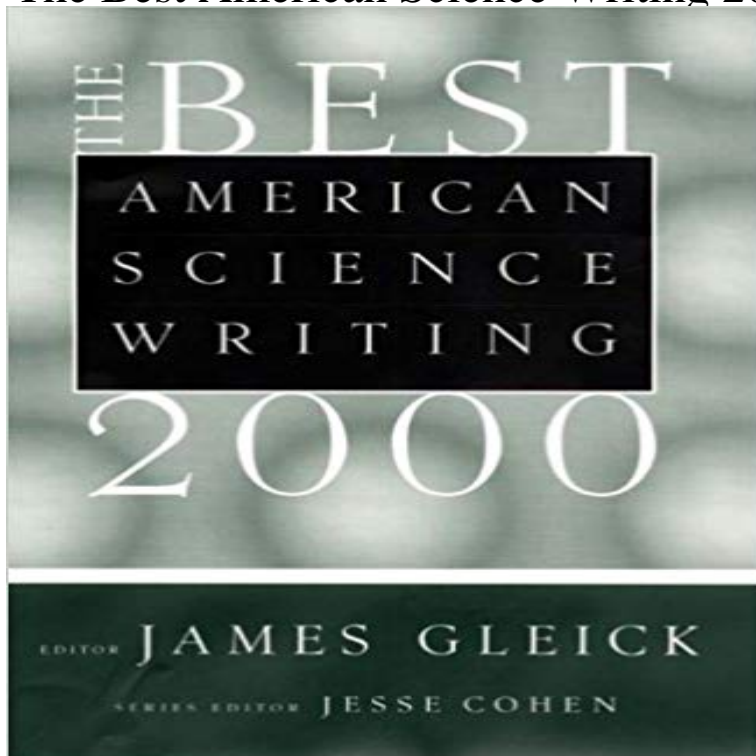


The Best American Science Writing 2000 (The Best American Series)



The first volume in this annual series of the best science writing by Americans -- meticulously selected by bestselling author James Gleick, one of our foremost chroniclers of scientific social history debuts with a stellar collection of writers and thinkers. Nobel laureate physicist Steven Weinberg bracingly challenges the idea that the universe has a designer; Pulitzer Prize winner Natalie Angier reassesses caveman (and cavewoman) couture; bestselling author and Darwinian theorist Stephen Jay Gould makes a claim for the man whose ideas Darwin discredited; mathematician and cognitive theorist Douglas R. Hofstadter explores the thought patterns that make the human mind unique; Timothy Ferris proposes a realistic alternative to warp-speed interstellar travel; neurologist and bestselling author Oliver Sacks reminisces about his first loves -- chemistry and math. The Best American Science Writing 2000 covers the full range of scientific inquiry -- from biochemistry, physics, and astronomy to genetics, evolutionary theory, cognition, and even ants. Many of these cutting-edge essays offer glimpses of new realms of discovery and thought, exploring territory that is unfamiliar to most of us or finding the unexpected in the midst of the familiar. Harvard historian Peter Galison takes us into the Bern patent office as Einstein formulates his theory of special relativity; neural scientist Denis G. Pelli shows how Chuck Close's spellbinding portraits actually overturn conventional wisdom about how we see; the young surgeon Atul Gawande exposes the split-second decision making that goes on in hospital emergency rooms around the country. As James Gleick writes in the Introduction: We need the news they're delivering. The more we read this year, the more we saw that our technocratic age requires urgent messages from the sometimes baffling, sometimes tumultuous frontier of knowledge. This

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