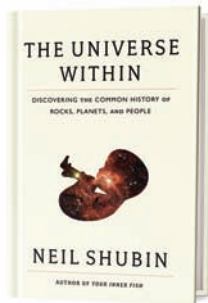


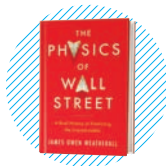
BOOKS



The Universe Within: Discovering the Common History of Rocks, Planets, and People

by Neil Shubin. Pantheon Books, 2013 (\$25.95)

Biologist Shubin's grand tour of human origins goes beyond the well-worn Carl Sagan line, "We're made of star stuff." Shubin, whose last best seller discussed how humans evolved from fish, focuses on our molecular composition as it relates to Earth and the cosmos: our bodies are mostly hydrogen, which formed during the big bang; carbon came from the fusion reactions inside stars; algae most likely gave rise to the oxygen we breathe. Even those familiar with the basic underpinnings of how we evolved will find *The Universe Within* engaging. It is laced with Shubin's own fossil-hunting adventures and filled with colorful tales of historical figures, such as Henrietta Leavitt, who discovered a way to measure a star's distance from Earth, and Galileo's lesser-known writings on how gravity dictates an organism's shape.



The Physics of Wall Street: A Brief History of Predicting the Unpredictable

by James Owen Weatherall. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013 (\$27)

Weatherall, a doctoral student in physics and math at the time of the 2007–2008 financial crisis, delves into the question of how physics and finance came together. In clear, lively prose, he traces the



Drawn from Paradise: The Natural History, Art and Discovery of the Birds of Paradise

by David Attenborough and Errol Fuller. Harper Design, 2012 (\$45)

British broadcaster Attenborough has narrated some of the most spectacular footage ever captured of the elaborate mating dances of birds of paradise. In this coffee-table book, he and Fuller describe how these ornate birds from New Guinea first came to the attention of Europeans in the early 16th century and how Westerners have studied and depicted them since that time.

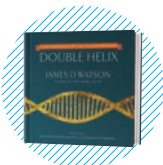


Male black sicklebill

"By weight, we contain such a large amount of oxygen and carbon that we are virtually unique in the known universe."

—From *The Universe Within*

evolution of the mathematical ideas behind derivatives and hedge funds, from the early papers of a student working on the floor of the Paris Bourse at the end of the 19th century to the late fractal geometry founder Benoit Mandelbrot's thoughts on the randomness of cotton prices. Weatherall argues that the blame for the financial collapse lies not with sophisticated mathematical models but with those who misused them. Economists and physicists must work together to prevent future crises.



The Annotated and Illustrated Double Helix

by James D. Watson. Edited by Alexander Gann and Jan Witkowski. Simon and Schuster, 2012 (\$30)

Watson's 1968 account of the race to identify the structure of DNA remains one of the best science memoirs ever written. This new annotated edition features letters, photographs and other documents from the period of Watson, Francis Crick and Maurice Wilkins's Nobel Prize-winning discovery. Among

the highlights: letters exchanged by some of the major players, including x-ray crystallographer Rosalind Franklin, who had a famously difficult relationship with Wilkins and Watson, testify to the intense, competitive atmosphere of the time. In one letter, Franklin confides to a friend that she finds many of her colleagues "positively repulsive."



Mastermind: How to Think Like Sherlock Holmes

by Maria Konnikova. Viking, 2013 (\$26.95)

Konnikova, author of the *Scientific American* blog Literally Psyched, has been fascinated by Sherlock Holmes since the days when her father read aloud to her from Conan Doyle's classic mysteries. Now a Ph.D. candidate in psychology, she examines Holmes's powers of perception and problem solving through the lens of her discipline. The book is part literary analysis and part self-help guide, teaching readers how to sharpen the ways they observe the world, store and retrieve memories, and make decisions.