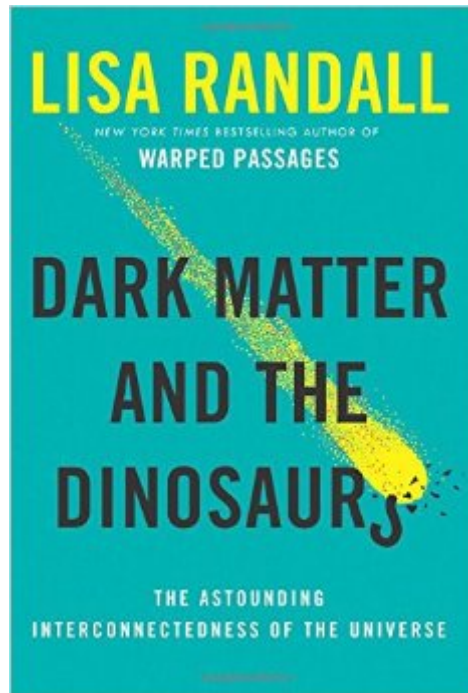


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Dark Matter And The Dinosaurs: The Astounding Interconnectedness Of The Universe



Synopsis

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.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

At one time it was said that Lisa Randall was the most cited theoretical physicist with about 10,000 citations. This is no easy achievement. She has now written a fascinating story about dark matter.

Her previous books were: • Warped Passages • about the role of extra dimensions and • Knocking on Heaven's Door • about the Higgs particle. The latter contained the best explanation of the Higgs that I have read. This new book requires less of a technical background to understand. It is the easiest to read. • Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs • combines stars, galaxies, comets, meteors, particle interactions, and of course dinosaurs. What could be better? The book is well written and totally fascinating. We know of the existence of dark matter by its effects on ordinary matter, in particular, through the rotational speed of galaxies, and also by its role in the gravitational lensing of light. Dark matter permeates the universe. There is five times as much dark matter as there is ordinary matter. We also think that the dinosaurs died 66 million years ago when a large meteoroid, e.g., comet or asteroid, crashed into the Earth. Is there a connection between dark matter and the extinction of the dinosaurs? Did a dark matter disk lying in the plane of our galaxy nudge the meteoroid into a collision course with the Earth? As an atomic/nuclear physicist I am captivated by the idea that dark matter may form atom-like objects.

Noted theoretical and experimental physicist Lisa Randall offers a spellbinding account of her current research into dark matter and how it relates to other cutting-edge science in astrophysics and geology in her latest book, • Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs: The Astounding Interconnectedness of the Universe •. This is a riveting exploration into how science is done, describing in ample detail not only her research, but also notable ones from paleontologists, planetary geologists, and other geologists pointing to the likely culprit for the terminal Cretaceous mass extinction (66 million years ago). The • Great Dying • that wiped out nearly two-thirds of Earth's biota, not only the non-avian dinosaurs, but also other terrestrial organisms and those dwelling in the late Cretaceous oceans, ranging in size from relatively miniscule single-celled planktic foraminifera to titanic mososaurs resembling the one in the film • Jurassic World •. An extraterrestrial culprit, a comet, its motion disturbed enough by unseen dark matter, altering its remote Oort Cloud orbit into one spelling doomsday for much of Earth's biota. As the subtitle of • Dark Matter and the Dinosaurs: The Astounding Interconnectedness of the Universe • suggests, Randall covers much ground in her lucid explanations of relevant aspects of cosmology, planetary geology, paleontology and particle physics, frequently relying on pop cultural and political references recognizable to American readers. She literally boldly goes where no one else has gone before in her informed scientific speculation, proposing that a unique form of dark matter was responsible ultimately for the great K-Pg • “ for Cretaceous/Paleogene • “ mass extinction.

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