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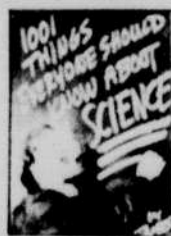
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**Science for inquiring minds**



**1,001 Things Everyone Should Know About Science**  
by  
**James Trefil**

Doubleday © 1992  
305 pages  
Hardcover price: \$20

★ ★ ★

• • • Draw it away, • • • a real disappointment.  
• • • worth the time, • • • • • a real page burner

Why don't hurricanes ever occur in Kansas? How does one rotten apple spoil the whole barrel? Where did the earth come from, or the sun?

To some, these questions are nerdy trivia. But for anyone interested in things scientific, or just curious, *1,001 Things Everyone Should Know About Science* is a good place to discover the secrets of the natural world.

At a time when scientific lit-

eracy — or any kind of literacy — seems to be dropping in this country, it's nice to have a book like this to remind us of what we should know. *1,001 Things*, written by physics professor and science writer James Trefil, does so simply and effectively, covering topics such as earth science, astronomy and classical physics. The "things" are numbered and range in length from one sentence to two or three paragraphs.

Trefil occasionally breaks in with a pop quiz question or his own theory on whatever is being discussed.

At first glance, the book appears to be another *Ripley's Believe It or Not* clone. To be honest, there are a few quirky little facts, like the fact that a species of fern is the organism with the most chromosome pairs (with 630). But the book does have important information and could conceivably be used as a study guide for any basic science course.

The book breaks down the main barrier between the general public and science: its complexity. One can't understand the significance of a super-collider without grasping the concept of elementary particles

and atomic nuclei. And with every chapter, Trefil starts at square one.

At the beginning of the chapter on molecular biology, for example, we are told that all molecules in living systems are made from six chemical elements. Trefil explains what they are and goes on from there. Two pages later, the reader is learning about amino acids and enzymes at an easy pace written in simple English.

Another of the book's pluses is the way it explains the scientific background of the most ordinary things. In the physical science chapter, for example, we learn about the scientific principles behind the distillation of whiskey, or the reason light switches are made with plastic.

Incidentally, the book says hurricanes happen only over the South Atlantic, where the storms "feed" off the warm waters. Rotting apples give off ethanol, which speeds up the ripening of adjacent apples. And the sun and earth are believed to have condensed from an ancient cloud of gas and dust.

The things you learn.

By Christopher Blair  
Emerald Editor

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**ABC anchor flirtatious, wife says**

ARLINGTON, Va. (AP) — ABC News anchorman Peter Jennings may be cool on-screen, but he's not off, he says of himself, an insight backed up by his wife and friends.

He sees himself as "very passionate, sometimes mercurial, always engaged."

He's also a flirt, says wife Kati Marton.

"Peter is very naturally flirtatious, but, as anybody with any brains realizes after five minutes, it's an exercise in having fun," Marton told *USA Weekend* for a profile to be published March 13-15. "And he loves to tell women that he finds them attractive. What harm does that do?"

"I find beauty irresistible, whether it's a woman or a piece of music or a painting," Jennings said. "I am very, very visual, and I can't not respond."

Marton said Jennings' sentimental side cropped up when he called home from Baghdad during Thanksgiving dinner in 1990. "We sang 'We Gather Together' for him, and we could hear him crying. He was somewhere on a Baghdad street, and there we were shouting into this silly telephone."

He's also tough, says ABC correspondent Barrie

Dunsmore, a friend of 30 years.

"Peter tends to steamroll people, and he's more interested in the ones he doesn't steamroll than the ones he does. What goes with Peter's great energy and curiosity is a relatively short attention span. If Kati weren't the kind of person she is, Peter would have lost interest a long time ago."

**Sutherland welcomes sun**

KEARNEY, Neb. (AP) — Former Lebanese hostage Thomas Sutherland says the sun was the last thing he saw before he was kidnapped and it's a sight he now welcomes each day with new appreciation.

Sutherland said he remembers glancing at the sun just before a bag was pulled over his head June 9, 1985.

"That was the last I saw of the sun for six years," said Sutherland, who was released last November.

Sutherland, 60, was dean of the American University of Beirut when he was kidnapped.

He spoke Tuesday at the Fort Kearney Cattleman's banquet in Kearney.

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