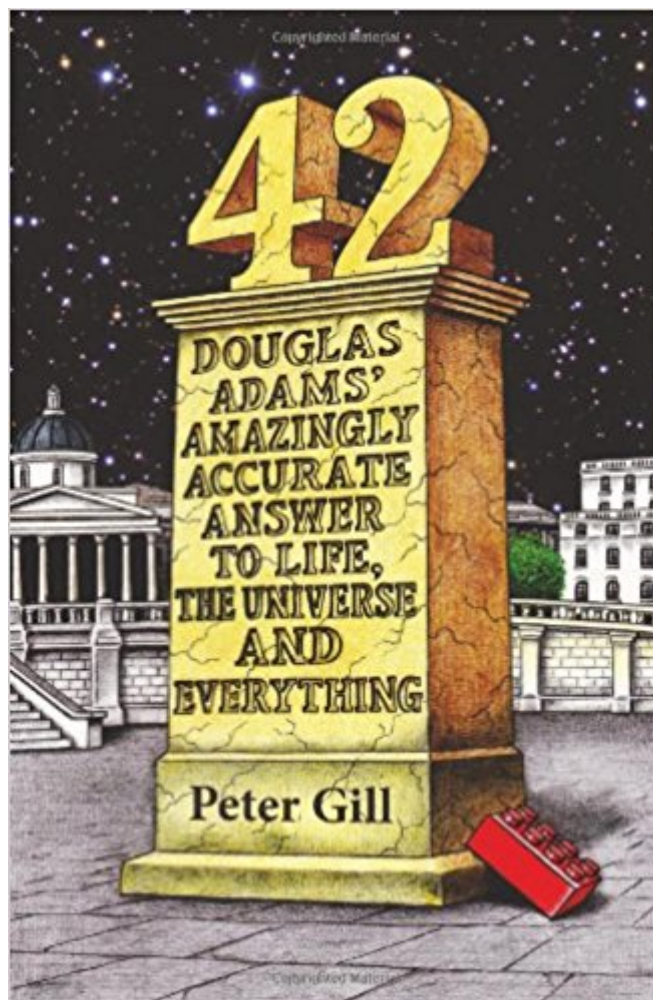


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42: Douglas Adams' Amazingly Accurate Answer To Life, The Universe And Everything



Synopsis

In *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, author Douglas Adams famously proposed that the answer to the question "What is the meaning of Life?" was the number 42. Why that number? Over the years, many theories have been put forward, but Adams steadfastly refused to clarify. It has taken a dedicated fan and investigator, Peter Gill, ten years to establish just why 42 is the answer. In this brilliantly detailed, maniacally meticulous and hilariously offbeat volume, Gill gives us a whole range of reasons why 42 really is the answer.

On page 42 of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, Harry discovers he is a wizard. Adolf Hitler turned vegetarian at the age of 42. Elvis Presley choked on his hamburger at the age of 42. Washington is the 42nd State. Channel 42 in the Stanley Hotel in Colorado, where Stephen King stayed prior to writing *The Shining*, shows Kubrick's film of the book in one non-stop loop.

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Customer Reviews

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I've loved Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy my entire life. But it wasn't until recently that I've tried to better understand what our dearly departed Douglas Adams was really on about. For someone who, in a world of quack bags proselytizing about the Mayan Calendar, really has struggled to handle this truly spectacular universe we live in, having authors like Peter Gill dotting the planet makes me ... joyful. For our world's inquisitors we have this global network of amazing, connected people and an opportunity to learn about "42: Douglas Adams' Amazingly Accurate Answer to Life, the Universe and Everything". OH the mathematics of it all! As Randy Marsh said in a particular South Park episode about fried chicken, "I love the future". The book: (will make you the most interesting person at your next dinner party BTW) ... Did you know there are moonbows? From start to finish the reader is treated to such a lovingly presented, whole-hearted view of Douglas Adams' life, universe ... and, well, you know, everything. Peter Gill's beautifully told story of this master of ideas, a technophobe, a shy man is spot on. My husband has met Douglas Adams. He said Mr. Gill was so exact in his all encompassment of Mr. Adams; it is "a beautiful tribute". SO this book isn't just fun reading for the Hitchhiker's devout, or even for the Anglo-maniacal such as myself! There is something in this brilliant book for everyone, everywhere.

The book is a collection of facts that happen to be related to the number 42. Some quite loosely, such as "and that's the distance between Rome and New York 42 times!" or something to that ilk. The number 42 is fascinating, and it keeps cropping up everywhere, when you least expect it. That's what I've noticed over the years and obviously, Peter Gill has noticed the same thing, but he's decided to go looking for facts and figures and putting them together in a book. Some are familiar, such as Elvis was 42 when he died and it was the number of Mulder's apartment in "The X-Files". Others are more surprising, and others will of course be missing. To begin with, I was disappointed. After all, it's just a book of facts that happen to be more or less loosely connected with the number forty-two. Whoop-tee-doo. I was expecting it to more be a book about, you know, like the title says: Douglas Adams' Amazingly Accurate Answer to Life, the Universe and Everything. A

way of explaining how it could be the Answer, more like Indiana Jones than Trivial Pursuit. Instead, it's just a book of facts. However, toward the end, it goes into how Douglas Adams came to choose the number (there have been various explanations given over the years, but it mainly boils down to that it was a random number, kind of humdrum yet still kind of funny). And I enjoyed that. I also enjoyed the facts, just ... well, they were facts, not a "and here's why this nicely inconspicuous number could indeed be the Answer we've been looking for". So I'm a bit undecided. It's an interesting book listing an amazing number of facts stemming from one integer. The big plus, a major plus, of the book is how it's written. It's funny. It's not too far off something Douglas Adams himself could have written, and that in itself is something I value. This is Peter Gill's first book, and I hope there's more writing in him. Perhaps not funny factoid books but rather something else, be it fact or fiction, but I really think it could work. Keep going and keep up the good work! Three and a half towels out of five. Four if it's a present to a Hitchhiker's fan or just for a laugh, two if you got it because you wanted to know more about the number 42.

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