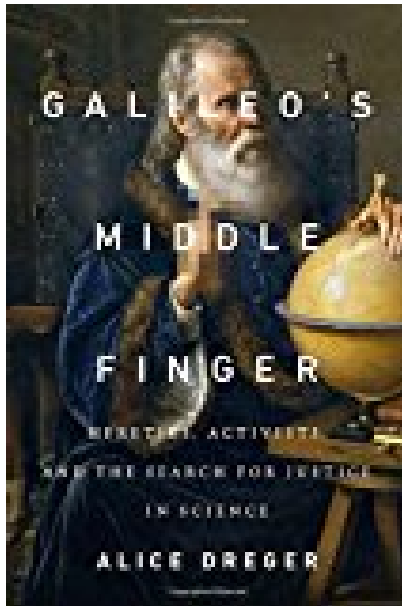


Galileo's Middle Finger Heretics Activists and the Search for Justice in Science



BOOK DETAILS

- Author : Alice Dreger
- Pages : 352 Pages
- Publisher : Penguin Press
- Language : English
- ISBN : 1594206082

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BOOK SYNOPSIS

"Smart, delightful . . . a splendidly entertaining education in ethics, activism, and science." --The New York Times Book Review (Editors Choice) An impassioned defense of intellectual freedom and a clarion call to intellectual responsibility, Galileos Middle Finger is one Americans eye-opening story of life in the trenches of scientific controversy. For two decades, historian Alice Dreger has led a life of extraordinary engagement, combining activist service to victims of unethical medical research with defense of scientists whose work has outraged identity politics activists. With spirit and wit, Dreger offers in Galileos Middle Finger an unforgettable vision of the importance of rigorous truth seeking in todays America, where both the free press and free scholarly inquiry struggle under dire economic and political threats. This illuminating chronicle begins with Dregers own research into the treatment of people born intersex (once called hermaphrodites). Realization of the shocking surgical and ethical abuses conducted in the name of "normalizing" intersex childrens gender identities moved Dreger to become an internationally recognized patient rights activist. But even as the intersex rights movement succeeded, Dreger began to realize how some fellow progressive activists were employing lies and personal attacks to silence scientists whose data revealed uncomfortable truths about humans. In researching one such case, Dreger suddenly became the target of just these kinds of attacks. Troubled, she decided to try to understand more--to travel the country to ferret out the truth behind various controversies, to obtain a global view of the nature and costs of these battles. Galileos Middle Finger describes Dregers long and harrowing journeys between the two camps for which she felt equal empathy: social justice activists determined to win and researchers determined to put hard truths before comfort. Ultimately what emerges is a lesson about the intertwining of justice and of truth--and a lesson of the importance of responsible scholars and journalists to our fragile democracy. Praise for Galileos Middle Finger: "An engrossing volume that is sure to undo any lingering notions that academic debate is the province of empiricists who pledge allegiance to the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth . . . Dregers clear and well-paced prose makes for compelling . . . reading." --The Chicago Tribune

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