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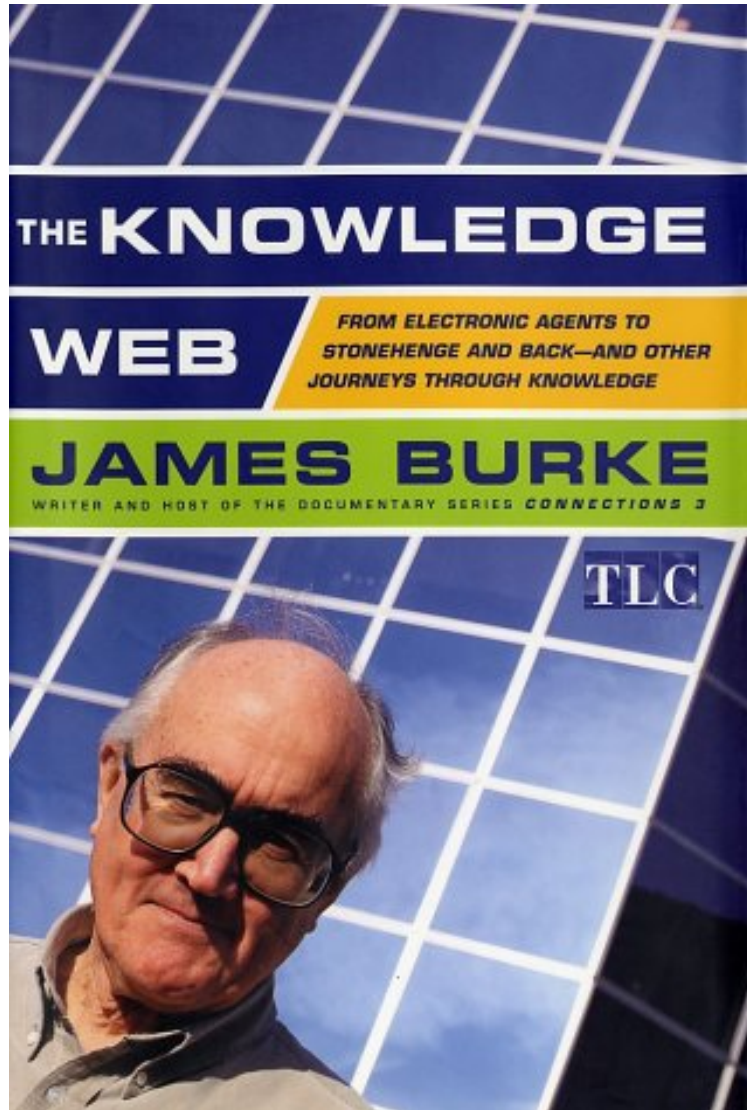


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James Burke

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(Read now) The Knowledge Web : From Electronic Agents to Stonehenge and Back -- And Other Journeys Through Knowledge

The Knowledge Web : From Electronic Agents to Stonehenge and Back -- And Other Journeys Through Knowledge

James Burke : The Knowledge Web : From Electronic Agents to Stonehenge and Back -- And Other Journeys Through Knowledge before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Knowledge Web : From Electronic Agents to Stonehenge and Back -- And Other Journeys Through Knowledge:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fantastic.By AstrotomA variation on some of Burke's other works. I own several of his books and never tire of the information and connections he sets afoot. It really depends on how

much of a Burke nut you are as to whether you will find it repetitive or fascinating (again). Burke is one of my Heroes and he can do no wrong.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good Quality ReadBy JohnThis book is a historical account of ideas and inventions. That why I bought it. Its good value. Most products which James Burke puts his name to a well worth investigatingI recommend this book.7 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Witty and challenging Burke at his bestBy Geert AnthonisIt is refreshing to find a book that lives up to its reputation. Not that you should have any doubts when the name James Burke is on the cover. Witty, interesting, intriguing, engaging and the list goes on... A good book even it even if there is no real point to it all. He but that is my opinion. I can recommend it though for a few hours of interesting reading and relaxation.

In *The Knowledge Web*, James Burke, the bestselling author and host of television's *Connections* series, takes us on a fascinating tour through the interlocking threads of knowledge running through Western history. Displaying mesmerizing flights of fancy, he shows how seemingly unrelated ideas and innovations bounce off one another, spinning a vast, interactive web on which everything is connected to everything else: Carmen leads to the theory of relativity, champagne bottling links to wallpaper design, Joan of Arc connects through vaudeville to Buffalo Bill. Illustrating his open, connective theme in the form of a journey across a web, Burke breaks down complex concepts, offering information in a manner accessible to anybody -- high school graduates and Ph.D. holders alike. The journey touches almost two hundred interlinked points in the history of knowledge, ultimately ending where it begins. At once amusing and instructing, *The Knowledge Web* heightens our awareness of our interdependence -- with one another and with the past. Only by understanding the interrelated nature of the modern world can we hope to identify complex patterns of change and direct the process of innovation to the common good.

.com How is vivisection related to Stonehenge? It might take a few leaps of history, but you'll find the answer in *The Knowledge Web*, another of science historian James Burke's compelling collections of circular narratives that have informed and inspired astute readers for years. Best known for his outstanding documentary series *Connections*, Burke has a genius for unraveling complex threads of history and sharing with us the remarkable coincidences and contingencies that built our modern world. In *The Knowledge Web* he shows us how the rapid flow of information engenders greater possibilities for the kinds of chance meetings that drive progress. Burke uses a very neat trick that both demonstrates the potential of hypertext and makes a more pleasurable reading experience. When mentioning certain key figures or events, he includes a footnote that points the reader not to the bottom of the page or the end of the book, but to another point in the text where the figure or event comes into play again. Many other writers would find this impossible to pull off, but Burke's style is perfectly suited for these jumps; if anything, his major theme of interconnectedness is driven home in a fresh new way. Whether or not you're a fan of Burke's unique style, *The Knowledge Web* will delight and amaze you with its visions of the delicacy of history and the many paths the past must take to reach the future. --Rob LightnerFrom *Publishers Weekly*Continuing in the vein of *The Pinball Effect*, his unconventional history of technological change, Burke offers 20 new historical "story lines" that attempt to demonstrate the interactive, often serendipitous connections among ideas, events, people and innovations. His style matches his subject as he skips from one topic to another, moving at the speed of hypertext. The chapter on feedback systems hops from neural networksA computers that simulate the human brain's workingsAto studies of the physiology of animal emotion, Cyrus Field's pioneering transatlantic telephone cable in 1857 and thence to Napoleon, James Watt, Arts and Crafts movement leader William Morris and Theosophist Annie Besant. Burke always risks being charged with carrying on an intellectual parlor game that trivializes the history of science and invention, of stretching the maxim "everything is interconnected" to the point of meaninglessness. But because his material is intrinsically interesting and because Burke is a superb raconteur, his maverick guide to the byways of Western civilization is entertaining when consumed in small segments. This manic, associative tour of the cultural underpinnings of technological advancement fast, sexy and packed with information; but it's ultimately shapeless and provides little in the way of deeper understanding. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.From *Library Journal*Flights of fancy from a sci-tech expert, e.g., what do Buffalo Bill Cody and the Spanish Inquisition have in common?Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.