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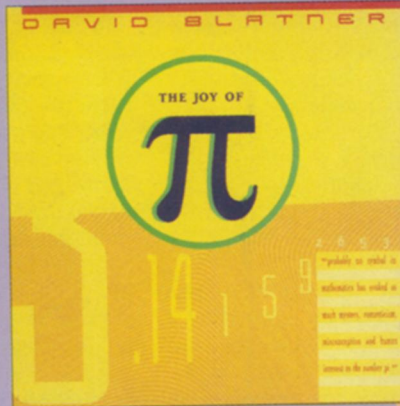
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No number has captured the attention and imagination of people throughout the ages as much as the ratio of a circle's circumference to its radius. Pi—or π , as it is known symbolically—is infinite and, in *The Joy of π* , it proves to be infinitely intriguing. With incisive historical insight and a refreshing sense of humor, David Blatner explores the many facets of pi and humankind's fascination with it—from the ancient Egyptians and Archimedes to Leonardo da Vinci and the modern-day Chudnovsky brothers, who have calculated pi to 8 billion digits with a homemade super-computer.

The Joy of π is a book of many parts. Breezy narratives recount the history of pi and the quirky stories of those obsessed with it. Sidebars document fascinating pi trivia. Dozens of



snippets and factoids reveal pi's remarkable impact over the centuries. Mnemonic devices help readers memorize pi to many hundreds of digits. Pi-inspired cartoons, poems, limericks, and jokes offer delightfully "square" pi humor. And, the first 1 million digits of pi appear throughout the book.

—Walker and Company

Walker and Company, 1997
129 pages, 6 1/2" x 6 1/2"
hardcover, \$18.00

Hiroyuki Goto
set a new world record in February 1995 by reciting pi to 42,000 places from memory. It took him just over 9 hours.

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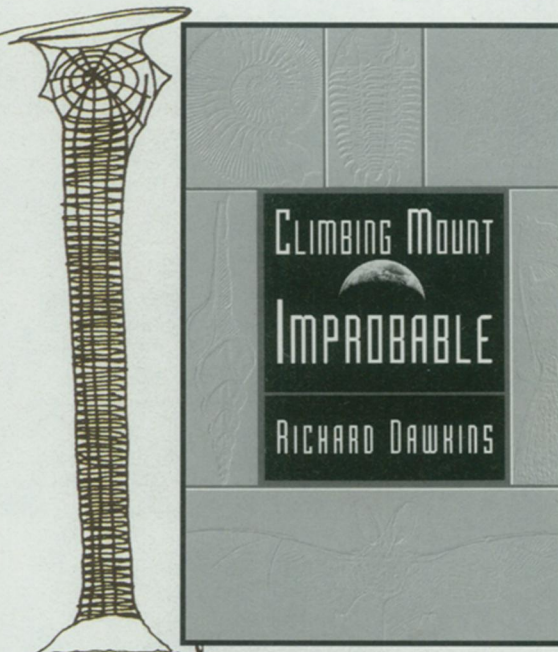
The towering cliffs of Mount Improbable can never, it seems, be climbed. In Richard Dawkins' remarkable new book, *Mount Improbable* represents the combination of perfection and improbability epitomized in the seemingly "designed" perfection of living things. From the combined strength and sensitivity of an elephant's trunk to the life-saving camouflage of an ant-mimicking beetle, the living world is populated by creatures that seem miraculously well-designed for the lives they lead.

These complex and brilliantly effective features cannot have come about by chance alone: That would be equivalent to scaling the sheer face of the mountain in a single leap. The only way to explain seemingly designed objects is through gradual evolution—inching up the gentle paths on the far side of Mount Improbable.

With Dawkins' guidance, the reader is introduced to the intricate, silken world of spiders; sees how the fig is a garden for its own teeming population of insects; and learns that the eye has evolved, independently, no fewer than 40 times. Through it all runs DNA, the molecule of life, responsible for its own destiny on an unending pilgrimage through geologic time.

In elegant and erudite prose, Dawkins imparts to his readers his passion for the endless variety and adaptability of the gene and all its works.

—from W.W. Norton



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