



Great Feuds in Science: Ten of the Liveliest Disputes Ever

By Hal Hellman

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The dramatic stories of ten historic feuds: How they altered the course of discovery-and shaped the modern world

Hall Hellman tells the lively stories of ten of the most outrageous and intriguing disputes from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries. Bringing the cataclysmic clash of ideas and personalities to colorful life, Hellman explores both the science and the spirit of the times. Along the way, he reveals that scientific feuds are fueled not only by the purest of intellectual disagreements, but also by intransigence, ambition, jealousy, politics, faith, and the irresistible human urge to be right.

Unusual insight into the development of science . . . I was excited by this book and enthusiastically recommend it to general as well as scientific audiences. - American Scientist

Hellman has assembled a series of entertaining tales. . . . many fine examples of heady invective without parallel in our time. -Nature

An entertaining and informative account of the unusual personalities and sometimes bitter rivalries of some of the world's greatest scientific minds. - Publishers Weekly

A fascinating new book which details some of the most famous disputes of the ages.-Courier Mail

Dry science history turns into entertaining reading without sacrificing historical accuracy. -The Christchurch Press

Great Feuds in Science is wonderful history, as the reader learns how scientists had to fight with religious leaders and other scientists to get their work recognized, accepted, and even get the credit for it! -Bookviews

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Great Feuds in Science: Ten of the Liveliest Disputes Ever By Hal Hellman Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1116629 in Books
- Published on: 1999-08-20
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.23" h x .73" w x 6.15" l, .72 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 256 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

"The facts, even the theories, are history. It is the *process* that is the living science; that's what makes the activity exciting to those who practice it," science writer Hal Hellman observes. "Often, however, the process of scientific discovery is charged with emotion.... Holders of an earlier idea may not give it up gladly." Hellman describes some of the most emotional, dramatic, and personal debates in scientific history. He rounds up the usual suspects--Galileo versus the pope, Newton versus Leibniz, Cope versus Marsh, evolution versus Creation--but also includes less well known, but no less interesting, conflicts: Wallis versus Hobbes on squaring the circle, Voltaire versus Needham on embryos. And he boldly includes two conflicts in which (some) of the combatants are still alive: Don Johanson versus the Leakeys on human origins and Derek Freeman versus the ghost of Margaret Mead on Samoa. Never a dull moment. --*Mary Ellen Curtin*

From Library Journal

Ranging from Galileo vs. Pope Urban VIII to Derek Freeman vs. Margaret Mead, this compilation of great scientific feuds covers an interesting variety of personalities as well as subject matter. Proceeding in chronological order, chapter by chapter, science writer Hellman aims to show the human side of scientists, including all their petty frailties. Some of the feuds were more constructive than others; some seemed to center on personality clashes; collectively, they demonstrate that over the centuries science has shown little ability to acknowledge changing interpretations or newly calculated data without falling into conflict. Hellman certainly raises some questions on style in science, but it would have been even more worthwhile if he had tried to derive some theme from these confrontations instead of simply demonstrating that scientists can be just as human as the rest of us. For larger popular science collections. ?Hilary Burton, Lawrence Livermore National Lab., Livermore, CA
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Review

* In his book, Hellman ""reveals just how human scientists can be.""--San Diego Union-Tribune

Users Review

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Ann Gross:

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