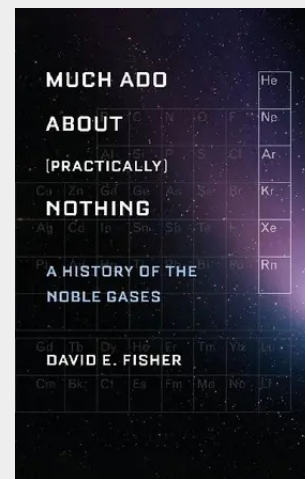


Much Ado about (Practically) Nothing

There are eight columns in the Periodic Table. The eighth column is comprised of the rare gases, so-called because they are the rarest elements on earth. They are also called the inert or noble gases because, like nobility, they do no work. They are colorless, odorless, invisible gases which do not react with anything, and were thought to be unimportant until the early 1960s. Starting in that era, David Fisher has spent roughly fifty years doing research on these gases, publishing nearly a hundred papers in the scientific journals, applying them to problems in geophysics and cosmochemistry, and learning how other scientists have utilized them to change our ideas about the universe, the sun, and our own planet. Much Ado about (Practically) Nothing will cover this spectrum of ideas, interspersed with the author's own work which will serve to introduce each gas and the important work others have done with them. The rare gases have participated in a wide range of scientific advances-even revolutions-but no book has ever recorded the entire story. Fisher will range from the intricacies of the atomic nucleus and the tiniest of elementary particles, the neutrino, to the energy source of the stars; from the age of the earth to its future energies; from life on Mars to cancer here on earth. A whole panoply that has never before been told as an entity.

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