

Librería
Bonilla y Asociados
desde 1950



Título: Disappearing Spoon

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Precio: \$240.00

Editorial:

Año: 2010

Tema:

Edición: 1^a

Sinopsis

ISBN: 9780316051637

Why did Gandhi hate iodine (I, 53)? How did radium (Ra, 88) nearly ruin Marie Curie's reputation? And why is gallium (Ga, 31) the go-to element for laboratory pranksters?*

The Periodic Table is a crowning scientific achievement, but it's also a treasure trove of adventure, betrayal, and obsession. These fascinating tales follow every element on the table as they play out their parts in human history, and in the lives of the (frequently) mad scientists who discovered them. *THE DISAPPEARING SPOON* masterfully fuses science with the classic lore of invention, investigation, and discovery--from the Big Bang through the end of time.

*Though solid at room temperature, gallium is a moldable metal that melts at 84 degrees Fahrenheit. A classic science prank is to mold gallium spoons, serve them with tea, and watch guests recoil as their utensils disappear.