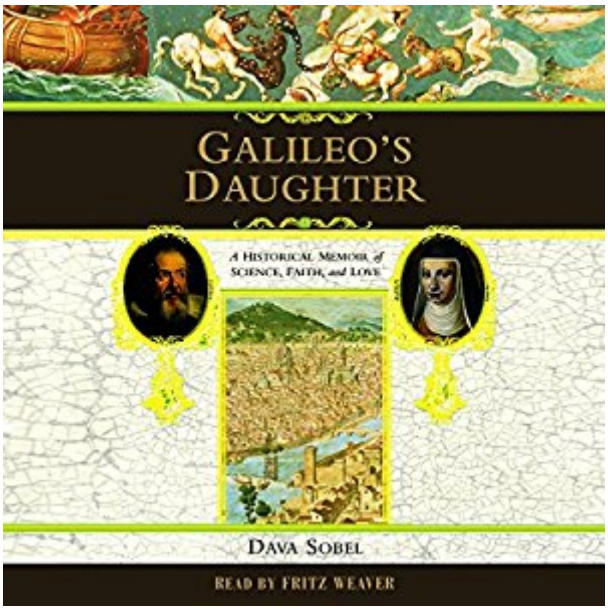
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# Galileo's Daughter




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## Synopsis

Inspired by a long fascination with Galileo, and by the remarkable surviving letters of his daughter Maria Celeste, a cloistered nun, Dava Sobel has crafted a biography that dramatically recolors the personality and accomplishments of a mythic figure whose early-seventeenth-century clash with Catholic doctrine continues to define the schism between science and religion-the man Albert Einstein called "the father of modern physics-indeed of modern science altogether." It is also a stunning portrait of Galileo's daughter, a person hitherto lost to history, described by her father as "a woman of exquisite mind, singular goodness, and most tenderly attached to me."Moving between Galileo's grand public life and Maria Celeste's sequestered world, Sobel illuminates the Florence of the Medicis and the papal court in Rome during the pivotal era when humanity's perception of its place in the cosmos was about to be overturned. During that same time, while the bubonic plague wreaked its terrible devastation and the Thirty Years' War tipped fortunes across Europe, Galileo sought to reconcile the Heaven he revered as a good Catholic with the heavens he revealed through his telescope. Filled with human drama and scientific adventure, Galileo's Daughter is an unforgettable story.Praise for Galileo's Daughter : "[Sobel] shows herself a virtuoso at encapsulating the history and the politics of science. Her descriptions of Galileo's ideas...are pithy, vivid, and intelligible."-Wall Street Journal  --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

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## Customer Reviews

Dava Sobel's extraordinarily readable biography of Galileo is as much a portrait of the mind of a

genius as it is a tapestry of Renaissance Italy. What infuses this masterful book with life, however, are the quirky, intelligent letters written to him by his daughter. Cloistered in a convent from the time she was a young girl, Suor Maria Celeste's loving correspondence to her father reveals the human side of Galileo. But the scope of Sobel's book encompasses more than the sum of its parts - in the final analysis, we are treated to the inner workings of a surprisingly "modern" approach to science (not least of which was the concept of a sun centered planetary system) in the face of malevolent censorship by the Catholic church. When Galileo is condemned of heresy, Sobel's book illuminates the political machinations behind the church's case, so that we understand the motivations (some of them nasty and personal) that fueled the fire. More importantly, we feel for the all too frail Galileo, under house arrest in the twilight of his life, and cheer when the centuries finally celebrate the genius that he was. I won't spoil the ending for you, but it is a genuinely moving surprise. Brava Dava Sobel!

This book is a life of Galileo as told from his letters to and from his daughter, Maria Celeste. A reading of this book enables one to really appreciate Phil Glass' Opera: "Galileo, Galilei" which is currently being presented by the Cincinnati Opera Company. The book is so well done that it reads almost like a novel and at times brings one to tears when one considers the injustices both Galileo and Maria Celeste had to endure. I recommend this book highly....a great read.

It is amazing how great this man's mind was, and the obstacles he had to overcome to bring reason around his scientific discoveries. The author helps you understand how difficult it was to prove his theories, and how the church weilded complete authority over everything, including scientific therories versus religious belief. A better understanding of the political power of the church during this period Is portrayed clearly.

I read this book when it came out and loved it. For some reason, though, I decided to read it again recently. I found the second read much more enjoyable than the first one.This book contains so much information on Galileo, his work, and daily life during the time. The way Sobel weaves in the daughter's letters is amazing. She brings in the church and convent life. Of course, the church plays a big role as Galileo ages.I love this book. It was well worth reading a second time. Sobel is a great writer and has the ability to give us the love between father and daughter.This book is doubly wonderful if you've visited Florence, Tuscany, Venice or Rome. Those areas play a big role in the book. If you have an interest in science then the book is even richer. Love it!!

The literary work, Galileo's Daughter, is a historical account of correspondence between Galileo Galilei and one of his children, Suor Maria Celeste. While the book starts out reading like a history book, it quickly becomes an interesting look at a topic most everyone is familiar with - the study of the heavenly bodies. Suor Maria Celeste is one of Galileo's two daughters who joined a convent at a very young age. During her years at the Convent of San Matteo, she wrote extensively to her father of her life while eagerly awaiting the letters from Galileo. Galileo would write to her of his discoveries and trials. Galileo had the audacity and courage to challenge the prevailing thought of the age that the earth was the center of the universe. He agreed with Copernicus that in fact it was the sun that held that role. The church thought his study to be heretical and condemned his discoveries. However, when his friend, Cardinal Barberini became Pope Urban he was given more opportunity in pursuing his thoughts about the sun centered universe. He believed that these truths would only glorify the Word and deeds of God. I thought that one of the most interesting statements in the book was "Who better than Galileo to propound the most stunning reversal in perception ever to have jarred intelligent thought. We are not the center of the universe" (Sobel 153). I would strongly recommend this book to anyone who has any interest in learning a new and deeper analysis of Galileo's studies and I am looking forward to Dava Sobel's next literary work.

I've had so much enjoyment reading this very well written book, it's almost sad to be done with it. First, Dava Sobel truly does an immense amount of research into her story outline before she writes. Their is well woven bit of information in all the characters speech . It all works to lend the correct time and place to the book. Gallo is seen working on his projects such as grinding the telescope glass because he has always been fascinated by the sun. His list of discoveries is very long. We see his daughters play a large role in how and why his decisions are made.

This wonderful read is best experienced in concert with, and after, Sobel's "A More Perfect Heaven." The latter chronicles the life of Nicolaus Copernicus, his life, theories, and the ordeal of publishing his work, accomplished only at his death. The last part of "Heaven" and all of "Galileos's Daughter," deal with the great scientific-religious conflict of the day in a most interesting way, when the telescope brings "focus" to Copernicus' work, which, had been largely ignored apart from the scientific community until proof of his theories started to appear. Both books offer an intimate look at the life and times of two titans of intellect. They also offer a perspective of similar scientific-religious debates of today, such as the "new Earth" debate. If you buy one, buy both!

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