

Scene 0

[A library backdrop is displayed]

[**Mike** & **Ray** are walking across the stage. **Adam** awaits in the center.]

Mike: “Ray, where did all this Western science and technology that we enjoy so much today come from, anyway?”

Ray: “Oh, that’s simple, the Western world came up with it.”

Mike: “Cool.”

Adam: “No, it’s not that simple. No society simply comes up with science and technology. Rather, they are borrowed from earlier cultures such as China, India and Egypt, and using that foundation a nation can then further earlier science and technology. But no society simply ‘comes up’ with it.”

Ray: “Ooooh, makes sense.”

Mike: “Yeah.”

Adam: “Here.”

[**Adam** Hands **Ray** a copy of *Lost Discoveries*]

Adam: “It’s all here in this book I read.”

Ray: “Thanks, you’ve changed my perspective on things already.”

Mike: “So, where did earlier cultures such as China, India, and Egypt get their science and technology from?”

Adam: “Oh, that’s simple. They came up with it. Have a good time with your new book.”

[**Adam** Runs away]

Mike: “Hey, wait, isn’t that a contradiction?”

[**Mike** looks at the ground, hangs shoulders low and sighs]

[**Ray** grabs **Mike** by the shoulder]

Ray: “Never mind that now, let’s go form a book group so we can get the most out of this new book.”

Scene 1

[Takes place inside the book group circle with a Library backdrop. Fade in.]

[**Mike** reads from page 1 of *Lost Discoveries*. The rest of the book-group sits in a circle listening intently.]

Mike: ““In school we learned that in the 16th century Copernicus reformed the solar system, placing the sun, rather than the earth, at its center, correcting the work of the second century Greek Astronomer Ptolemy...””

[**Kyle** Stands up]

Kyle (disgusted): “Now, wait a minute, Copernicus ‘reformed?’ He’s not a god; you can’t just say stuff like that, and win acclaim from...”

[**Kyle** Turns to the back cover of his book and pauses for a second to read]

Kyle: “...*The Wall Street Journal*, and Nobel Prize winners. Can you?”

[**Dave** stands up]

Dave: “Yeah, I have to admit that that is bad. Perhaps we should get another book for our reading group.”

[**Adam** stands up]

Adam: “Now, hold on just a minute, guys. Maybe the book makes up for its writing style with interesting content. Let’s just all read the book further first.”

[Everyone agrees, and sits in their respective chairs and begins to read]

Scene 2

[Takes place inside the book group circle with a Coliseum backdrop. Fade in.]

[**Adam** stands up]

Adam: “I am Aristotle. I am going to put my hand in this fire over and over again because it would seem I cannot reject theory in favor of evidence.”

[**Adam** moves to the front of the circle to face the class]

[**Adam** moves his hand over the fire]

Adam: “Ow!”

[**Adam** moves his hand over the fire]

Adam: “Ow!”

[**Adam** moves his hand over the fire]

Adam: “Ow!”

[**Mike** grabs **Adam**’s arm]

Mike: “Stop it!”

Adam: “Why should I?”

Mike: “Because it is hurting you.”

Adam: “That doesn’t make any sense! Who are you?”

[**Mike** is still holding **Adam**’s arm]

Mike: “I am Abu Ali al-Hasan ibn al-Haytham, and in the year one thousand I invented the process of rejecting a concept in favor of evidence. No longer will you have to do such foolish things as this.”

[**Mike** Puts **Adam**’s hand back in the fire]

Adam: “Ow! Hey, thanks Abu. All humanity owes you a great debt. May we never forget you for showing us the light.”

[**Adam** & **Mike** sit down & the background changes back to the library]

Dave: “What was the author thinking?! How exactly did the guy invent simple deductive reasoning anyway?”

Kyle: “It says right here. He looked up at the sun and it hurt his eyes. Therefore, he rejected a theory that rays from the eyes sensed what was happening in the world.”

Ray: “Listen to what it says right after that...Quote: ‘For some, the failure to acknowledge the success of non-Western cultures derives not just from ignorance but from conspiracy.’”

Dave: “So by doubting the author’s word, that one man from one nation created simple deductive reasoning, I am engaged in a conspiracy?”

Ray: “It gets better, guys. We haven’t even left chapter one yet...”

Scene 3

[Takes place inside the book group circle with the library backdrop. Fade in.]

[**Adam** hold copy of *Lost Discoveries* and reads from page 70.]

Adam: ““From A.D. 750 onward, after the proliferation and then consolidation of Muslim rule to cover half the Old World, the sciences flourished in a largely peaceful Islamic culture. The Muslims dominated from North Africa north to France, spanned Persia and the central Asian plains to the borders of China, and extended their rule down to northern India. In one of the great syntheses of mathematics, statistics and linguistics, the Arabs invented cryptanalysis.””

[**Kyle** stands up when Adam states, “Arabs invented cryptanalysis”]

Kyle: “That’s just wrong. This cryptography book says the author is wrong. It says that the first cryptographic system was the Caesar cipher named after Julius Caesar, who lived from 100-44 B.C. And the Diameter cipher was in use long before 750 AD, as well.”

Mike: “Perhaps the author speaks from ignorance.”

Kyle: “But, perhaps the author is throwing the need for balanced research to the wind to stack the...”

[**Kyle** makes quote marks with his hands as he says “evidence”]

“...in favor of his argument.”

Scene 4

[Takes place inside the book group circle with a library backdrop. Fade in.]

[**Ray** stands up and shouts at the top of his lungs.]

Ray: “Oh my god!”

Dave: “What is it? Who died?”

Ray: “From what I have just read, I’d say common sense has just died. This book has hit a new low with this one!”

Dave: “With what?”

Ray: “See for yourself, here’s a table from page 170 in chapter 4 outlining the material for the rest of the chapter.”

Dave: “So? I like outlines. They make tasks more manageable.”

Ray: “Just look.”

[**Mike** Displays a projection of the chart from Page 170 for the audience to see.]

Dave: “It says here that the Maiana cultural creation myth of God’s head bursting to make the world is the equivalent of the big bang theory today. It says that so is the Babylonian myth that the world formed from the dead mother goddess. It says that the Hindu idea that the universe hatched from a golden egg is also really the big bang theory. It says that the Mangaia idea that the universe grows from a coconut root is also the big bang theory.”

[**Mike** Displays a montage of theories and the authors thoughts on them.]

Adam: “Don’t worry, you’re not losing your mind. It sounds like a series of flying leaps to me, too. Considering the need for a theory of gravity before one can properly address any big bang theory, the author’s precepts are without foundation. And I noticed you skirted the comparisons to other theories such as plasma. Don’t worry about seeming ignorant of what they are. The author is being ridiculous. For instance, plasma-based theory requires complex thermodynamic differential equations that just didn’t exist at the time.”

Kyle: “I think what the author is going for is that every theory breaks down when scrutinized to a high enough degree, and that modern scientific theory is no different.”

Mike: “Of course, every theory breaks down. That’s just the definition of theory. If what you say is true, then why spend 35 pages to say that. Why not just spit it out and move on?”

Scene 5

[Takes place inside the book group circle with a library backdrop. Fade in.]

Ray: “Boy, Chapter 4 was awful.”

Kyle: “Hey Ray, did you ever notice that *aw-ful* carries a negative connotation, while *aw-some* denotes something positive? And yet they share the same root word.”

Ray: “No, I didn’t. What’s your point?”

Kyle: “I guess I don’t really have one.”

Ray: “Yeah, well neither does this book, except to waste my time. I’d rather play with that laptop and light switches over there than stay in this book group. See ya!”

[**Ray** goes over to man the AV equipment for the play]

Mike: “Guess it’s my turn to read.”

[**Mike** reads from page 214]

Mike: “The ancient Indians reasoned that moving atoms had the potential to combine with other atoms of the same class, forming a dyad, also believed to be sizeless. Yet the concept of ‘two’ itself gave the dyad a magnitude, albeit an invisible one. To be perceptible, a triad had to form composed of three dyads. There are vague parallels here to quark theory, in which three quarks combine to form protons, neutrons and hadrons.”

Adam: “Stop for a minute. So, ignoring the fact that no particle is sizeless, according to the author’s interpretation of Indian culture, not only did the Indians come up with atomic theory but that when their atoms combined they then became quarks? Which, in actuality are smaller than atoms in the first place? Balderdash!”

[**Ray** Displays the elementary particles of quantum theory.]

Adam: “Modern sub-atomic theory states that quarks combine to create the building blocks of atoms and not the other way around. All visible matter in the universe is made from the first generation of matter particles, that is, up quarks, down quarks, and electrons. This is because all second and third generation particles are unstable and quickly decay into stable first generation particles. Yet there is nothing about decay in this supposed Indian theory of sub atomic particles. I find it enraging that this was not mentioned by the author.”

Dave: “Yeah! You said it! But you have to admit that this book is quite comical. And so for the sake of humor let us continue reading it.”

[**Mike** continues to reading, this time from page 215]

Mike: “Indian theorists posited that atoms combine to form aggregates which then make up all manifestations of physical matter. The Jainist atom came in two opposing kinds

snighda, positive or soft, and *ruksha*, negative or rough—which combined, an idea foreshadowing the modern idea of ionic bonding.”

[**Ray** displays the quartz/feather montage.]

Dave: “Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha”

Kyle: “Mike, can you skip a couple pages? My head hurts.”

Mike: “Okay, next up is the ancient Middle East.”

Scene 6

[Takes place inside the book group circle with a black backdrop. Fade in.]

Adam: I am Ahura Mazda I command everything the light touches.

[**Ray** kills the lights for a moment]

Kyle: I am Angra Mainyu I am the source of darkness in the universe.

[**Ray** turns the lights back on]

Adam: Our powers are contemplative. That means that what Angra does I have no power over and vice a versa.

Kyle: “Together we make the universe work.

Adam: “Obviously, suggesting an ancient Middle Eastern theory of matter and energy.”

Kyle: “Exactly. You see, I trapped light in mankind, making me like matter.”

Adam: “And I, the Sun God, command my earthly priests to eat food and burn wood so that the light it contains may be freed so it can ascend to the moon and be stored there, until such time as the moon is full where it is then beamed back to the sun. Making me like light.”

[**Ray** displays the slide of the moon/sun montage.]

Dave: “Ha Ha Ha, my sides are splitting, so funny and so painful at the same time”

Mike: “This isn’t funny, it’s sad. And unlike the author’s understanding of the universe, matter and energy do interact with one another. Optics influence light and the budding field of atom-optics does just the opposite by having electromagnetic radiation bend matter.”

Scene 7

[Takes place inside the book group circle with the Library backdrop. Fade in.]

[**Dave** reads from page 242]

Dave: “Okay, get this, this is hilarious. The book says, ‘After an eighth-century B.C. earthquake, Chinese scholars theorized that it was caused by an imbalance of ch’i between heaven and earth. The imbalance arose, they said, when the yang was imprisoned or barred by the yin. This is not exactly a scientific explanation. On the other hand, who else was trying to understand the problem?’”

[Display the yin/yang = tectonic plates map picture]

Adam: “What? No! That can’t be a valid line of thought.”

Kyle: “The author is saying that trying to know why things are the way they are is a noble cause.”

Adam: “Perhaps in theory, but not always in implementation.

[**Ray** displays a ship going off the side of the earth.]

Adam: Sometimes ideas are wrong, and holding on to them sets back scientific thought hundreds of years. These setbacks sometimes hurt people. After all, no one looks back on medicine’s bleeding of patients with fevers with anything but contempt. Sometimes the search for truth just leads to a dead end and you have to let go of what you thought you knew. No one today thinks a dark ch’i invasion is causing earthquakes. The author should help China to let go of this instead of glorifying it.”

Mike: “On a different note, I can say that the author is wrong. Many who are affected by an earthquake questions why. Not just the Chinese.”

Scene 8

[Takes place inside the book group circle with the library backdrop. Fade in.]

[**Kyle** reads from page 311]

Kyle: ““As in other cultures, the Chinese believed in the idea of contraries, or what they called ‘two principles’ – active and passive, male and female, and so on—which represented earlier (and modern) ideas of attraction and repulsion””

Mike: “Alright! That’s enough of this chapter.”

Everyone: “Agreed!”

Scene 9

[Dave Reads from page 326]

Dave: ““Francis Bacon wrote that three inventions—gunpowder, the magnetic compass and paper and printing transformed the modern world and marked it off from antiquity and the Middle Ages. They all came from China.”

Mike: “That’s not right; anthropologists have shown that paper was used thousands of years beforehand in Egypt.”

Kyle: “How did the author miss that one?”

Adam: “I don’t know, but I figured out a way to summarize this book.”

Dave: “How’s that?”

Adam: “With the tale of Renaldus Columbus”

Dave: “Go on, I’d love to see this farce of a book summarized so I might laugh some more.”

Adam: “Renaldus Columbus was born in 1516, he became a doctor in Italy and in 1559 at the age of 43 he claimed to have discovered the clitoris. He tried to name it the sweetness of Venus. His claim was disputed immediately, but not because the idea that anyone could lay claim to such a discovery is pure idiocy, but because his successor at the school he taught at also wanted credit for finding the clitoris. Fortunately, in the Seventeenth Century a Danish anatomist dismissed both claims, stating that the clitoris had been known to man ever since the second century A.D.”

Dave: “That’s hilarious and an excellent way to summarize this book”

Kyle: “Yes, so many of the technologies, sciences, and ideas cannot be attributed to any one person or nation. To do so is laughable.”

Adam: “Let’s quit reading this book. It’s intent is clear; it seeks to build up a fistfull of Renaldus Columbus wannabees”

Mike: “No, it’s even worse than that. Listen to this section from page 331 quote ‘Water management remained the most important technology from the ancient civilizations through the brilliant centuries of medieval Islam. Providing people with water, Muhammad is said to have observed, is the act of greatest value. (See Frank Herbert’s Planet Dune and its Fremen Culture.)’”

[Display a picture of the killer worm from Children of Dune jumping out at the screen]

Adam: “He just cited a work of science fiction? With space ships and interstellar travel and spice mined from the killer worms on Arrakis?! Man, screw this book. The sucker needs to be purified by fire.”

Kyle: “It did have its interesting moments. Like noting the Mayan culture vulcanized rubber a thousand years before the West. Or the dialog about how the number zero came into common use.”

Dave: “Most of it was just funny as hell, though.”

Mike: “We already know how the book ends”

Adam: “Yeah, with fire.”

Mike: “I was going to say with credit assigned for that which no one can take credit for.”