

The Writings of Simon Winchester

Scientists say that there are millions of stars in our galaxy, and that there are millions of galaxies in our universe. They tell us that ours may be only one among a multitude of universes that 'float' around in space like a bunch of gigantic soap bubbles. They've given us a *We'll get back to you* while they straighten out the String and M theories, and search for the Higgs boson. So, until their next dramatic announcement, we're left to ponder such questions as: Where do we come from? Are we alone in the universe? What's the fate of our warming planet?

And read captivating books by authors like Simon Winchester. British born, raised in London, and educated as a geologist at Oxford, Winchester, at one time or another, has been an author, a journalist, a broadcaster, and a foreign correspondent. Early on he was a freelance writer who contributed to such periodicals as *Harper's* and the *Smithsonian*, and was heard frequently on the BBC radio program, *From Our Own Correspondent*. On Independence Day, 2011, he assumed American citizenship. Now, in his 'spare time,' he writes, and produces television films on a variety of historical topics.

Winchester's the author of a novel and several non-fictional books. They include: *The Map That Changed the World* (about 19th-century geologist William Smith); *The River at the Center of the World* (China's Yangtze); *The Professor and the Madman* (who together created the Oxford dictionary in the late 19th century); *A Crack in the Edge of the World: America and the Great California Earthquake of 1906* (describes plate tectonics, the San Andreas fault, and the city of San Francisco prior to the quake), and *The Men Who United The States* (discusses several of the explorers and inventors – and a few of the crackpots – who stitched our country together). His geologic bent is seen in most of them; all are thoroughly researched and smoothly written. Many are award-winning. In 2006 Queen Elizabeth II made him an Officer in the Order of the British Empire for his many contributions to literature. After raising their four children in New York city, Simon Winchester and his wife settled on a farm in the Berkshires of western Massachusetts.

Essay by Bill Lounsbery

*KRL has these books by Simon Winchester & many more ...
e.g. Krakatoa: The Day the World Exploded*

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