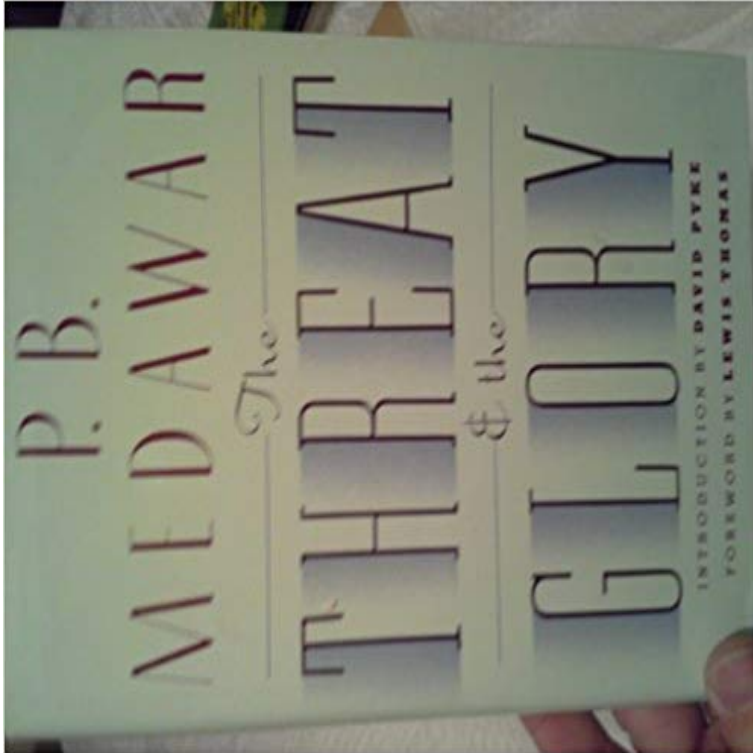


The Threat and the Glory: Reflections on Science and Scientists



Sir Peter Medawar, as his many admirers know, was not only a great scientist but a great writer. The creative energy that earned him the 1960 Noble Prize for Medecine for his pathbreaking work in immunology also fueled his many and varied writings. Books such as *Plutos Republic*, *The Limits of Science*, and *The Hope of Progress* (to name but a few) made the ever-changing world of modern science accessible to non-specialists, and have since become small classics of their kind. As Lewis Thomas writes in his foreword to this posthumous collection, some of the wisest remarks of the twentieth century come from the pen of Peter Medawar.

The Threat and the Glory explores the twin nature of modern science; its ability to inspire both hope and fear in its professional and lay observers. Medawar, of course, says it best when he writes of sciences ability to make the seemingly impossible a reality, scientists may exult in the glory, but in the middle of the twentieth century the reaction of ordinary people is more often to cower at the threat. This theme runs throughout this collection of writings which cover a characteristically wide range of topics: genetic engineering, evolution, philosophy, creativity, scientific fraud, the medical community, and attitudes toward death. Ranging in tone from these serious reflections on the nature of science to more lighthearted pieces such as *Son of Stroke*--a guide for long-term hospital patients based on his own experience as the victim of a cerebral hemorrhage--*The Threat and the Glory* entertains as much as it educates. Selected by his close friend David Pyke, these essays--some previously unpublished, many appearing in book form for the first time--show Medawar to have been not only a tireless truth-seeker, but also a merciless debunker of myths. Reading Medawar, we come to understand and accept the indispensable role of science in our world.

Witty, incisive, and above all compassionate, The Threat and the Glory will delight those who are familiar with Medawar's writing, and will be a special treat for those who are not.

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