The Substance Of Civilization: Materials And Human History From The Stone Age To The Age Of Silicon
The story of human civilization can be read most deeply in the materials we have found or created, used or abused. They have dictated how we build, eat, communicate, wage war, create art, travel, and worship. Some, such as stone, iron, and bronze, lend their names to the ages. Others, such as gold, silver, and diamond, contributed to the rise and fall of great empires. How would history have unfolded without glass, paper, steel, cement, or gunpowder? The impulse to master the properties of our material world and to invent new substances has remained unchanged from the dawn of time; it has guided and shaped the course of history. Sass shows us how substances and civilizations have evolved together. In antiquity, iron was considered more precious than gold. The celluloid used in movie film had its origins in the search for a substitute for ivory billiard balls. The same clay used in the pottery of antiquity has its uses in today's computer chips. Moving from the Stone Age to the Age of Silicon, from the days of prehistoric survival to the cutting edge of nanotechnology, this fascinating and accessible book connects the worlds of minerals and molecules to the sweep of human history, and shows what materials will dominate the century ahead.

**Book Information**

Audible Audio Edition
Listening Length: 8 hours and 54 minutes
Program Type: Audiobook
Version: Unabridged
Publisher: Audible Studios
Audible.com Release Date: February 23, 2013
Whispersync for Voice: Ready
Language: English
ASIN: B00BK81J8S

Best Sellers Rank: #110 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > History > World #119 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Reference > Patents & Inventions #268 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Science > Technology & Engineering

**Customer Reviews**

"History is an alloy of all the materials that we have invented or discovered, manipulated, used, and abused, and each has its tale to tell." These are the words of the author, a professor of material sciences at Cornell University. He is obviously in love with the subject he teaches. He reminds me of one of my Chemistry professors who was in the lab on a Saturday afternoon when a student...
happened to come by, and said; "Do you have to work on Saturday's?" He replied; "Son this isn't work, it's my hobby." Reading this book, one gets the feeling you are just having a friendly discussion with him about the subject that is his work, interest, fascination, and most of all what his love resolves around. Just the opposite of a Librarian I was having a social chat with one day. I asked what she liked to read; and the reply stunned me. "I really don't like to read much; I get too much of it at work every day". Sass is a very good writer, particularly considering his profession. I don't say this as a slur; but generally good, interesting writing is not the strong point of technical people. Carl Sagan is a great exception to this, and it shows Sass loves materials like Sagan loved the universe. Although I am an engineer, took courses in materials; I never heard them talked about like this. Sass shows how materials have influenced civilizations from the Stone Age to the present time and will continue to do so for the future. Not only that, but there will be materials invented at an astonishing rate, even more so than the last half century. Just imagine the things that have become commonplace in that time and how much their existence is dependent on space age materials. Dreams are the ideas behind inventions; but materials are what makes them happen. I read a lot of history, and particularly of warfare.

Download to continue reading...

Story of Two Men, Their Extraordinary Journey, and the Discovery of the Lost Civilization of the Maya
Brokenburn: The Journal of Kate Stone, 1861–1868 (Library of Southern Civilization) Stone
Revelations of the Last Ice Age: Ancient Mid-Atlantic Relief Sculptures of Human Faces and Extinct Megafauna