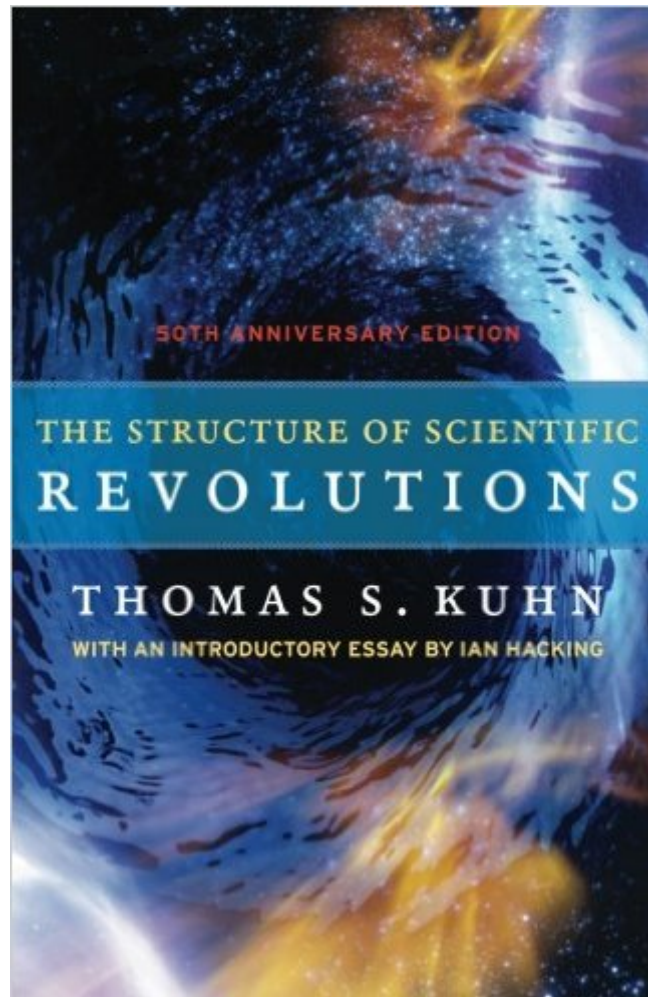


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The Structure Of Scientific Revolutions: 50th Anniversary Edition



Synopsis

A good book may have the power to change the way we see the world, but a great book actually becomes part of our daily consciousness, pervading our thinking to the point that we take it for granted, and we forget how provocative and challenging its ideas once were—and still are. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* is that kind of book. When it was first published in 1962, it was a landmark event in the history and philosophy of science. Fifty years later, it still has many lessons to teach. With *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Kuhn challenged long-standing linear notions of scientific progress, arguing that transformative ideas don't arise from the day-to-day, gradual process of experimentation and data accumulation but that the revolutions in science, those breakthrough moments that disrupt accepted thinking and offer unanticipated ideas, occur outside of "normal science," as he called it. Though Kuhn was writing when physics ruled the sciences, his ideas on how scientific revolutions bring order to the anomalies that amass over time in research experiments are still instructive in our biotech age. This new edition of Kuhn's essential work in the history of science includes an insightful introduction by Ian Hacking, which clarifies terms popularized by Kuhn, including paradigm and incommensurability, and applies Kuhn's ideas to the science of today. Usefully keyed to the separate sections of the book, Hacking's introduction provides important background information as well as a contemporary context. Newly designed, with an expanded index, this edition will be eagerly welcomed by the next generation of readers seeking to understand the history of our perspectives on science.

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Customer Reviews

First, let me state the obvious - since Kuhn is talking about the philosophy of science, this is not light reading. That said, this book is as relevant as it was when it was first published - perhaps more so. Kuhn makes a well-reasoned argument that science is not an objective search for "truth," as many people believe. Instead, "normal science" is a problem solving endeavor, solving known problems by known methods. Science only changes the rules by which it operates (its "paradigm" - that over-used and often misused term in contemporary language) only when the current paradigm causes more problems than it solves. This is the real answer to any from any field who say, "The science is settled. There is no room for discussion." Those who make that statement need to re-read Kuhn and come to grips with the reality that all knowledge is inevitably socially constructed. If you read this in graduate school, it is worth revisiting. If you have never read it and you are ready for some deep thinking, dive in. You will find your horizons expanded, and that is a good thing.

Have you ever wondered what makes one scientific experiment considered a breakthrough while others simply place more pieces into the puzzle? Thomas Kuhn's book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, now in its 50th anniversary edition, withstands the test of time in its relevance to today's world of science. In addition to popularizing the phrase "paradigm shift", this book addresses the philosophy of science by questioning the assumption that scientific discovery is a linear progression toward the truth, as history might lead you to believe. As the title suggests, this book thoughtfully presents a structure to scientific revolutions starting with an explanation of how "normal science" (versus great moments in science) operates to clarify an accepted model or pattern, which then serves to establish a paradigm. When the problem solving of normal science leads to anomalies that can no longer be explained within the established paradigm, crisis ensues. Finally, this crisis is resolved through the establishment of a new paradigm. Kuhn is clear that this structure of scientific revolutions is not a process leading toward the truth, but more of a process of evolution from "primitive beginnings." This book offers deep insight that applies beyond the field of science. You don't need to be a scientist to grasp the transformational thoughts presented by Kuhn.

I read this book almost 30 years ago and still consider it one of the most profound texts I have read. It gives genuine insight into fundamental beliefs. I still cringe when I hear TQM speakers talk about paradigm shifts. People don't change paradigms like a pair of glasses, they change them about as easily as they might change into a new set of eyes. Persons of accomplishment have gotten where they are by mastering skills that fit into their understanding of the world around themselves. Is it so difficult to understand that they would be hesitant to start looking at the world in a new way and

deny the world that gives value to their achievements. This is not a book about psychology. It is a book about the unavoidable consequences a being logical creatures. You really do need to read this book

This is a classic, influential book in the field of the philosophy of science. I read it in 1966, when it was revolutionizing our understanding of science by introducing the notion of "scientific paradigms." I'm reading it now again and getting even more out of it. I'm glad I'm getting a lot out of it because it's a hard read. Dry and with long, complex sentences that are a little too abstract for me. Fortunately, Kuhn includes a number of good examples from discoveries in physics and chemistry. Being familiar with these examples is key to helping me understand Kuhn's concepts. So, I Google the discoveries as needed. I highly recommend this book as it gives much more understanding of how scientists work and what their results mean. I wish more people had the kind of understanding of the scientific method that one gets from this book.

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