



Absolute Zero: And the Conquest of Cold

Tom Shachtman

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In a sweeping yet marvelously concise history, Tom Shachtman ushers us into a world in which scientists tease apart the all-important secrets of cold. Readers take an extraordinary trip, starting in the 1600s with an alchemist's air conditioning of Westminster Abbey and scientists' creation of thermometers. Later, while entrepreneurs sold Walden Pond ice to tropical countries -- packed in "high-tech" sawdust -- researchers pursued absolute zero and interpreted their work as romantically as did adventurers to remote regions. Today, playing with ultracold temperatures is one of the hottest frontiers in physics, with scientists creating useful particles Einstein only dreamed of. Tom Shachtman shares a great scientific adventure story and its characters' rich lives in a book that has won a grant from the prestigious Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. Absolute Zero is for everyone who loves history and science history stories, who's eager to explore Nobel Prize-winning physics today, or who has ever sighed with pleasure on encountering air conditioning.



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