



# Eureka: How Invention Happens

By Gavin Weightman

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**Eureka: How Invention Happens** By Gavin Weightman

**This witty and inspiring book chronicles the long history of discovery and ingenuity which gave rise to a “eureka moment” when a dream of invention became a reality for the first time**

Tracing the long pre-history of five twentieth-century inventions which have transformed our lives, Gavin Weightman reveals a fantastic cast of scientists and inspired amateurs whose ingenuity has given us the airplane, television, bar code, personal computer, and mobile phone. Not one of these inventions can be attributed to a lone genius who experiences a moment of inspiration. Nearly all innovations exist in the imagination before they are finally made to work by the hard graft of inventors who draw on the discoveries of others.

While the discoveries of scientists have provided vital knowledge which has made innovation possible, it is a revelation of Weightman’s study that it is more often than not the amateur who enjoys the “eureka moment” when an invention works for the first time. Filled with fascinating stories of struggle, rivalry, and the ingenuity of both famous inventors and hundreds of forgotten people, Weightman’s captivating work is a triumph of storytelling that offers a fresh take on the making of our modern world.

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## Editorial Review

### Review

“Smart technology history that's as fun and readable as it is seriously informative.”—*Kirkus Reviews*  
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‘...the book is sweetly written, carried along by unobtrusive good humour, a deep intuition for the history of ideas and a liberal salting of steam-punk esoterica.’—Oliver Moody, *the Times*.

(Oliver Moody *The Times* 2015-08-01)

“*Eureka* is an informative look at the nature of invention and, equally important, it is an entertaining, well-written and accessible account full of wonderful stories, colorful characters and little-known events, bringing a fresh perspective and appreciation for technologies that many now take for granted.”—*Shelf Awareness*  
(*Shelf Awareness*)

“An excellent book for those interested in the early history of flight, television, computers, or cell phones.”—*Library Journal*  
(*Library Journal*)

### About the Author

**Gavin Weightman** is a journalist, historian, and former documentary filmmaker. He has published more than twenty books, including *The Frozen Water Trade: A True Story* and *Children of the Light: How Electricity Changed Britain Forever*. He lives in London.

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