

**American Institute of Physics announces winners of the 2010 AIP Science Communication Awards:  
Authors Zoellner and Richardson honored**

College Park, Md. (April 28, 2011) – The story of the prized and perilous element uranium and a fun and fascinating look at explosions of all stripes were selected as the winners of the American Institute of Physics' (AIP) 2010 Science Communication Awards.

Tom Zoellner will receive the Science Writing Award for his book "Uranium: War, Energy, and the Rock that Shaped the World." Gillian Richardson will receive the award in the children's category for her book "Kaboom! Explosions of All Kinds."

AIP's award selection committee praised both books for their quality of writing, choice of interesting topics, and approachable and engaging designs.

"Science enables us to understand not only the natural world but also the events that shape our daily lives," said Catherine O'Riordan, AIP vice president for physics resources. "These outstanding books present complex science topics in both entertaining and thought-provoking ways. We are pleased to recognize such excellent work."

The winning entries each will receive an award of \$3,000, an engraved Windsor chair, and a certificate of recognition.

**Science Writing Award**

In his book, "Uranium: War, Energy, and the Rock that Shaped the World," Tom Zoellner explores the history and impact of this seemingly commonplace element in the Earth's crust. He discusses how after World War II, uranium reshaped the global order. While Marie Curie gave us hope that uranium would be a miracle panacea, the Manhattan Project raised the specter of nuclear war. The book details how fortunes were made from this yellow dirt and how massive energy grids have been run from it. Spurious claims about the now infamous "yellow cake" uranium were used to help justify war with Iraq, even as uranium enrichment programs were being developed in Iran and North Korea. The recent devastation in Japan and the damage to that nation's nuclear power enterprise are forcing all nations to reexamine the safety of harnessing this element for peaceful needs. In "Uranium", Zoellner takes readers on a journey through twelve nations and five hundred years for a close look at the mineral that can sustain life or destroy it.

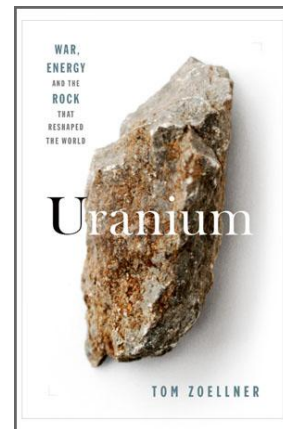




PHOTO: Paul Charvat

Tom Zoellner is a graduate of Lawrence University in Appleton, Wis., and is currently doing graduate work at Dartmouth College in Hannover, N.H. He previously worked as a contributing editor at *Men's Health* magazine and as a reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Zoellner is the author of two other books: "The Heartless Stone: A Journey Through the World of Diamonds, Deceit and Desire" and the forthcoming "Train: Smoke, Iron and the Invention of the Modern World." He is also the co-author of the *New York Times* bestseller "An Ordinary Man."

For more information: <http://tomzoellner.com>.

## Award for Children's Writing

In "Kaboom! Explosions of All Kinds," Gillian Richardson explains how explosions are all around us. From the Big Bang to the pop of a seedpod, from solar flares to the explosive gases inside a car engine, they impact everyone. The book divides explosions into two categories: explosions in nature and explosions we create. Richardson enables readers to learn about dramatic volcanic eruptions, supernovae, volatile coalmine methane and the often-surprising results when gases are produced by decomposition. Many remarkable blasts are the results of human ingenuity – the use of dynamite for the carving of faces of U.S. Presidents on Mount Rushmore and the wartime devastation of bombs. Explosive material can also entertain as spectacular fireworks and cleverly disguised special effects in movies. This book examines the science behind explosions of all kinds.



Canadian author Gillian Richardson attended McMaster and Brock universities, and worked as a teacher/librarian for 21 years. She began writing for children in 1982 and is currently an instructor for The Institute of Children's Literature, and writes reviews of children's books for *CM* magazine. Richardson makes her home in Sorrento, British Columbia. She has published 16 books and has written numerous short stories and articles for children's magazines. Her work has earned recognition on the Canadian Children's Book Centre's "Our Choice" list and in *Best Books for Children and Teens*. Her book "Kaboom!" was also a 2011 Silver Birch and Rocky

Mountain Book Award nominee.

For more information: <http://books4kids.ca/about/gillian-richardson>.

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## About the AIP Science Communication Awards

The AIP Science Communication Awards aim to promote effective science communication in print and broadcast media in order to improve the general public's appreciation of physics, astronomy, and allied science fields. The awards are presented separately at venues that best highlight the science covered in the publications.

For more information, contact Charles Blue ([cblue@aip.org](mailto:cblue@aip.org)) or visit the AIP website (<http://www.aip.org/aip/writing/>).

## About AIP

The American Institute of Physics is an organization of 10 physical sciences societies representing more than 135,000 scientists, engineers, and educators and is one of the largest publishers of scientific information in physics. AIP also delivers valuable resources and expertise in education and student services, science communication, government relations, career services for science and engineering professionals, statistical research, industrial outreach, and the history of physics and other sciences. Offering publishing solutions for scientific societies and organizations in science and engineering, AIP pursues innovation in electronic publishing of scholarly journals. AIP publishes 13 journals ([journals.aip.org](http://journals.aip.org)), two magazines—including its flagship publication, *Physics Today*—and the AIP Conference Proceedings series. Scitation, AIP's online publishing platform, hosts 1.6 million articles from 190 scholarly journals, proceedings, and eBooks of learned society publishers. AIP also provides the international physical science community with UniPHY, the first literature-based social and professional networking site; it features pre-populated profiles of more than 300,000 scientists and enables collaboration among researchers worldwide.

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