



**"Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman!"':  
Adventures of a Curious Character: Adventures of  
a Curious Character**



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# **"Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman!": Adventures of a Curious Character: Adventures of a Curious Character**

*Richard P. Feynman, Ralph Leighton*

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Kurzbeschreibung

A *New York Times* bestseller—the outrageous exploits of one of this century's greatest scientific minds and a legendary American original.

Richard Feynman, winner of the Nobel Prize in physics, thrived on outrageous adventures. Here he recounts in his inimitable voice his experience trading ideas on atomic physics with Einstein and Bohr and ideas on gambling with Nick the Greek; cracking the uncrackable safes guarding the most deeply held nuclear secrets; accompanying a ballet on his bongo drums; painting a naked female toreador. In short, here is Feynman's life in all its eccentric—a combustible mixture of high intelligence, unlimited curiosity, and raging chutzpah.

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A series of anecdotes, such as are included in *Surely You're Joking, Mr Feynman*, shouldn't by rights add up to an autobiography, but that's just one of the many pieces of received wisdom that Nobel Prize-winning physicist Richard Feynman (1918-88) cheerfully ignores in this engagingly eccentric book. Fiercely independent (read the chapter entitled "Judging Books by Their Covers"), intolerant of stupidity even when it comes packaged as high intellectualism (check out "Is Electricity Fire?"), unafraid to offend (see "You Just Ask Them?"), Feynman informs by entertaining. It's possible to enjoy *Surely You're Joking, Mr Feynman*, a bestseller ever since its initial publication in 1985, simply as a bunch of hilarious yarns with the author as know-it-all hero. At some point, however, attentive readers realise that underneath all the merriment simmers a running commentary on what constitutes authentic knowledge: learning by understanding, not by rote; refusal to give up on seemingly insoluble problems, and total disrespect for fancy ideas that have no grounding in the real world. Feynman himself had all these qualities in spades, and they come through with vigour and verve in his no-bull prose. No wonder his students--and readers around the world--adored him.

--Wendy Smith Amazon.co.uk

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