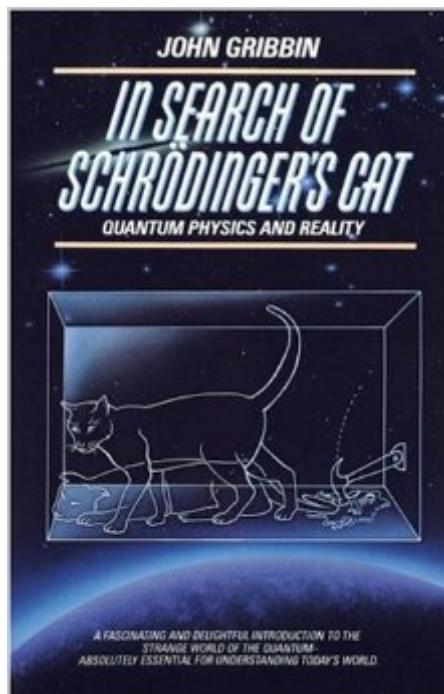


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# In Search Of Schrödinger's Cat: Quantum Physics And Reality



## Synopsis

Quantum theory is so shocking that Einstein could not bring himself to accept it. It is so important that it provides the fundamental underpinning of all modern sciences. Without it, we'd have no nuclear power or nuclear weapons, no TV, no computers, no science of molecular biology, no understanding of DNA, no genetic engineering. In Search of Schrodinger's Cat tells the complete story of quantum mechanics, a truth stranger than any fiction. John Gribbin takes us step by step into an ever more bizarre and fascinating place, requiring only that we approach it with an open mind. He introduces the scientists who developed quantum theory. He investigates the atom, radiation, time travel, the birth of the universe, superconductors and life itself. And in a world full of its own delights, mysteries and surprises, he searches for Schrodinger's Cat - a search for quantum reality - as he brings every reader to a clear understanding of the most important area of scientific study today - quantum physics. In Search of Schrodinger's Cat is a fascinating and delightful introduction to the strange world of the quantum - an essential element in understanding today's world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

PROS: 1. Good narrative style - you won't be bored. 2. Not complicated... not trivial or overly diluted either. High school Math, and Science will suffice for understanding. You'll derive more on a second read though. 3. I like how he weaves history into science and adds personality to the characters way beyond anything you'll find in a textbook. One reader said he wanted just the facts and could do without the extras. I think it's the extras that make this book appealing, approachable and

engaging. If you want just facts, get a college textbook. 4. Not too long... he spends just about the right length of time on each topic. 5. He revisits topics to shed extra light at appropriate times... he doesn't try to hammer in everything into your head all at once. 6. Gives credit to respective scientists, including stating who won what Nobel prize when. This is good as otherwise these people and their achievements would be largely unknown by people who are not academics, such as some of the readers of this book. 7. Gives an excellent sense of perspective of how things were developed or arrived at. You really appreciate that it is by collaboration and assistance that a lot has been developed. Previous to this work I hadn't heard of Dirac... everybody knows Einstein. I heard of Bohr, Rutherford, and Planck at school. But there really are other greats of the era: Heisenberg, Dirac, Pauli and Shrodinger for example. 8. Extremely well-researched and woven together. 9. Great to find out the simple origins of anti-matter. (pages 124, and 125) 10. Great to see how many things we take for granted have been derived from Quantum Mechanics...

I wrote this review before reading the sequel to this book (Schrodinger's Kittens and the Search for Reality). After reading the sequel I have an additional comment, which is included at the end of the review. This book rests somewhere between being a history book and a popular science physics text that focuses on the underlying implications of quantum theory. It introduces the history of the development of quantum mechanics and develops this physics in a general, non-mathematical, manner. In my opinion, Gribbin does a fine job in both areas. The book is very readable and very informative. It begins with the particle/wave nature of light and how attempts to explain this paradox formed the basis of modern scientific thought. From this, Gribbin introduces the notion that matter (initially electrons) also exhibit wave as well as particle characteristics. This is then used to describe Bohr's initial attempts at describing the nature of the atom. Gribbin shows how the Heisenberg uncertainty principle grew naturally out of attempts to explain the nature of an atom, as depicted by the splitting of spectral lines. The uncertainty principle is often incorrectly depicted as just an adjunct to quantum theory, not as its central idea. Gribbin shows that it is intimately tied up with the particle/wave paradox and that it is not (as it is often portrayed) just an experimental limitation. (He also shows that Heisenberg himself is responsible for this misconception because he used this analogy to try to explain the concept.) The hardcover version of this book was published in 1984, so one could justly question reading a book that is over 20 years old.

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