



My Inventions and Other Writings

Nikola Tesla

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"My Inventions and Other Writings" is a candid and illuminating autobiography of Nikola Tesla (1856-1943), one of the most important technological innovators of the modern industrial age. Famous for the radio, robotics, and wireless energy, Tesla quickly gained international notoriety for his pioneering inventions as much for his eccentric life. Perhaps no one in his day more thoroughly embodied the archetype of the "mad scientist". This firsthand account reveals the fascinating interior life of a genius. In it we see a prodigious man musing over the Tesla coil, magnifying transmitter, transformer, and the rotating magnetic field. Written by the brilliant inventor himself, "My Inventions and Other Writings" is a fascinating window into the principles and practices of Tesla's singular world. Tesla's public rivalry with Thomas Edison, with whom he worked early on, fueled his celebrity. Here we witness the art and science behind the conception, execution, and reception of Tesla's most fame inventions. "My Inventions" is a classic with appeal to Tesla fans, science buffs, and historians alike.

My Inventions and Other Writings Details

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Bipin says

The current educational system is teaching what to think instead of how to think. We set boundaries upon ourselves without even asking why. Reading this book made me question that.

Reading this nearly 100-year-old book (98 years, actually) changed my view about certain things which the current generation takes for granted.

Autobiography of this scintillating inventor who owns 700 patents is . . . I wouldn't say inspiring. Despite his inventions and their impact on the modern society, his name is known to a handful, unlike the household name of Edison. He died in a hotel room where he spent most of his last days, with debts. It's depressing to some extent. But it encourages us to think crazy, beyond boundaries.

The book tells you about his passion for science and innovation. It tells you about the out of box thinking of Tesla, which may, at times, seem spectacularly absurd. Some topics are quite unfathomable for me. (I don't have a degree in electrical engineering.) But others were fascinating.

He doesn't shy away from telling his worst experiences and failures. He even talked about philosophy, the concept of Karma, even though he didn't use that term.

He was too ahead of his time. He predicted many things in the book, which would have seemed utterly ridiculous to his contemporaries. But some of those ideas have been realized and used extensively in the current world. So, who's to say that the rest won't be realized in future?

In Tesla's words: "The scientific man does not aim at an immediate result. He does not expect that his advanced ideas will be readily taken up. His work is like that of a planter - for the future. His duty is to lay the foundation for those who are to come, and point the way."

Lily says

Fascinating, bewildering, and brilliant all at once. Full review here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rfq44...>

Rohit Rai says

A really inspiring life he had. In some ways, he did have strong gifts from nature. But, there's still enough to inspire; like the desire to be resourceful, the immense concentration, keenness in finding new problems, the desperate devotion to achieve success in solving the problems that come up.

When I ordered it, I had intended to kick myself into a lifestyle of active work, from the grumpy inertia I was in.

Still grumpy I am to some extent.

Amber says

"My Inventions" is a semi-autobiographical series of articles that were published in an electronics hobby magazine in 1919, wherein Tesla relates bewildering personal anecdotes about the strange things he experienced as a child he believes were formative for many of his inspirations, alongside more commonplace life events and explanations of how his inventions came to fruition.

The other writings are three short essays: In the first, he precipitates the advent of widespread military AI (killer robots) and morbidly descends upon the problem of ending warfare once and for all through WMDS and how no nation would voluntarily use a weapon so deadly and despicable so as not to tarnish their reputation (he was wrong on that point). He postulates how the eye really uses light in the second. In the final essay, the longest of the three, he tackles the problem of humanity's pressing need to tap into alternative energy sources, and I wish I could say more than that because it sounds really interesting, but frankly, I have no idea what the fuck he's talking about.

Tesla writes in an easy and unaffected manner, as though he were granting you a casual interview. He isn't trying to convince you of his own greatness -- his extraordinary abilities are apparent -- but you'll understand him much better if you have an above-average understanding of electronics. The words "genius" and "visionary" are applied liberally to famous people, but in Tesla's case, they are appropriate.

Abdulrahman Kauther says

The book is very difficult to follow, and the "Other Writings" is extremely boring.

R.W. Patterson says

Nikola Tesla was a visionary, inventor, writer, and more...I'm fascinated by his mind, and his passion for creating. Really enjoyed reading this book. Definitely inspiring, but I do wish his achievements would've been more recognized.

Joanna says

Im Nachwort zu „Die letzten Tage der Nacht“ von Graham Moore erwähnte der Autor, welche Lektüre er für seine Recherche verwendet hat und welche Titel er interessierten Lesern empfiehlt. Darunter war auch dieses Buch von Tesla, das sozusagen als seine Autobiographie gilt.

Eine Autobiographie von Tesla? Muss ich lesen.

Auf dem Rückentext steht eine Warnung von Kevin Kelly, wer bei gesundem Verstand bleiben wolle, sollte dieses Buch nicht lesen. Zum Glück kann ich nicht weiter geschädigt werden und stürzte mich in mein ganz persönliches Tesla-Abenteuer.

Nein, ich ging nicht davon aus, dass ich etwas verstehen würde, wenn Tesla von seinen Erfindungen berichtet.

In Physik bin ich ständig grossartig durchgefallen und hier reden wir vom Jahrhundertgenie Tesla. Wenn er in seinem Werk von „einfachen Zusammenhängen“ spricht, wusste ich schon zwei Seiten zuvor nicht mehr, worum es ging.

Aber mehr als die Erfindungen selbst interessierte mich der Mensch Nikola Tesla. Seine Art, sein Denken. Deshalb wollte ich dieses Buch so dringend lesen. Und es war es wert! Immer wieder berichtet Tesla von Erfahrungen, die er als Kind oder Jugendlicher gemacht hat, die für seine späteren Arbeiten prägend waren.

Dabei streift Tesla auch andere Bereiche der Wissenschaft, lässt sich über Geister aus und berichtet davon, dass er die Lösung für alle Kriege hätte (dieser Text liess mich leicht verängstigt zurück) und blickt schon weit, weit in die Zukunft. Die Lektüre von „My Inventions“ belegt, dass Tesla seiner Zeit weit voraus war. So berichtet er z.B. bereits damals von Drohnen und kabellosen Telefonen, wobei das Telefon eben erst erfunden worden ist.

Diese Texte waren es, die mir Tesla näher gebracht haben. Sobald er sich wieder in seinen Berichten über Maschinen ergibt, gab ich mir zwar Mühe, aber das war dann doch zu viel für mich. Lustigerweise sass eine Kollegin im Physikunterricht, während ich mich mit Herrn Tesla beschäftigte, und auf ihr Klagen über die Schwierigkeit des Unterrichts, schickte ich ihr einen Auszug aus dem Buch. Ich glaube, das hat sie etwas getröstet. Oder verwirrt.

Für mich hat sich die Lektüre gelohnt und meine Bewunderung für Nikola Tesla ist noch weiter gewachsen. Ich lege „My Inventions“ jedem ans Herz, der Tesla auf eine andere, neue Art und Weise kennenlernen möchte. Diese Teile sind es allemal wert sich mit Abschnitten wie diesem auseinanderzusetzen:

"(...) another partly frictional and partly negative force R , acting in a direction exactly opposite, and retarding the movement of the mass. (...) In accordance with the preceding, the human energy will then be given by the product $\frac{1}{2} MV^2 = \frac{1}{2} MV \times V$, in which M is the total mass of man in the ordinary interpretation of the term "mass", and V is a certain hypothetical velocity (...)"

Brook says

If you haven't heard of him before, you will never forget him after reading this collection of his writings, inventions, thoughts and process. A humanitarian, creator and persona of immense presence and prescience this work gives you a view of history and the world seldom seen. Peppered with names and inventions that changed life for mankind in the early 20th Century, Nikola Tesla imagined life in the 21st. Read it.

Alex Sarll says

Nowadays, we're mostly familiar with the Tesla basics - archetypal mad scientist, ripped off by the charlatans Edison and Marconi, and A Bit Odd. But reading his own writings is still a revelation, in that however smart and however odd you think he is, you're barely halfway there. You know in a film or comic, where someone supersmart is shown accomplishing astonishing physical feats through lightning-quick calculation of the physics of a situation? Tesla could do that, and turn in mid-air like a cat at age 59. The concluding essay here, 'The Problem of Increasing Human Energy', is at once a massively ahead-of-its-time plea for renewable energy, and a bonkers tract of mechanical mysticism which wouldn't be out of place as a

tract for the insane cult of Gordelpus in Stapledon's *Last and First Men*. At times (the obsolescence of copper in a world which has mastered aluminium), he's flat-out wrong, and he's one of the long line of techno-utopians who thought new inventions would bring world peace - yet you can't help wondering if, with Tesla at the helm, they might have done.

Oh, and apparently his brother, who died when they were very young, was considered the smart one. Now there's an alternate reality I'd love to visit...

Matt Jarvis says

A fascinating read. I found it best not to try and understand every detail, and he certainly makes some giant leaps of imagination but you can feel Tesla's passion in the colour of his anecdotes and explanations. His curiosity is infectious! I read this in a single sitting I was so engaged and I will visit it again.

Jim George says

The author compiled a lot of Tesla's essays from The Electrical Experimenter magazine to piece meal together a short autobiography. I found it fascinating that Tesla experienced flashing lights in his brain that caused him to be able to look at things in 3D, he could see them not just imagine them - he could both construct and operate them in his mind. Not just ideas, but words triggered his brain to enable him to see the objects as 3 dimensional pictures. Tesla holds the patent for and is credited for designing the 1st radio, even though Marconi has his name in the History books. He also is responsible for our modern day electrical system of alternating current. A system that caused him quite a bit of grief from his rival Thomas Edison. His ideas are so tripped out and 100s of years ahead of his time. In one of his essays he goes on and on about producing a machine to fight our wars, a machine that possesses intelligence, a machine with the ability to make decisions, and think. Yes, a robot with a mind! Tesla often referred to himself as an Automaton (robot). Not a great read, but scientifically interesting.

Bookdragon Sean says

“Of all things, I liked books best.”

Tesla was a bit of an enigma. He clearly operated in a way that most men couldn't handle. He spent so much of his time alone, detached from society and all others; yet, he created some incredible things that altered civilisation as we know it.

This quote here sums up much of his dealings with people:

The real tragedy of his life and work is that so few people know of his enduring legacy. And he seems so removed from his time. His ideas were brilliant and innovative, and there were probably very few people he could discuss them with. He saw the world in ways most people wouldn't imagine. He had crazy visions for the future. Imagine if he was alive today. The things he could accomplish with the tech we now have would be astonishing. Reading his words made me realise how unique an individual he was.

"I do not think there is any thrill that can go through the human heart like that felt by the inventor as he sees some creation of the brain unfolding to success . . . Such emotions make a man forget food, sleep, friends, love, everything."

He describes the way his mind works with powerful clarity. And if anyone else were writing it I would doubt their sanity. He never used blueprints or models to project his ideas, instead preferring to perfect his inventions in his mind until he turned them into reality, which is, in itself, an astonishing feat. He was also an environmentalist and feared for the future, a future where we had exploited and extinguished all our natural resources.

However, the surface level of his prose is not the most engaging. His writing has no real flare or energy; his ideas do, but his words do not convey them with any particular passion. And that's a real shame. He clearly wasn't any sort of orator or the type who could sway with the power of language. He put all his stock into what he could actually show people. He was serious, persistent and determined and that all comes through here.

As such it's an interesting read, and certainly a bit of a curiosity, though it is a little bit of a slog even for a short book.

Paul Korir says

This is the first book I've read that is incomplete-by-design: it refers to figures that are not present in the text. I wonder what the publisher had in mind.

While I deeply admire Tesla, this book is eminently unreadable. I think it's a collector's item to be used more as a reference work than a book to be read from cover to cover. I say this because it reads like a personal diary; there's no continuity, no story.

Nevertheless, it offers a wonderful insight into Tesla's mind, how he regarded his achievements and his eccentricities. It also shows how Tesla was way ahead of his time. I take it that deep understanding of a subject gives one powerful abilities of prediction. Some parts of the book read as 'familiar' because of how precise Tesla saw into our time and beyond.

Edward says

Introduction

A Note on the Text

--My Inventions

--Tesla Would Pour Lightning from Airships to Consume Foe

--The Action of the Eye

--The Problem of Increasing Human Energy: With Special Reference to the Harnessing of the Sun's Energy

Ruze says

Known as an inventor, Tesla was truly an astonishing thinker, so far ahead of his time as to be almost too advanced in his own mind frame. Great read.
