

The Periodic Kingdom



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著者:P. W. Atkins

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The periodic table of the elements is the grand, unified theory of chemistry. In *The Periodic Kingdom*, P. W. Atkins imagines the table as a landscape, with fields of metals, pools of mercury and bromine, clouds of gases, and the offshore island of rare earths. He describes the history of this metaphoric kingdom and shows how its laws are those of physical chemistry: they are the expression in the visible world of the invisible dance of subatomic particles. *The Periodic Kingdom* is an excellent book for students at any level who want to see the connections between chemistry, physics, and "real life."

From Publishers Weekly

An extended metaphorical description of the periodic table of chemical elements is offered in this compact volume by Oxford chemist and author Atkins (*Molecules*, *Physical Chemistry*). The presentation presumes no scientific background. Likening the arrangement of the periodic table to a landscape and the sections denoting individual elements to geographic regions ("an imaginary kingdom, a land of chemists' dreams"), Atkins discusses in topographical analogies the elements' physical and chemical

properties. Histories of the formation and discovery of elements and of the formulation of the periodic table itself are surveyed. Later chapters adroitly introduce the basics of atomic physical chemistry. The fantastical imagery, maintained throughout, conveys the author's passion for his subject. Unfortunately, it's remarkably tedious. This work deserves the esteem of connoisseurs of chemistry and perhaps of impressionable youth, yet seems unlikely to hold the attention of a more general audience. Illustrations.

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作者介绍:

P. W. Atkins is university lecturer in physical chemistry at the University of Oxford and a fellow and tutor at Lincoln College, Oxford. He is the author of more than twenty books, including the highly popular *Molecules* and the textbook *Physical Chemistry*, which is used around the world.

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