As a shrimp lover, I didn't really enjoy hearing this and started questioning my love for the dish and that you can change the world just by changing what you are eating.

We have better maps of Mars than we do over our own sea beds. This may explain why 97% of the world's plant and animal species may still await discovery. Of the organisms that we do know about more than 99% and 100 are only barely described with just a scientific name a handful of specimens in a museum and a few bits of description in scientific journals.

One of the most interesting ideas that I found in the book is the one that we are all reincarnations through short-lived ones. When we die our atoms will disassemble and move off to find new uses elsewhere as part of a leaf or other human being or a part of dew. Atoms themselves however pretty much go on forever.

You couldn't be here without a little incest, compare your genes with any other human beings and on average there will be about 99.9% the same.

When the universe expands it won't be spreading out fill a larger emptiness as you could imagine at first. The only space that exists is a space that creates as it goes.

I saved the best lesson I took from the book for last. It comes from the fact that We are the only creature that can harm at a distance. I didn't even think about this one, surely there's some animal that can harm from a distance, can I think of one? We must be grateful because being born as humans put us in a more favorable position on earth, if not the most favorable.

I might say that it is sort of a given that you're going to learn a lot from this book, I learned a lot from it that I didn't know. I think the best part of the book is about the insights this has for science in general and the size of the process. A lot of people think they know a lot about science but probably they really don't because science is often taught as though, it's a body of knowledge and I really think it would be a mistake to say that you know for example that cosmology is a science because it uses a scientific process learning that the universe that you can't get the edge of the universe that's not science that's what science could suggest to us.

To sum up I think that any person on earth should read this book because it teaches

fundamental knowledge about science in a very readable way despite other science books that are hard to read.

If I was asked to recommend a science book to someone this would be for sure my top choice.