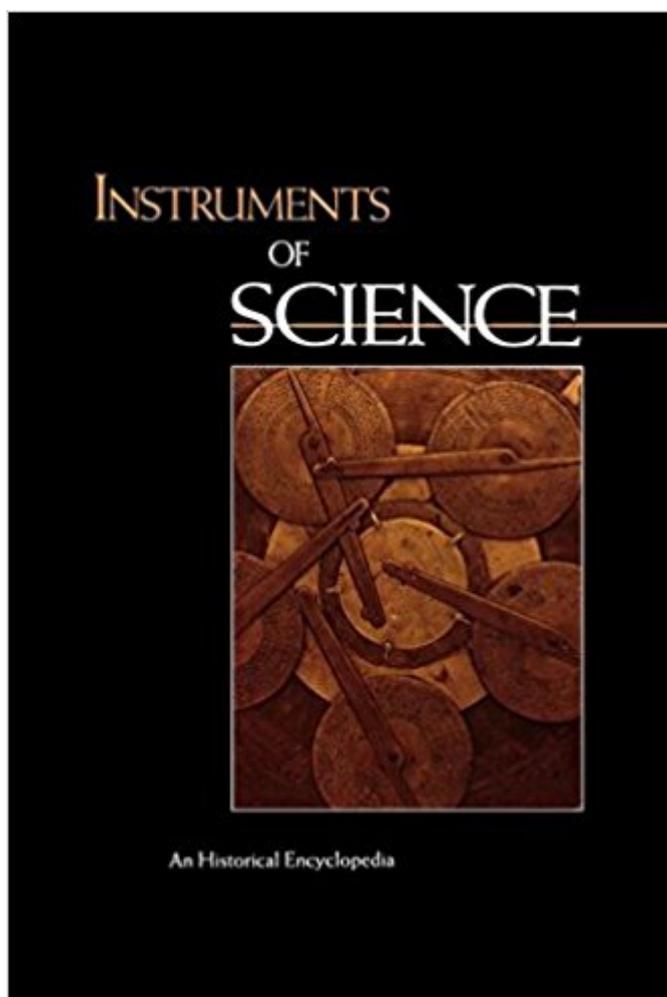


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Instruments Of Science: An Historical Encyclopedia (Garland Encyclopedias In The History Of Science)



Synopsis

This authoritative reference covers 325 scientific instruments ranging from antiquity to the present, and from the mundane to the highly sophisticated. Entries explain how they work and trace their invention, development, distribution and use. Fully illustrated and complete with bibliographies, it will be particularly useful to students and scholars of modern science and technology. Reflecting contemporary practice, it examines instruments used for testing and monitoring, as well as those used for research, and even considers a number of widely used laboratory organisms (such as drosophila and e.coli) as instruments.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One has to celebrate the publication of a book like this, because of the scarcity of the information available on this subject. The book is relatively big (709 p.), more expensive than big (\$150) and of course has quite an amount of interesting information. But it is probably as important to highlight its shortcomings, which show how much remains to be done. I do not pretend to do a general review, for which I am not qualified and that is quite impossible in a work of encyclopedic pretense like this one. I will restrain my commentary mainly to the treatment of the field of electricity and magnetism, which I suppose has its importance in scientific instrumentation and does not lack in amount and variety of instruments by itself. Its reflection in this book is very unfair and inadequate, in my opinion. All the entries that begin with "Electricity-Electrostatic" span a mere 20 pages, 7 of which are

dedicated to medical applications (electrocardiograph, electroencephalograph, electromyograph and electroretinograph, to be precise). One will search in vain, on the contrary, for any mention to the electron tube, or valve, or thermionic device. The totality of what the editors and the authors have to say about radio waves and related topics is included under the clumsy entry of "Radio Wave Detector". Here the whole history of electromagnetism and of radio is dispatched in little more than one page, including all its apparatuses and "science". In this egregious page one finds the only mention I have been able to locate to the "thermionic diode" and the "triode", but not one reference to galena or silicon or germanium. Coils, resistors, resonance, oscillators or quartz crystals are not even mentioned per se.

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