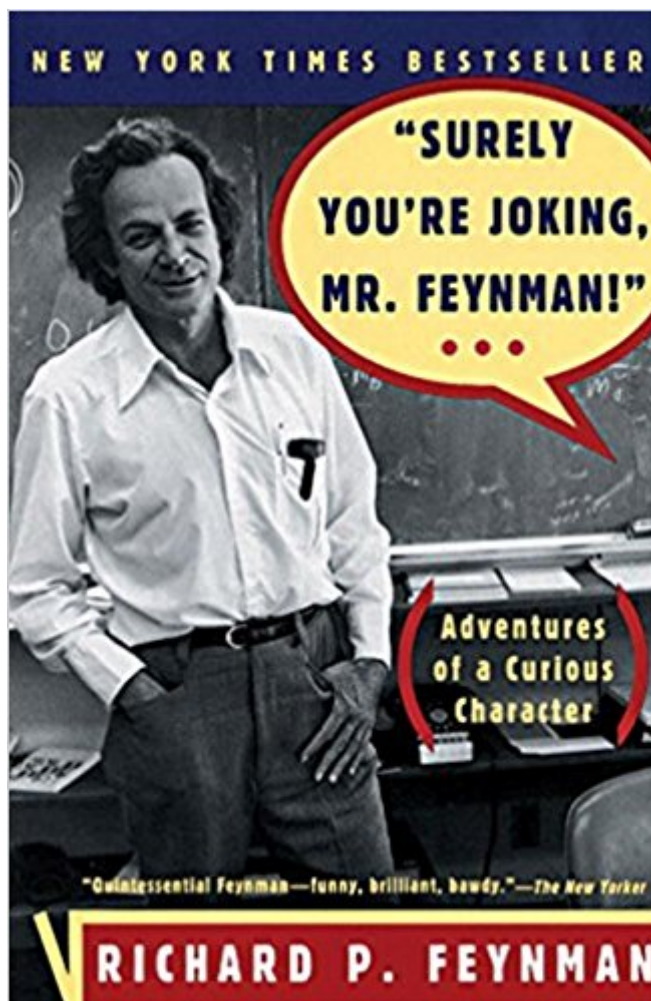


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Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman! (Adventures Of A Curious Character)



Synopsis

A New York Times bestseller— the outrageous exploits of one of this century's greatest scientific minds and a legendary American original. Richard Feynman, winner of the Nobel Prize in physics, thrived on outrageous adventures. Here he recounts in his inimitable voice his experience trading ideas on atomic physics with Einstein and Bohr and ideas on gambling with Nick the Greek; cracking the uncrackable safes guarding the most deeply held nuclear secrets; accompanying a ballet on his bongo drums; painting a naked female toreador. In short, here is Feynman's life in all its eccentric— a combustible mixture of high intelligence, unlimited curiosity, and raging chutzpah. Black-and-white photographs throughout

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Customer Reviews

A series of anecdotes shouldn't by rights add up to an autobiography, but that's just one of the many pieces of received wisdom that Nobel Prize-winning physicist Richard Feynman (1918-88) cheerfully ignores in his engagingly eccentric book, a bestseller ever since its initial publication in 1985. Fiercely independent (read the chapter entitled "Judging Books by Their Covers"), intolerant of stupidity even when it comes packaged as high intellectualism (check out "Is Electricity Fire?"), unafraid to offend (see "You Just Ask Them?"), Feynman informs by entertaining. It's possible to enjoy Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman simply as a bunch of hilarious yarns with the smart-alecky author as know-it-all hero. At some point, however, attentive readers realize that underneath all the merriment simmers a running commentary on what constitutes authentic knowledge: learning by

understanding, not by rote; refusal to give up on seemingly insoluble problems; and total disrespect for fancy ideas that have no grounding in the real world. Feynman himself had all these qualities in spades, and they come through with vigor and verve in his no-bull prose. No wonder his students--and readers around the world--adored him. --Wendy Smith

History will remember Nobel Prize-winning physicist Feynman (1918-1988), for his work in quantum physics and his role in the investigation of the explosion of the Challenger space shuttle. Contemporary readers and listeners, however, will remember him best for his reputation as a free-thinking iconoclast whose personal adventures were hilarious, insightful and inspiring. Todd does a fabulous job of conveying Feynman's infectious enthusiasm and childlike sense of wonder with his energetic portrayal of the scientist. He's adept even in difficult sections, such as when Feynman "speaks Italian" and "Chinese" - inventing completely made-up but accurate sounding languages. Todd does a good job of portraying Feynman's inquisitive manner and conveys the book's message and attitude with aplomb. While he sounds nothing like the late physicist (Feynman - the subject of James Gleick's *Genius* - had a thick Long Island accent and sounded more like a cross between Yogi Berra and The Honeymooners' Ed Norton), Todd's clean, polite voice is a revelation. Based on the Norton paperback. (Oct.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Richard Feynman is certainly one of the greatest minds of the 20th century. This book is a recollection on his life, stories, memorable trips, and learned lessons. I've been trying to read it for the past 30 years and only now I got to do it. It was worth it!

Nice little book about an interesting man. It uses his words and is "by him", but not really. The writing could be better and the stories are somewhat disconnected. Still I enjoyed most of it and would recommend it for a light read.

Richard Feynman was a science and mathematics prodigy and one of the great physicists of the 20th century. He worked on the atomic bomb as part of the Manhattan project and as a professor at Caltech and Cornell. He was true polymath that had a bit of an antiestablishmentarian streak and a was contrarian thinker.

This book is an honest self assessment of the humanistic psyche of a top notch physicist. Those wonderful theorist had human lives, dreams, and desires that we all have. This book takes away the impenetrable wall between equations and human behaviors and gives us a solid understanding of why scientists must methodically pursue truth and endure the full brunt of questioning attitudes. We could not have progress this far without them; we can only progress further when we don't give up on the truth.

About halfway through, have not come across the "LOL" parts yet, as some of the reviewers have mentioned. Has been an interesting read so far.

Feynman is one of my heroes in science, but I've kept away from this book for some reason. I believe it was worth the wait. His character comes crashing out of the print, full speed ahead. He wants you to like him and believe he's a mensch, but a highly gifted and slightly eccentric mensch. He succeeded. This is not a literary book. It is a conversation, with all of the self-absorption along with more than a little self-deprecation that such introspections typically bring. But, Feynman's work product continues to be a huge force in physics today and he worked with and knew many of those more publicly exposed scientists of the 20th Century. That makes the conversation worth listening to without the speaker picking up the bar tab. His science is wonderful. His morality...not so much. Reading the book, it is almost impossible not to draw comparisons between what Feynman was able to achieve under the conditions and tools available to him at that time, and the work of some of the leading public science advocates today. Feynman doesn't lose in the comparison. Lawrence Krauss recently wrote a biography on Feynman. If you are able to only purchase one of these books, I recommend Feynman's own view of himself as the starting point.

I loved this authentic satirical biography with hints of life's truths scattered throughout. The irony, of course, is the truth's that "Dick" discovers are from notional experience, and not scientific method. Much of his frustration is expressed that often "others" create beliefs and truths by discovering a result and attributing it to a prior activity. Kind of the correlation does not mean causation argument. Yet, his life experiences are shared with correlation type anecdotes, which, are meaningful, fun, and probably accurate.

Feynman was one of the best scientists, life philosophers, human beings that have ever lived.

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