



Black Bodies and Quantum Cats: Tales from the Annals of Physics

Jennifer Ouellette

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Physics, once known as "natural philosophy," is the most basic science, explaining the world we live in, from the largest scale down to the very, very, *very* smallest, and our understanding of it has changed over many centuries. In *Black Bodies and Quantum Cats*, science writer Jennifer Ouellette traces key developments in the field, setting descriptions of the fundamentals of physics in their historical context as well as against a broad cultural backdrop. Newton's laws are illustrated via the film *Addams Family Values*, while *Back to the Future* demonstrates the finer points of special relativity. Poe's "The Purloined Letter" serves to illuminate the mysterious nature of neutrinos, and Jeanette Winterson's novel *Gut Symmetries* provides an elegant metaphorical framework for string theory. An enchanting and edifying read, *Black Bodies and Quantum Cats* shows that physics is not an arcane field of study but a profoundly human endeavor—and a fundamental part of our everyday world.

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