

The Science of Communicating Science: *The Ultimate Guide*

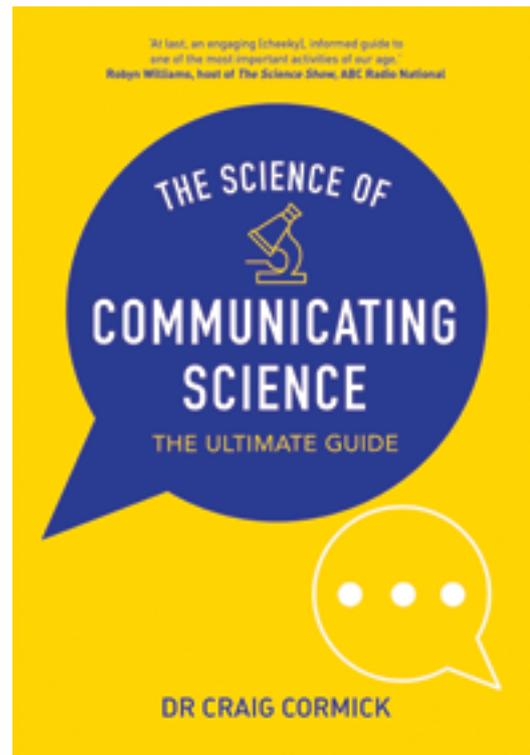
Written by: Dr Craig Cormick
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Reviewed by: Phillip Berrie, Publications Manager, ASTA

When this book arrived in the mail, I wasn't sure which of our reviewers I should send it to as it didn't seem to immediately fit into any one particular aspect of the teaching of science. Still, all science teachers are, in effect, science communicators and so I was of the definite opinion that the readers of *Teaching Science* might be interested in finding out more about the actual science of science communication and hopefully learn some tips as to how to go about it.

Dr Craig Cormick is an incredibly prolific and varied writer and editor, having been involved in the creation of well over forty publications, both fiction and nonfiction. His award-winning works range from the fictional *Uncle Adolf* (Ginninderra Press) through to a nonfiction study of the scientific investigations into the history of Ned Kelly: *Ned Kelly Under the Microscope* (CSIRO Publishing). But perhaps more important with regard to the book being reviewed here is that he is a past president of the Australian Science Communicators group.

In this book, the author not only delves deeply into the theory of communicating in general — as well as the best ways to go about doing it — but also looks at the specific issues involved in communicating science where, as is often the case, the people who need the information the most are resistant to receiving this knowledge because of previously established beliefs or



misconceptions. A situation many teachers, particularly at the secondary level and higher, might experience regularly with their teaching.

In my opinion, Cormick's insights into this problem should make this book of interest to all dedicated teachers of science. And the author supports these insights with a veritable barrage of facts, figures and charts accompanied by many, many pages of endnote references to support them. In fact, my one major criticism about this book is that the sheer number of inset diagrams and break-out boxes makes the flow of the text sometimes hard to follow. However, this criticism is minor because the text itself is very easy to read because of the author's humorous, and often irreverent, take on the subject.

Recommended reading for anyone interested in the communication of science, and especially for those who don't understand why it sometimes doesn't work.

Caveat: The reviewer and the author of this book are both members of the ACT Writers Centre.