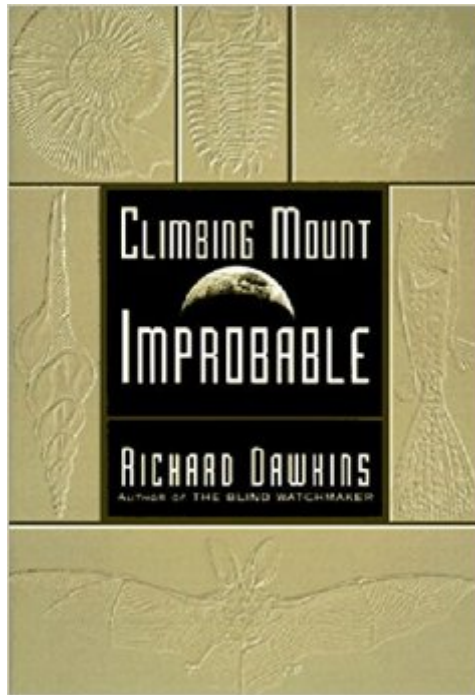


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Climbing Mount Improbable



Synopsis

A brilliant book celebrating improbability as the engine that drives life, by the acclaimed author of *The Selfish Gene* and *The Blind Watchmaker*. The human eye is so complex and works so precisely that surely, one might believe, its current shape and function must be the product of design. How could such an intricate object have come about by chance? Tackling this subject in writing that the *New York Times* called "a masterpiece" •Richard Dawkins builds a carefully reasoned and lovingly illustrated argument for evolutionary adaptation as the mechanism for life on earth. The metaphor of Mount Improbable represents the combination of perfection and improbability that is epitomized in the seemingly "designed" complexity of living things. Dawkins skillfully guides the reader on a breathtaking journey through the mountain's passes and up its many peaks to demonstrate that following the improbable path to perfection takes time. Evocative illustrations accompany Dawkins's eloquent descriptions of extraordinary adaptations such as the teeming populations of figs, the intricate silken world of spiders, and the evolution of wings on the bodies of flightless animals. And through it all runs the thread of DNA, the molecule of life, responsible for its own destiny on an unending pilgrimage through time. Climbing Mount Improbable is a book of great impact and skill, written by the most prominent Darwinian of our age.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've read two of Dawkins' books so far (*The Selfish Gene* and *The Blind Watchmaker*), and I'm starting to notice a very prevalent theme in his writing. Dawkins has two major faults. His first fault is rambling. His second fault is raving. Let me explain. Rambling: Dawkins has one point to make.

Evolution is NOT the random process creationists will have you think it is, but rather it is a process based on random mutation and NON random selection. Very well. We get it. We got that in The Selfish Gene, we got that in The Blind Watchmaker. We got that in chapter 1. We understand that's what you want to say. The entire book is dedicated to explaining this point. HOWEVER, you don't have to repeat it every 4 paragraphs. Say it once. Say it loud. Say it proud. Stop repeating it 300 times. Dawkins also has a way of sliding into rather odd and unbecoming metaphors, as if trying to explain evolution to an imbecile - the entire book and its title point to such a metaphor (the Improbable Mountain and its peaks). Raving: Okay. We understand you're trying to make a point. Now what's up with complaining on the (rather idiotic) claims the creationists make. Refute them with one paragraph, and get on with it. Now, after I got the faults out of the way now it's time to point out the good parts. Dawkins' knowledge is encyclopedic. Seriously. He goes on and shows examples from every corner of the wildlife kingdom and he does his explaining with style, elegance, and lucidity. He slides from mussels to spiders to bees to humans with ease and grace, explaining how evolution worked its way to solve problems in each and every case and pointing out the similarities between the solutions and how graceful they are.

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