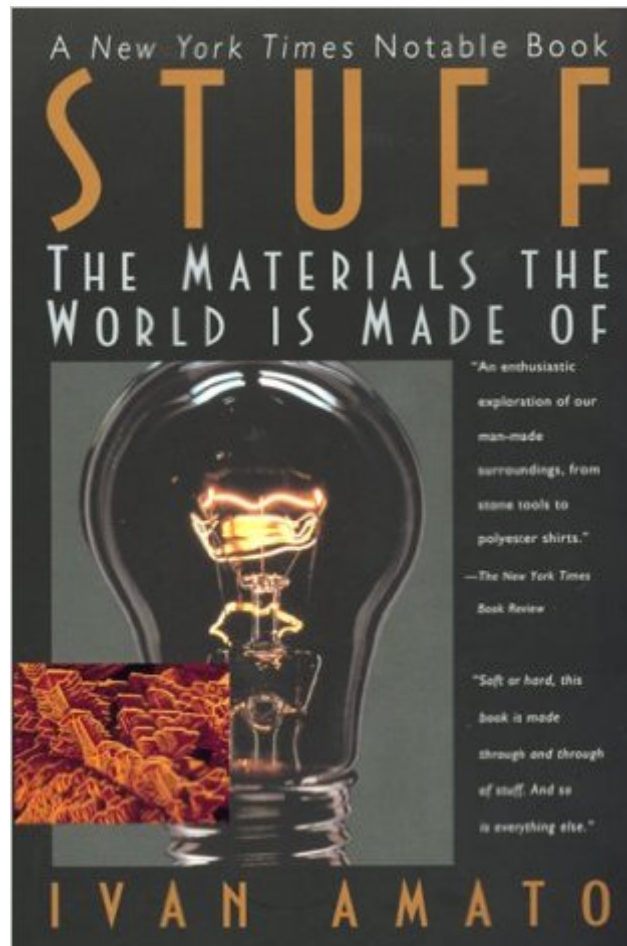


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# Stuff: Materials World



## Synopsis

The way our world is, how it got there and where it's going, is a direct result of the stuff we make other stuff out of: the metals, composites, ceramics, plastics and semi-conductors found in every man-made thing around us. From antique china to airplanes, transistor radios and supercomputers--from the Stone Age to the Electronics Age and far beyond--science writer Ivan Amato takes on a remarkable journey through a breathtaking universe of enlightenment and challenge; revealing the secrets, exploring the astounding histories, introducing us to the genius personalities behind the discoveries, and unveiling the glorious future and possibilities of STUFF.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (7 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #954,866 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in [Books > Science & Math > Experiments, Instruments & Measurement > Electron Microscopes & Microscopy](#) #67 in [Books > Science & Math > Experiments, Instruments & Measurement > Microscopes & Microscopy](#) #179 in [Books > Science & Math > Earth Sciences > Mineralogy](#)

## Customer Reviews

Optimistic, easy-to-read, this charming history of the effect of new materials on society is filled with brilliant analogies. From the ceramics and bronze of prehistoric times through iron, steel, aluminum, polymers, transistors, silicon microchips and solid-state lasers, using personal interviews and a number of diagrams, Amato takes the reader on a joyful tour of what became Materials Science. This fount of good (but not excellent) explanations of many things is marred by a number of technical errors, and a Green Party stance on all of the current environmental issues. These flaws drag down what would have been a 5-star rating to 3 stars. The generally delicious writing style is marred by some problems with transitive verbs and a few slang expressions that may be hard to translate. Citation of sources is adequate. ...

Ivan Amato's *Stuff: The Materials the World is Made of* is a good, workmanlike history and description of "materials science." Basically, materials science involves the fashioning of one material of nature into another; Amato imagines the first "materials scientist" as the caveman breaking rocks to make the first tools. Modern materials science, of course, is focused much more on atomic and sub-atomic levels, and Amato does a good job describing the state of the art today. Much of his writing is a bit "gee whiz", both over-written and over-enthusiastic for my tastes. He writes clearly and in a well-organized fashion, and I learned a fair amount from this book.

There's nothing terribly wrong with this book, but unfortunately it came out at about the same time as Phillip Ball's vastly superior *Made to Measure*, which covered the same ground, at least as regards technology. Mr. Amato must be one of the few people on Earth who can be so awestruck by a technical conference -- he devotes at least an entire chapter to the thrill and wonder of a Materials Research Society meeting, which is, well, just a technical conference.

He manages to explain complicated things in a way me and you can understand them, and he makes you even more interested in the subjects he covers.

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