

NEW BOOKS & MEDIA

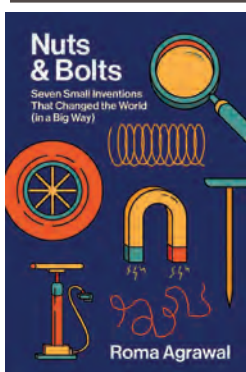
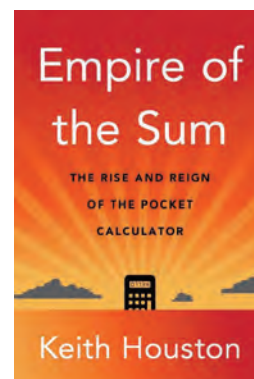
Empire of the Sum

The Rise and Reign of the Pocket Calculator

Keith Houston

W. W. Norton, 2023. \$32.50

Although the pocket calculator's heyday was brief compared with the technologies that superseded it, including the home computer and cell phone, it serves as evidence of the fast pace of technological change in the 1970s and 1980s. Author Keith Houston begins with a history of the various counting mechanisms humans have devised over the past millennia, such as the abacus and slide rule. He then dives into a discussion of some of the most important modern desktop and handheld calculating devices, including the Friden STW-10, which Katherine Johnson used to help John Glenn orbit Earth, and Texas Instruments' TI-81, which became a fixture in US high schools in the 1990s. —CC



Nuts and Bolts

Seven Small Inventions That Changed the World (in a Big Way)

Roma Agrawal

W. W. Norton, 2023. \$29.99

Named for the fundamental parts that make something work, *Nuts and Bolts* focuses on seven simple pieces of engineering—nails, wheels, springs, magnets, lenses, strings, and pumps—that have shaped the modern world. Structural engineer Roma Agrawal devotes a chapter to each, discussing its unique function, history, and uses in modern appliances, structures, and technologies. Throughout, she promotes the value of learning how to take things apart to see how they work. Once you've read this book, you'll never look at a can opener or a ballpoint pen the same way again. —CC



ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN QUANTUM INFORMATION SCIENCE

The Department of Physics at the University of South Florida, Tampa, seeks to fill a tenure-earning position in Quantum Information Science/Quantum Sensors and Quantum Computing at the Assistant Professor level. Please visit www.usf.edu/work-at-usf (Job Opening # 35198) to apply.

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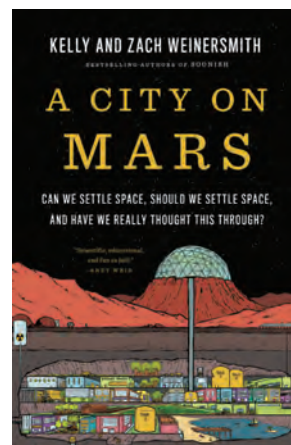
A City on Mars

Can We Settle Space, Should We Settle Space, and Have We Really Thought This Through?

Kelly Weinersmith and Zach Weinersmith

Penguin Press, 2023. \$32.00

Given what we're hearing from governmental space agencies and billionaires like Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos, one might think that humanity will soon be colonizing the Moon and Mars. In *A City on Mars*, Kelly Weinersmith and Zach Weinersmith—a behavioral ecologist and cartoonist, respectively—throw a healthy bucket of cold water on such fantasies. The Weinersmiths, self-proclaimed “space geeks,” started their project wanting to support space settlement, but they came to believe that many members of the field weren't being realistic. Chapters cover such topics as space physiology, space psychology, space law, space politics, and the sheer inhospitality of outer space and other celestial bodies. Deeply informed by current research, *A City on Mars* is a witty, accessible introduction to a topic more people should be familiar with. As they note, “Space is one more place where humans will be humans.” —RD



Titanium Noir

Nick Harkaway

Knopf, 2023. \$28.00

A futuristic take on the hard-boiled-detective novel, *Titanium Noir* centers on a consulting detective reminiscent of Sam Spade and Philip Marlowe. Cal Sounder has been called on to investigate an unusual murder: The victim, Roddy Tebbit, is a Titan—a genetically rejuvenated human—who is 91 years old and over seven feet tall. Titans are rare because the procedure is expensive, so Sounder's hunch that the murderer may also have been a Titan adds to the intrigue. Replete with the genre's requisite inner monologuing, playful banter, and femmes fatales, *Titanium Noir* follows Sounder as he is pulled into a tangled web of mad scientists and corporate intrigue. —CC 

Caltech

Faculty Position in Aerospace

The Graduate Aerospace Laboratories at the California Institute of Technology (GALCIT) invites applications for a tenure-track or tenured faculty position. We are seeking highly qualified candidates committed to a career in teaching, mentoring and research excellence in the broad area of aerospace. We have particular strategic needs in solid mechanics, reacting/high-speed flows, and autonomy/robotics for aerospace, but we are conducting a broad search spanning all areas of aerospace. It is anticipated that a successful candidate would collaborate broadly with investigators both within and beyond the Engineering and Applied Science Division, as well as in centers at Caltech including, for example, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the Center for Autonomous Systems and Technologies, the Center for Quantum Precision Measurement, and the Resnick Sustainability Institute. The appointment is contingent upon completion of the Ph.D. degree in an appropriate engineering or science related discipline.

Applications should be completed at <https://applications.caltech.edu/jobs/galcit> by **December 15, 2023**; however, the review of applications will begin immediately upon receipt.

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