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Sudden Genius: The Gradual Path to Creative Breakthroughs

By Andrew Robinson



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Sudden Genius: The Gradual Path to Creative Breakthroughs By Andrew Robinson

The extraordinarily inventive Linus Pauling, twice winner of the Nobel Prize, was asked how he came to have so many good ideas. Pauling replied: "Well, I have a lot of ideas and throw away the bad ones." Where do ideas come from? And why do the best ideas sometimes strike in a flash of "sudden genius"? Andrew Robinson here offers a fascinating look at the genesis of creativity in science and art, following ten remarkable individuals who achieved brilliant breakthroughs in their fields. Robinson looks first at the scientific study of creativity, covering talent, genius, intelligence, memory, dreams, the unconscious, and much more. He then tells the stories of ten amazing breakthroughs--five by scientists and five by artists--ranging from Curie's discovery of radium and Einstein's theory of special relativity to Mozart's composing of *The Marriage of Figaro* and Virginia Woolf's writing of *Mrs. Dalloway*. Robinson concludes by highlighting what highly creative people have in common; whether breakthroughs in science and art follow patterns; and whether they always involve great leaps and "sudden genius."



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Review

Robinson displays an acute sensitivity to the complexity and nuances of each topic...engrossing and often hard to put down. David R. Topper, ISIS In view of the ephemeral...nature of his subject, Robinson's calm and authority are exemplary. History Today Robinson's ten subjects display his impressive intellectual range. Peter Forbes, The Independent On the whole, this book does serve a useful purpose: it highlights the fact that creative people are complex individuals who focus on their work to the exclusion of all else. New Scientist Fascinating book...The book's real value lies in its masterly overview of various theories promulgated about the causes of genius. The Sunday Times Robinson's book ranges widely and well, and he proves himself adept at explaining complex concepts. The Sunday Times

About the Author

Andrew Robinson is the author of numerous books, including five biographies of exceptionally creative individuals in a wide range of fields.

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