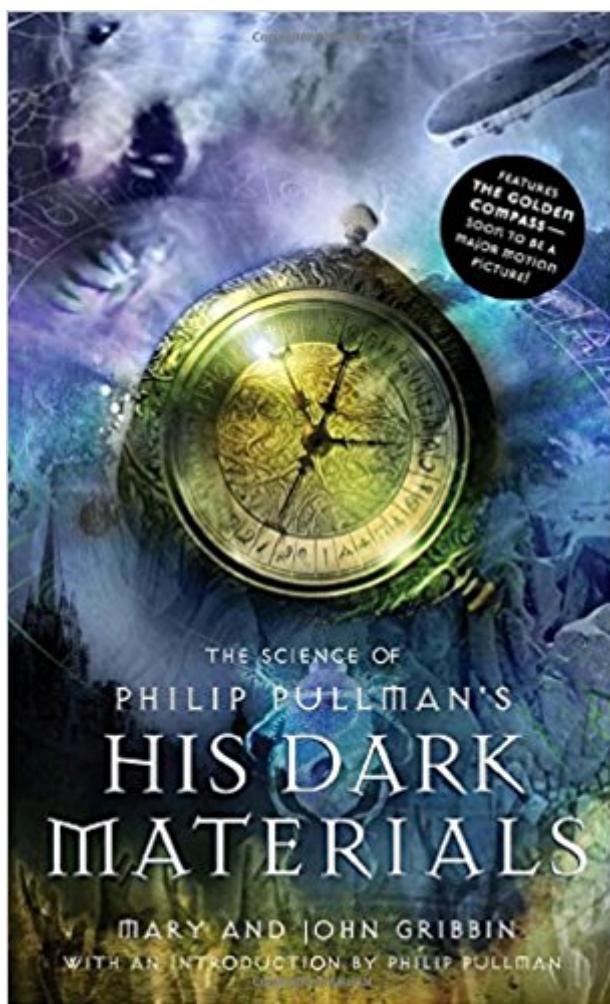


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# The Science Of Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials



## Synopsis

Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials trilogy is renowned for its mystery and magic. What's the truth behind it all? Is the golden compass actually based in science? How does the subtle knife cut through anything? Could there be a bomb like the one made with Lyra's hair? How do the Gallivespians' lodestone resonators really work? And, of course, what are the Dark Materials? Drawing on string theory and spacetime, quantum physics and chaos theory, award-winning science writers Mary and John Gribbin reveal the real science behind Philip Pullman's bestselling fantasy trilogy in entertaining and crystal-clear prose. From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 5-9 "The Gribbins are fairly successful at relating various aspects of the worlds of Pullman's series to scientific principles of our world. The discussion is less than scientific at some points. The authors relate the use of The Golden Compass to the unconscious mind and, in so doing, describe both the theories of Jung and the use of the I Ching. At other times, their science is on solid ground, even cutting edge, as in their discussion of quantum entanglement, but their comparison of this scientific principle to Will and Lyra's sharing the same Oxford park bench in different worlds is tenuous at best. The book is organized roughly by the chronology of the trilogy so readers must jump from one concept to another quite disparate idea within a few pages. Overall, though, the Gribbins introduce quite a few interesting topics ranging from cosmology to natural selection in an

understandable and readable manner. This book could be used to introduce scientifically inclined readers to Pullman's works and Pullman's fans to the wonders of science.â "Eric Norton, McMillan Memorial Library, Wisconsin Rapids, WI Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gr. 6-9. In a sometimes self-deprecating introduction, Pullman notes, "When I first read [this book], I was enormously impressed by how clever I was. Then, I . . . realized that if I'd got anything right in the first place, it was because of the work of writers like [the Gribbins], who explained these difficult ideas--and many others--with clarity and skill." And difficult ideas they are: string theory, space-time continuum, quantum physics. Noted science writers, the Gribbins show how concepts are the real magic of Pullman's trilogy. Each chapter begins with a quote drawn from the books, which leads to an elegantly written explanation of the science. ?A description of the Northern Lights, for instance, starts a discussion of "the magic of magnetism" that moves to a description of the magnetic earth, and on to a look at atoms. Some readers may say that the book veers off a true scientific path in a chapter that uses Lyra's alethiometer to launch into the world of oracles, Jung, and the I Ching (even with diagrams, the latter concept will be hard for young readers to grasp). ?And occasional statements are surprisingly oversimplified: "William Gilbert was the first scientist." Actually, the book is often at its best with complicated material. The authors do an amazing job teasing an introduction to string theory from Will's "subtle knife," even if concepts such as compactified dimensions seem unbelievable. Naturally, fans of the series will be the best audience, but the book offers much to readers simply interested in the advanced sciences, who then may be led back to His Dark Materials.^B Ilene CooperCopyright Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

You're looking for something to keep up that feeling, right? Keep looking. While attempting to do the impossible, Gribbin's work just left me with a "what?" feeling- not unlike the other attempts to revive and relive - not to mention capitalize upon the experience of a very special place.

I really enjoyed the writing and the explanations offered in this book, which break down some of the happenings in The Golden Compass into an understandable reality, such as the Subtle Knife and how it is based in the 'String Theory.' All if this is fine. The authors go awry, however, in chapter four when they decided to trash my favorite occult pastime (Tarot card reading) by declaring that an

experienced card reader can not read cards as well as Lyra naturally reads the Golden Compass. Of course she can read it well - neither SHE nor the Golden Compass exist! She's a fictional character! And the Golden Compass - based in I Ching as it were - doesn't exist either! I found this aspect and criticism to be totally unwarranted and totally out-of-place in a book that otherwise is very entertaining and informative. IMHO, that section needs to be tossed out!

The science- based theories that are compared to the Phillip Pullman Trilogy, "His Dark Materials" I found to be captivating. With the scientific explanations of dust and other details in the books, it is enjoyable and more meaningful as to why I liked these stories so much. They were more creative than I first imagined. This book explains the author's substance to his story.

For the ordinary person, this little book has pretty good coverage of the scientific basis for Pullman's trilogy. I am no expert, but from the info in the college courses I have taken with the Teaching Company, I think the writers have done well to condense so many items in a little space. It helps to understand that many of the ideas in Pullmans's fantasy have a bit of reality to them.

Broad but fascinating. I am enjoying this book!

cool.

The trilogy just stunned me and I worked at trying to understand its complexities. Then I read this book, and everything made sense. At first I declared that the trilogy was better than 'The Lord of the Rings' but could not explain why. This book nails it. It will be wonderful if you read the trilogy, read this book, and share everything with your children. Remember when 'expanding your consciousness' was all the rage? No? That's OK. All these books do it with a basis in science. Buy the darn books. Buy them for your friends.

It is a fun book using the facts of Dark Matter in a rather cavalier way that is fun and gives a great explanation for the magic/ absurdities in the Dark Matter series.i liked the book and bought is as part of a set of the dark matter trilogy that begins with The Golden Compass.

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