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Explaining Today's Physics Through History and Biography

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Quantum computers, string theory, holographic universes—to the general audience, today's physics can be as mystifying as it is fascinating. But modern ideas evolved from an earlier phase of physics—Newtonian mechanics, simple cause and effect—that is in principle easier for the non-expert to grasp. I have found that writing about physics from a historical and biographical perspective is an effective way to convey modern thinking by explaining where it comes from—it is a way of carrying the reader from concepts that make intuitive sense to ideas that seem, on first encounter, utterly bizarre. Smuggling explanations into stories satisfies the reader's desire for narrative—bearing in mind that narrative can include the evolution of ideas as well as tales about intriguing and original people.