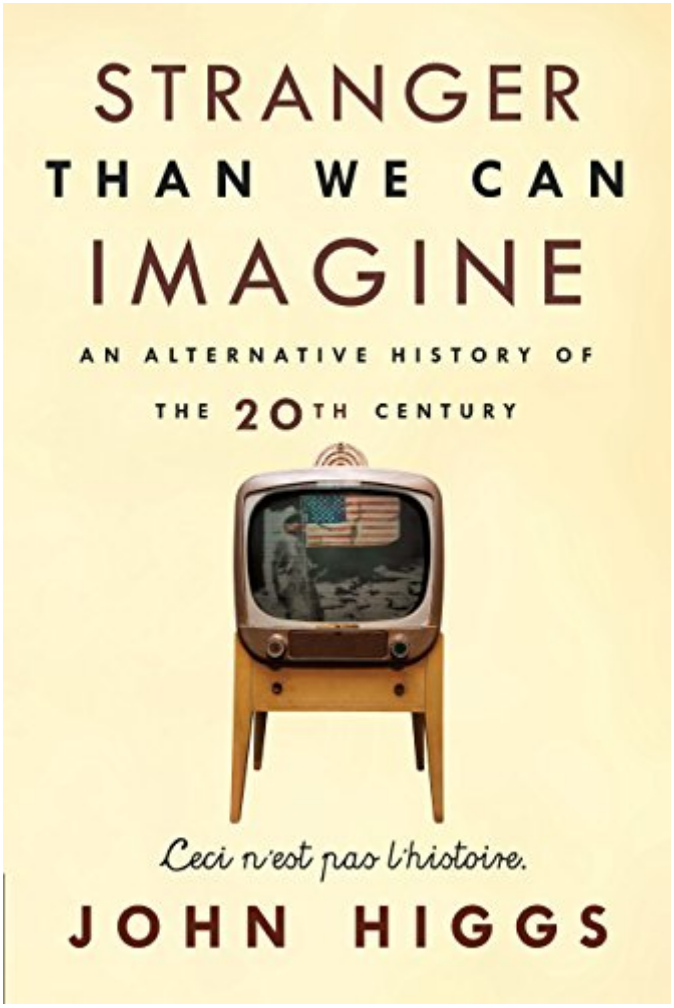
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Stranger Than We Can Imagine: Making Sense Of The Twentieth Century



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Synopsis

In Stranger Than We Can Imagine, John Higgs argues that before 1900, history seemed to make sense. We can understand innovations like electricity, agriculture and democracy. The twentieth century, in contrast, gave us relativity, cubism, quantum mechanics, the id, existentialism, Stalin, psychedelics, chaos mathematics, climate change and postmodernism. In order to understand such a disorienting barrage of unfamiliar and knotty ideas, Higgs shows us, we need to shift the framework of our interpretation and view these concepts within the context of a new kind of historical narrative. Instead of looking at it as another step forward in a stable path, we need to look at the twentieth century as a chaotic seismic shift, upending all linear narratives.Higgs invites us along as he journeys across a century “about which we know too muchÃ¢â ¬Â• in order to grant us a new perspective on it. He brings a refreshingly non-academic, eclectic and infectiously energetic approach to his subjects as well as a unique ability to explain how complex ideas connect and intersect—whether heÃ¢â ¬â„¢s discussing EinsteinÃ¢â ¬â„¢s theories of relativity, the Beat poets' interest in Eastern thought or the bright spots and pitfalls of the American Dream.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Well written, readable and thought provoking book with a vague nondescript title. The scope defies a short synopsis. I enjoyed it and found it hard to put down.The core concept behind EinsteinÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Theory of Relativity is that there was no single perspective that can be considered correct or true. Our knowledge of our subject is dependent on the perspective we take. John Higgs extends that thought to the explain the changes seen in the 20th century in art, politics, psychology, philosophy, quantum mechanics, physics, politics, culture, the internet and a bit more.

Thought provokingAny reader will find points to ponder especially the comparison between popular musicModernisnPost moderismAnd more

Omphalos is my new word gained from this book...well executed thesis....mix of new hybrid philosophy and derived perspectives from history

As a history lover this book is a gem and lots of fun!

For me this was a new take on the history of the 20th Century making many interesting connections between events and intellectual advances that were new and novel.

The 20th century was arguably one of the strangest and most bewildering in recorded human history. It is also the one about which we know the most and yet which nevertheless remains almost impossible to understand.In "Stranger Than We Can Imagine: Making Sense of the Twentieth Century", British author, John Higgs, delivers a superbly enlightening review of the significant paradigm shifts that occurred during the 100 years since 1901, connecting seemingly disparate developments -- such as physicists' theories of relativity and quantum mechanics, the emergence of modernism and post-modernism in the arts, the rise of feminism and sexual equality, half a century of warfare culminating in the arrival of the nuclear age, our increasing dependence on technology, and the establishment of the internet -- in ways that demonstrate a thread of continuity across almost all fields of human endeavour over this period. From the mish-mash of seemingly unrelated and inexplicably bizarre events that triggered some of the most rapid changes to the global human condition -- and which now seems to threaten our continuing existence -- emerges a coherent thread of causality, which shines a light of meaning upon the overarching whole and renders the nonsensical (even for those who lived through the times) entirely comprehensible. And it's even an

easy, entertaining and enjoyable read.Highly recommended.

Fantastic book filled with interesting facts all weaved into engaging storytelling. This was a pageturner and I can’t wait to jump into it again.

An original approach to understand XX century events that enlight XXI social behaviour. As a bonus track is also funny and well written.Excellent reading.

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