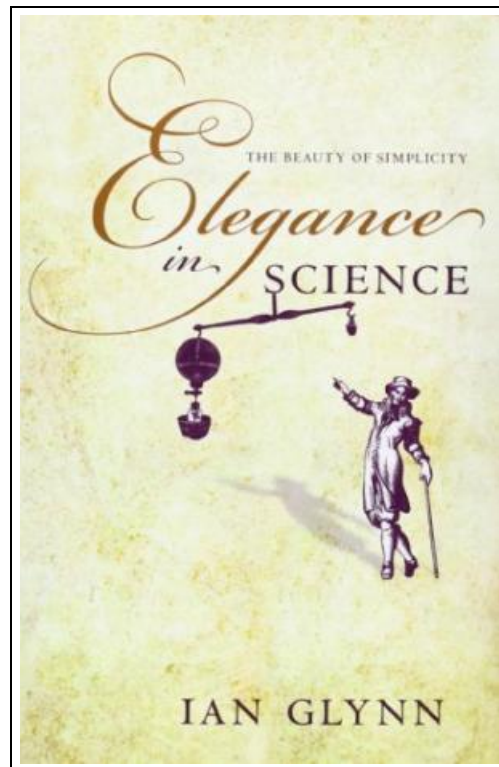


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Oxford University Press, United Kingdom, 2010. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English. Brand new Book. The idea of elegance in science is not necessarily a familiar one, but it is an important one. The use of the term is perhaps most clear-cut in mathematics - the elegant proof - and this is where Ian Glynn begins his exploration. Scientists often share a sense of admiration and excitement on hearing of an elegant solution to a problem, an elegant theory, or an elegant experiment. The idea of elegance may seem strange in a field of endeavour that prides itself in its objectivity, but only if science is regarded as a dull, dry activity of counting and measuring. It is, of course, far more than that, and elegance is a fundamental aspect of the beauty and imagination involved in scientific activity. Ian Glynn, a distinguished scientist, selects historical examples from a range of sciences to draw out the principles of science, including Kepler's Laws, the experiments that demonstrated the nature of heat, and the action of nerves, and of course the several extraordinary episodes that led to Watson and Crick's discovery of the structure of DNA. With a highly readable selection of inspiring episodes highlighting the role of beauty and simplicity in the sciences, the book also relates to important philosophical issues of inference, and Glynn ends by warning us not to rely on beauty and simplicity alone - even the most elegant explanation can be wrong.

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