



## Newton: Ackroyd's Brief Lives

*Peter Ackroyd*

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## **Newton: Ackroyd's Brief Lives** Peter Ackroyd

When Newton was not yet twenty-five years old, he formulated calculus, hit upon the idea of gravity, and discovered that white light was made up of all the colors of the spectrum. By 1678, Newton designed a telescope to study the movement of the planets and published *Principia*, a milestone in the history of science, which set forth his famous laws of motion and universal gravitation. Newton's long-time research on calculus, finally made public in 1704, triggered a heated controversy as European scientists accused him of plagiarizing the work of the German scientist Gottfried Leibniz.

In this third volume in the acclaimed Ackroyd's Brief Lives series, bestselling author Peter Ackroyd provides an engaging portrait of Isaac Newton, illuminating what we think we know about him and describing his seminal contributions to science and mathematics.

A man of wide and eclectic interests, Newton blurred the borders between natural philosophy and speculation: he was as passionate about astrology as astronomy and dabbled in alchemy, while his religious faith was never undermined by his determination to interpret a modern universe as a mathematical universe.

By brining vividly to life a somewhat puritanical man whose desire to experiment and explore bordered on the obsessive, Peter Ackroyd demonstrates the unique brilliance of Newton's perceptions, which changed our understanding of the world.

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