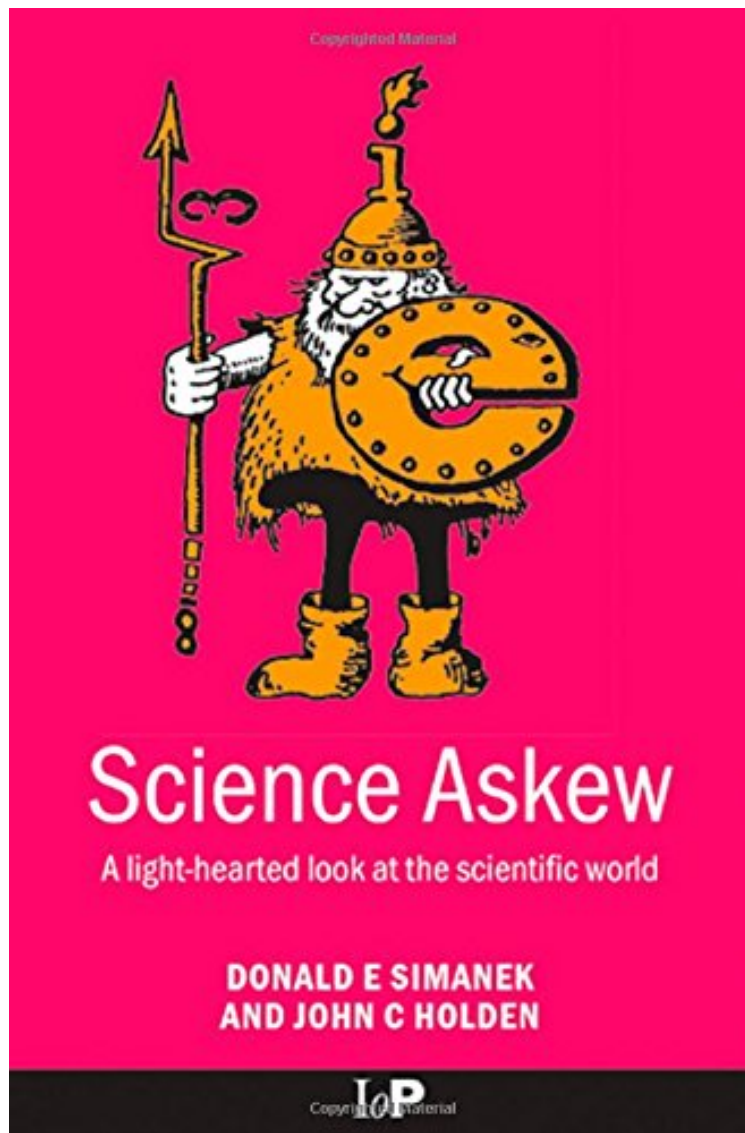


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## Science Askew: A Light-hearted Look at the Scientific World (Institute of Physics Conference Series)

*Donald E Simanek, John. Holden*

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**Donald E Simanek, John. Holden : Science Askew: A Light-hearted Look at the Scientific World (Institute of Physics Conference Series)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Science Askew: A Light-hearted Look at the Scientific World (Institute of Physics Conference Series):

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is a Science Askew companion web site that adds to the book's content. It expands on some concepts and adds new concepts. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. fantastic By SamGreat7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Witty! Clever! Splendid! By Norman Sperling I wrote and published this review in The Journal of Irreproducible Results, the science humor magazine, vol. 48 #4, November 2004: If you like JIR, you'll love Science Askew. Science satires, cartoons, puns, and parodies range from chapter-long tales down to punchy 1-liners. Among the rules of the lab: \* Experiments must be reproducible; they should fail the same way each time. \* Experience is directly proportional to equipment ruined. \* Teamwork is essential; it allows you to blame someone else. My reaction upon reading most of the articles was "we should run this item in JIR!". But we reprinted an entire chapter in the last issue, and we published 2 of the articles (by the illustrator, retired geologist John C. Holden) in the 1970s, and the whole thing is already in a nifty package - this book. From the computer expert's glossary: \* On-line: The idea that a human being should always be accessible to a computer. \* Machine-Independent Program: A program that will not run on any machine. \* Documentation: Instructions translated from Swedish by Japanese for English-speaking people. Simanek and Holden include fuel for debunking pseudoscience, and teaching students the distinctions. Ever the teacher, Simanek takes several opportunities to "talk straight" and point out legitimate science lessons. The pair of articles arguing opposing sides of the DHMO "controversy" afford chuckles, as well as stimulation for student exercises. "Di-Hydrogen Monoxide", of course, is H<sub>2</sub>O. What engineers say and what they mean by it: \* "Test results were extremely gratifying": It works, and are we ever surprised! \* "The entire concept will have to be abandoned": The only guy who understood the thing quit. \* "The designs are well within allowable limits": We just barely made it, by stretching a point or 2. Holden contributes many clever and witty illustrations. Several other authors appear too, along with some items that have circulated worldwide on the Web which could not be traced to their original authors. Some of Simanek's Laws of Statistics: \* Anyone who trusts in statistics is taking a chance. \* When 2 lines of a graph cross, that must be significant. \* Once human subjects find out what you have discovered about their behavior, they begin to behave differently. There are no important typos, and the trivial ones won't distract or confuse anyone. Among the "do-it" 1-liners: \* Professors do it absent-mindedly \* Cosmologists do it with a bang \* Logicians do it symbolically Institute of Physics Publishing produced this book extremely well. The type is clear, the illustrations crisp, and all the parts are where they ought to be, except that there is no index. The paper is very high quality. The binding is excellent, comfortable, tight, and ought to last a long time. That's essential for this book, because the owner, friends, students, visitors, and everyone else lucky enough to happen upon it will dip into it time after time. Despite excellent achievements by the authors and producers, this book has not been reviewed or advertised as much as it merits because the publisher refuses to send out many review copies, advertises very little outside its own periodicals, and discourages retailers. Science Askew belongs in academic libraries, both for amusement and to stimulate classwork. Scientists, doctors, and educators will love this book. And it makes a splendid gift for anyone with technical knowledge and a sense of - or need for - humor.

Copiously illustrated throughout with many fine drawings by John C. Holden, *Science Askew: A Light-Hearted Look at the Scientific World* is a refreshing antidote to the daily grind. From continental drip to the life of Konrad Finagle via the murky depths of Loch Ness, we are treated to an off-kilter trip through the scientific world. This pocket-sized goldmine can be produced whenever a spare minute or two presents itself, when the reader feels in need of a chuckle, or when just plain old-fashioned enlightenment is required.

"Science Askew is a very funny book, especially to mathematicians and physicists. Open it anywhere and you'll find some belly laughs not only in the text but also in the clever cartoons by John Holden. All of the classic jokes are here, as well as a thousand more you haven't heard before." Martin Gardner, mathematician "Simanek and Holden have cleverly disguised this book as an anthology of humor, while inserting gems of scientific wisdom and philosophy among the jibes. I think that science teachers can discover here subtle ways of teaching facts and principles, and improving the flavour and aroma of otherwise dull rules and discoveries. Knowledge, however lubricated or polished, is a commodity we should pursue. It need not be boring; proof of that assertion is found in 'Science Askew'." James Randi, investigator of paramormal claims "Every page is a delightful spoof. I expect to refer to it frequently." James A. Van Allen, space physicist "If harmless humour...makes you laugh, then you'll love this book by retired scientists Donald Simanek and John Holden. Their collection of nursery rhymes turned into turgid scientific prose is found amidst an array of puns, stories, jokes and quotes that the authors have brought together after a lifetime in science to show that it is not always a serious business." Matin Durrani - Physics World *e Askew* is a very funny book, especially to mathematicians and physicists. Open it anywhere and you'll find some belly laughs not only in the text but also in the clever cartoons by John Holden. All of the classic jokes are here, as well as a thousand more you haven't heard before." Martin Gardner, mathematician "Simanek and Holden have cleverly disguised this book as an anthology of humor, while inserting gems of scientific wisdom and philosophy among the jibes. I think that science teachers can discover here subtle ways of teaching facts and principles, and improving the flavour and aroma of otherwise dull rules and discoveries. Knowledge, however lubricated or polished, is a commodity we should pursue. It need not be

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