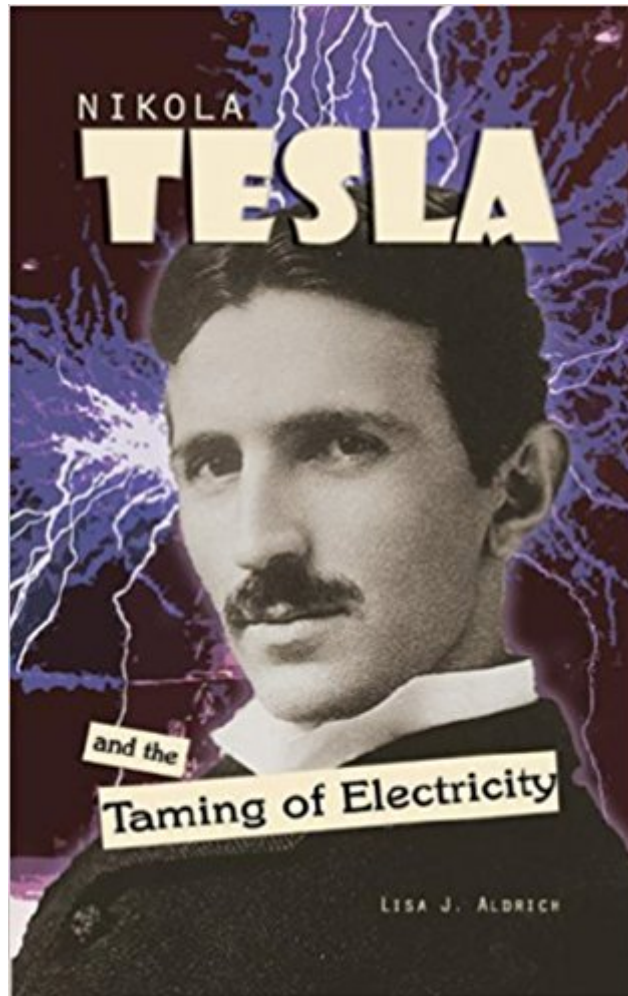




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Nikola Tesla And The Taming Of Electricity



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Customer Reviews

Grade 5-9—Beginning with her subject's boyhood in Croatia, Aldrich makes good use of the drama in the scientist's life to craft a very readable story. She covers his great inventions, such as early remote controls, radio, and alternating current equipment, technology that forms the basis for all electrical service in the world today. Although at one point Tesla was owed millions by Westinghouse, he voided the contract when the company was in financial trouble and died a pauper. Few know that after his death, the Supreme Court revoked the patent for radio given to Marconi and awarded it to Tesla instead. Readers learn about the genius's quirky personality and unusual obsessions, such as his fascination with pigeons and his abhorrence of germs. Some passages read like pulp science fiction, as Tesla works at creating a death ray, states that he has received communications from Mars, and describes beams of light coming from the eyes of a pigeon. The text includes numerous quotes and is supported by insets that explain some of the electrical-engineering concepts. Period photographs, diagrams from Tesla's notebooks, and similar illustrative materials appear throughout. A brief list of Web sites about the inventor, his longtime rival Thomas Edison, and the U.S. Patent Office is appended. A solidly researched and interesting biography.

—Eric Norton, McMillan Memorial Library, Wisconsin Rapids, WI Copyright © 2005 Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Gr. 8-11. Born in rural Croatia in 1854 and educated as an engineer, Tesla moved to America as a young man and spent his life experimenting and inventing new ways to generate, transport, and use electricity. Often unlucky or unwise in trusting other inventors as well as businessmen in the electrical industry, Tesla enjoyed wealth based on his many patents, yet he died a poor and increasingly eccentric old man. He may not have the name recognition of Marconi, yet according to Aldrich's well-researched account, Marconi actually stole several of Tesla's patented ideas in designing his radio. Aldrich writes involving of Tesla's life, while using sidebars to carry information on related topics such as alternating and direct current, the patent system, and Tesla's dream of wireless power. The photos and diagrams are numerous, but oddly (and not particularly attractively) tinged with purple. Back matter includes a time line, source notes for quotes, and lists of books and Internet sites. Carolyn Phelan Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

12 y/o son is fascinated with Tesla. He loves anything Tesla he can get his hands/eyes on.

Nikola Tesla was one of the unsung heroes of the early days of electricity. A contemporary of and sometimes associate of Edison, he held a great many pivotal patents in the area. Largely ignored during his lifetime, many of his inventions were used by other companies (Westinghouse, Edison, GE, Marconi) without acknowledgement or payment to Tesla. As a result Tesla died alone and broke. Eight months after his death the Supreme Court reviewed his earlier radio patents and ruled that he had indeed been the basic inventor of radio, not Marconi as is still commonly believed. Tesla is also remembered as a "way out" thinker. He worked for years on the transmission of power through the air rather than using wires - it didn't work. He was trying to build a death ray, the papers of which are held in a classified library at a U.S. defense research agency and are accessible only to members of the intelligence community - no one knows why they remain so closely guarded sixty years later. Tesla is a person who should be remembered better. This book is a welcome addition to the bookshelf.

Excellent book, would highly recommend. I find the other review to be completely off, I'm sure the research and fact-finding was done while this book was being prepared-- there are always differences on how history can be interpreted, and I appreciate this perspective.

Being one of Tesla's great admirers because he enlightened 20th century and helped all mankind to get rid of hard work (machines now doing lots of work thanks to Tesla), I don't think this grossly

inaccurate book makes him or us readers any favors. Factual error on almost every page is really little bit too much - so much that it becomes great fun to read and laugh if only it is not so sad that someone can actually produce such a book. In conclusion tragicomic, pity that it involves Tesla as he and his great work does not deserve such a cheap and illiterate approach. Maybe the author should try with some other characters where accuracy is not so important, like Donald Duck for example.

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