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In Empires of Light, historian Jill Jonnes portrays this extraordinary trio and their riveting and ruthless world of cutting-edge science, invention, intrigue, money, death, and hard-eyed Wall Street millionaires. At the heart of the story are Thomas Alva Edison, the nation's most famous and folksy inventor, creator of the incandescent light bulb and mastermind of the world's first direct current electrical light networks; the Serbian wizard of invention Nikola Tesla, elegant, highly ...

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Empires of Light | Jill Jonnes

In the final decades of the nineteenth century, three brilliant and visionary titans of America ' s Gilded Age—Thomas Edison, Nikola Tesla, and George Westinghouse—battled bitterly as each vied to create a vast and powerful electrical empire. In *Empires of Light*, historian Jill Jonnes portrays this extraordinary trio and their riveting and ruthless world of cutting-edge scie

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A riveting chronicle of scientific history recounts the race among three great titans of the Gilded Age--inventor Thomas Alva Edison, creator of the incandescent light bulb; eccentric genius Nikola Tesla; and George Westinghouse, a tough entrepreneur and powerful empire builder--to bring electricity to the world. Reader's Guide available. Reprint. 17,500 first printing.

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The gripping history of electricity and how the fateful collision of Thomas Edison, Nikola Tesla, and George Westinghouse left the world utterly transformed. In the final decades of the nineteenth century, three brilliant and visionary titans of America's Gilded Age—Thomas Edison, Nikola Tesla, and George Westinghouse—battled bitterly as each vied to create a vast and powerful electrical empire. In *Empires of Light*, historian Jill Jonnes portrays this extraordinary trio and their riveting and ruthless world of cutting-edge science, invention, intrigue, money, death, and hard-eyed Wall Street millionaires. At the heart of the story are Thomas Alva Edison, the nation's most famous and folksy inventor, creator of the incandescent light bulb and mastermind of the world's first direct current electrical light networks; the Serbian wizard of invention Nikola Tesla, elegant, highly eccentric, a dreamer who revolutionized the generation and delivery of electricity; and the charismatic George Westinghouse, Pittsburgh inventor and tough corporate entrepreneur, an industrial idealist who in the era of gaslight imagined a world powered by cheap and plentiful electricity and worked heart and soul to create it. Edison struggled to introduce his radical new direct current (DC) technology into the hurly-burly of New York City as Tesla and Westinghouse challenged his dominance with their alternating current (AC), thus setting the stage for one of the eeriest feuds in American corporate history, the War of the Electric Currents. The battlegrounds: Wall Street, the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, Niagara Falls, and, finally, the death chamber—Jonnes takes us on the tense walk down a prison hallway and into the sunlit room where William Kemmler, convicted ax murderer, became the first man to die in the electric chair.

A riveting chronicle of scientific history recounts the race among three great titans of the Gilded Age--inventor Thomas Alva Edison, creator of the incandescent light bulb; eccentric genius Nikola Tesla; and George Westinghouse, a tough entrepreneur and powerful empire builder--to bring electricity to the world. Reader's Guide available.

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The story of the world-famous monument and the extraordinary world 's fair that introduced it, by the author of *Conquering Gotham* and *Urban Forests* In this first general history of the Eiffel Tower in English, Jill Jonnes-acclaimed author of *Conquering Gotham*-offers an eye- opening look not only at the construction of one of the modern world's most iconic structures, but also the epochal event that surrounded its arrival as a wonder of the world. In this marvelously entertaining portrait of Belle Époque France, fear and loathing over Eiffel's brash design share the spotlight with the celebrities that made the 1889 Exposition Universelle an event to remember-including Buffalo Bill and his sharpshooter Annie Oakley, Thomas Edison, and artists Whistler, Gauguin, and van Gogh. Eiffel's Tower is a richly textured portrait of an era at the dawn of modernity, reveling in the limitless promise of the future.

In the early 1880s, only a few wealthy city dwellers enjoyed electric lighting in their homes. Everyone else had to make due with dirtier and more dangerous lighting technology, such as kerosene lanterns and gas lamps. Eager companies wanted to be among the first to supply electric power to more Americans. The early providers would set the standards—and they would reap great profits. Inventor Thomas Edison already had a leading role in the industry: he had invented the first reliable electrical light bulb. By 1882, his Edison Electric Light Company was distributing electricity using a system called direct current, or DC. But an inventor named Nikola Tesla challenged Edison. Tesla believed that an alternating current—or AC—system would be better. With an AC system, one power station could deliver electricity across many miles, compared to only about one mile for DC. Each inventor had his backers. Business tycoon George Westinghouse put his money behind Tesla and built AC power stations. Meanwhile, Edison and his DC backers said that AC was dangerous. They said that AC could easily electrocute people, so it

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should power the newly invented electric chair. Edison believed this negative association would sway public opinion toward DC power. The battle over which system would become standard became known as the War of the Currents. This exciting book tells the story of that war, the people who fought it, and the ways in which both kinds of electric power changed the world.

AC/DC tells the little-known story of how Thomas Edison wrongly bet in the fierce war between supporters of alternating current and direct current. The savagery of this electrical battle can hardly be imagined today. The showdown between AC and DC began as a rather straightforward conflict between technical standards, a battle of competing methods to deliver essentially the same product, electricity. But the skirmish soon metastasized into something bigger and darker. In the AC/DC battle, the worst aspects of human nature somehow got caught up in the wires; a silent, deadly flow of arrogance, vanity, and cruelty. Following the path of least resistance, the war of currents soon settled around that most primal of human emotions: fear. AC/DC serves as an object lesson in bad business strategy and poor decision making. Edison's inability to see his mistake was a key factor in his loss of control over the "operating system" for his future inventions?not to mention the company he founded, General Electric.

The spellbinding true account of the scientific competition to light the world with electricity. In the mid-to-late-nineteenth century, a burgeoning science called electricity promised to shine new light on a rousing nation. Inventive and ambitious minds were hard at work. Soon that spark was fanned, and a fiery war was under way to be the first to light—and run—the world with electricity. Thomas Alva Edison, the inventor of direct current (DC), engaged in a brutal battle with Nikola Tesla and George Westinghouse, the inventors of alternating current (AC). There would be no ties in this race—only a winner and a loser. The prize: a nationwide monopoly in electric current. Brimming with action, suspense, and rich historical and

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biographical information about these brilliant inventors, here is the rousing account of one of the world ' s defining scientific competitions. A Christy Ottaviano Book

“ Superb. [A] first-rate narrative ” (The Wall Street Journal) about the controversial construction of New York ' s beloved original Penn Station and its tunnels, from the author of Eiffel's Tower and Urban Forests As bestselling books like Ron Chernow's Titan and David McCullough's The Great Bridge affirm, readers are fascinated with the grand personalities and schemes that populated New York at the close of the nineteenth century. Conquering Gotham re- creates the riveting struggle waged by the great Pennsylvania Railroad to build Penn Station and the monumental system of tunnels that would connect water-bound Manhattan to the rest of the continent by rail. Historian Jill Jonnes tells a ravishing tale of snarling plutocrats, engineering feats, and backroom politicking packed with the most colorful figures of Gilded Age New York. Conquering Gotham will be featured in an upcoming episode of PBS's American Experience.

"Nature's largest and longest-lived creations, trees play an extraordinarily important role in our cityscapes, living landmarks that define space, cool the air, soothe our psyches, and connect us to nature and our past. Today, four fifths of Americans live in or near cities, surrounded by millions of trees, urban forests containing hundreds of species. Despite the ubiquity and familiarity of those trees, most of us take them for granted and know little of their specific natural history or civic virtues. Jill Jonnes's Urban Forests is a passionate, wide-ranging, and fascinating natural history of the tree in American cities over the course of the past two centuries. Jonnes's survey ranges from early sponsors for the Urban Tree Movement to the fascinating stories of particular species (including Washington, DC's famed cherry trees, and the American chestnut and elm, and the diseases that almost destroyed them) to the institution of Arbor Day to the most recent generation of tree evangelists who are identifying the best species to

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populate our cities' leafy canopies. The book examines such questions as the character of American urban forests and the effect that tree-rich landscaping might have on commerce, crime, and human well-being. As we wrestle with how to repair the damage we have wrought on nature and how to slow climate change, urban forests offer an obvious, low-tech solution. (In 2006, U.S. Forest Service scientist Greg McPherson and his colleagues calculated that New York City's 592,000 street trees annually saved \$28 million in energy costs through shading and cooling, or \$47.63 per tree.)"--Amazon.com.

A sweeping history of the electric light revolution and the birth of modern America The late nineteenth century was a period of explosive technological creativity, but more than any other invention, Thomas Edison ' s incandescent light bulb marked the arrival of modernity, transforming its inventor into a mythic figure and avatar of an era. In *The Age of Edison*, award-winning author and historian Ernest Freeberg weaves a narrative that reaches from Coney Island and Broadway to the tiniest towns of rural America, tracing the progress of electric light through the reactions of everyone who saw it and capturing the wonder Edison ' s invention inspired. It is a quintessentially American story of ingenuity, ambition, and possibility in which the greater forces of progress and change are made by one of our most humble and ubiquitous objects.

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