



Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs: The Astounding Interconnectedness of the Universe

By Lisa Randall



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In this brilliant exploration of our cosmic environment, the renowned particle physicist and *New York Times* bestselling author of *Warped Passages* and *Knocking on Heaven's Door* uses her research into dark matter to illuminate the startling connections between the furthest reaches of space and life here on Earth.

Sixty-six million years ago, an object the size of a city descended from space to crash into Earth, creating a devastating cataclysm that killed off the dinosaurs, along with three-quarters of the other species on the planet. What was its origin? In *Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs*, Lisa Randall proposes it was a comet that was dislodged from its orbit as the Solar System passed through a disk of dark matter embedded in the Milky Way. In a sense, it might have been dark matter that killed the dinosaurs.

Working through the background and consequences of this proposal, Randall shares with us the latest findings—established and speculative—regarding the nature and role of dark matter and the origin of the Universe, our galaxy, our Solar System, and life, along with the process by which scientists explore new concepts. In *Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs*, Randall tells a breathtaking story that weaves together the cosmos' history and our own, illuminating the deep relationships that are critical to our world and the astonishing beauty inherent in the most familiar things.



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Editorial Review

Review

“Successful science writing tells a complete story of the ‘how’-the methodical marvel building up to the ‘why’-and Randall does just that.” (New York Times Book Review)

“A cracking read, combining storytelling of the highest order with a trove of information on subjects as diverse as astrophysics, evolutionary biology, geology and particle physics. What’s remarkable is that it all fits together.” (Wall Street Journal)

“The universe, Randall eloquently argues, is an organic thing, a symphonic thing, with all its myriad parts contributing their own notes.” (Time Magazine)

“Randall succeeds in guiding the reader through the history of the cosmos and the Earth from the Big Bang to the emergence of life as we know it in a fun and captivating way. . . . [This is] a very enjoyable read for both lay readers and scientists.” (Science Magazine)

“The nature of the impactor remains unknown, but if it was indeed a comet dislodged from the Oort Cloud, then Randall’s book provides an entertaining and radical explanation of the events leading up to their ultimate extinction.” (Philadelphia Inquirer)

“Through Randall’s brilliant research we see a universe unfold that is far grander than anyone at any time could have imagined... She is a progressive thinker, a visionary capable of bridging the vast gulf between speculation and reality science.” (San Francisco Book Review)

“Randall, a Harvard professor, is one of the world’s leading experts on particle physics and cosmology. In *Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs*, she takes readers on an illuminating scientific adventure, beginning 66 million years ago, that connects dinosaurs, comets, DNA, and the future of the planet.” (Huffington Post)

“Brilliant and thought provoking...The greatest strength of Randall’s book is that it lacks any overly academic jargon and is reasonably easy to understand. *Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs* illustrates beautifully that there is so much left to be discovered about ourselves and the universe that we call home.” (BUST)

“The nature of the impactor remains unknown, but if it was indeed a comet dislodged from the Oort Cloud, then Randall’s book provides an entertaining and radical explanation of the events leading up to their ultimate extinction.” (Physics World)

“The nature of the impactor remains unknown, but if it was indeed a comet dislodged from the Oort Cloud, then Randall’s book provides an entertaining and radical explanation of the events leading up to their ultimate extinction.” (WHYY Radio Times)

“Mind-blowing. . . . If [Randall is] correct. . . . it would be a revolution in human thought every bit as gargantuan as that precipitated by Copernicus. (House of Speakeasy Blog)

“The nature of the impactor remains unknown, but if it was indeed a comet dislodged from the Oort Cloud, then Randall’s book provides an entertaining and radical explanation of the events leading up to their

ultimate extinction.” (On Being with Krista Tippett)

“[Randall’s] is a fascinating, tantalizing theory, linking life on Earth-or the extinction thereof-with the very origins of our universe.” (Publishers Weekly, Starred Review)

“Engrossing in its own right, this theory opens onto an illuminating survey of the cutting-edge science now deployed to test its components, including its daring redefinition of dark matter. As she did in *Warped Passages* (2005) and *Knocking on Heaven’s Door* (2011), Randall delivers intellectual exhilaration.” (Booklist, Starred Review)

“Writing in a deceptively chatty narrative style, Randall provides a fascinating window into the excitement of discovery and the rigor required to test and elaborate new hypotheses. A top-notch science book from a leading researcher.” (Kirkus, Starred Review)

Only Lisa Randall can take us on such a thrilling scientific journey—from dinosaurs to DNA to comets to dark matter and to past and future of our species. Randall’s research is so thorough, the story so powerful, and her storytelling so compelling that I could not put this book down.” (Siddhartha Mukherjee, author of *Emperor of All Maladies*)

“The nature of the impactor remains unknown, but if it was indeed a comet dislodged from the Oort Cloud, then Randall’s book provides an entertaining and radical explanation of the events leading up to their ultimate extinction.” (Walter Kirn, author of *Blood Will Out* and *Up In the Air*)

“The wonder and curiosity Lisa Randall so obviously feels about our world and the universe itself is evident on every page. [Randall] render[s] complex subject matter into a gripping page-turner that is impossible to put down. *Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs* is a fascinating, mind-expanding experience.” (Augusten Burroughs, author of *This is How* and *Running with Scissors*)

“Lisa Randall has produced an intriguing, insightful book that brilliantly weaves together the disparate subjects of cosmology and biology. . . . A simple, elegant theory that finally makes sense of mass extinctions. A must read for anyone interested in the precariousness of life on earth.” (Jack Horner, MacArthur Fellow and author of *How To Build a Dinosaur*)

“*Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs* is . . . a masterpiece of science writing: a detective story that illuminates the nature of scientific research while explaining how our very existence may be connected to unexpected properties of the dark matter that fills the universe.” (Kip Thorne, Feynman Professor of Theoretical Physics at CalTech)

“A provocative and revealing account of how scientists like herself are uncovering deep connections between human existence and the wider universe. A terrific read.” (Timothy Ferris, author of *Coming of Age in the Milky Way* and *Seeing in the Dark*)

“World-renowned physicist Lisa Randall brings a fresh twist to one of the world’s oldest murder mysteries, the death of the dinos. With lively writing and wonderfully accessible explanations, she now convincingly implicates a new suspect as ultimately responsible for the hit: a novel kind of dark matter.” (Max Tegmark, physicist and author of *Our Mathematical Universe*)

“It’s a tall order to cover everything from the Big Bang to today’s ongoing Sixth Extinction in a consistently engaging way for a general audience. Particle physicist Randall delivers, peppering serious science with

anecdotes about Roombas and fortune cookie messages.” (Discover Magazine)

“By grounding one in the principles of cosmology, particle physics, geology, astrophysics, paleontology and meteoritics, Randall provides the reader with a broad spectrum look at not only the world around them, but the worlds around that world, the galaxies and galactic clusters, filaments, sheets and, eventually, the Universe.” (Paste)

From the Back Cover

Bestselling author of *Warped Passages* and *Knocking on Heaven's Door* and one of today's most influential and highly cited theo-retical physicists, Professor Lisa Randall once again effortlessly delivers fascinating science to the general reader. Weaving together the cosmos' his-tory and our own in an expanding intellectual adventure story, *Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs* takes us from the mysteries of dark matter and our cosmic environment to the conditions for life on Earth.

Sixty-six million years ago, an object the size of a city descended from space to crash into Earth, creating a cata-clysm that killed off the dinosaurs, along with three-quarters of the other species on the planet. What was its origin? Randall proposes it was a comet that was dislodged from its orbit as the Solar System passed through a disk of dark matter that is embedded in the plane of the Milky Way. Her research challenges the usual assumptions about the simple nature of dark matter and demonstrates how scientists formulate and establish new ideas. In a sense, it might have been dark matter that killed the dinosaurs.

With her unique and wide-ranging perspective, Randall connects dark matter to the history of the world in the broadest terms. Bringing in pop culture and social and political viewpoints, she shares with us the latest findings—established and speculative—regarding dark matter, the cosmos, the galaxy, asteroids, comets, and impacts, as well as life's development and extinctions. Randall makes clear how connected the planet is to the makeup of the Universe, but also how fragile our place in the Universe, which evolved over billions of years, might be.

In this brilliant and fresh exploration of our cosmic environment, Professor Randall explains the underlying science of our world in the breathtaking tale of a Universe in which the small and the large, the visible and the hidden are intimately related. *Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs* illuminates the deep relationships that are critical to our world as well as the astonishing beauty of the structures and connections that surround us. It's impossible to read this book and look at either Earth or sky again in the same way.

About the Author

Lisa Randall studies theoretical particle physics and cosmology at Harvard University, where she is Frank B. Baird, Jr., Professor of Science. A member of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, she is the recipient of many awards and honorary degrees. Professor Randall was included in *Time* magazine's "100 Most Influential People" of 2007 and was among *Esquire* magazine's "75 Most Influential People of the 21st Century." Professor Randall's two books, *Warped Passages* (2005) and *Knocking on Heaven's Door* (2011) were *New York Times* bestsellers and 100 Notable Books. Her stand-alone e-book, *Higgs Discovery: The Power of Empty Space*, was published in 2012.

Users Review

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Lisa Hegland:

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Do you considered one of people who can't read pleasant if the sentence chained in the straightway, hold on guys that aren't like that. This Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs: The Astounding Interconnectedness of the Universe book is readable by means of you who hate those straight word style. You will find the details here are arrange for enjoyable examining experience without leaving also decrease the knowledge that want to supply to you. The writer associated with Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs: The Astounding Interconnectedness of the Universe content conveys thinking easily to understand by many people. The printed and e-book are not different in the written content but it just different such as it. So , do you nevertheless thinking Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs: The Astounding Interconnectedness of the Universe is not loveable to be your top listing reading book?

James Brown:

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