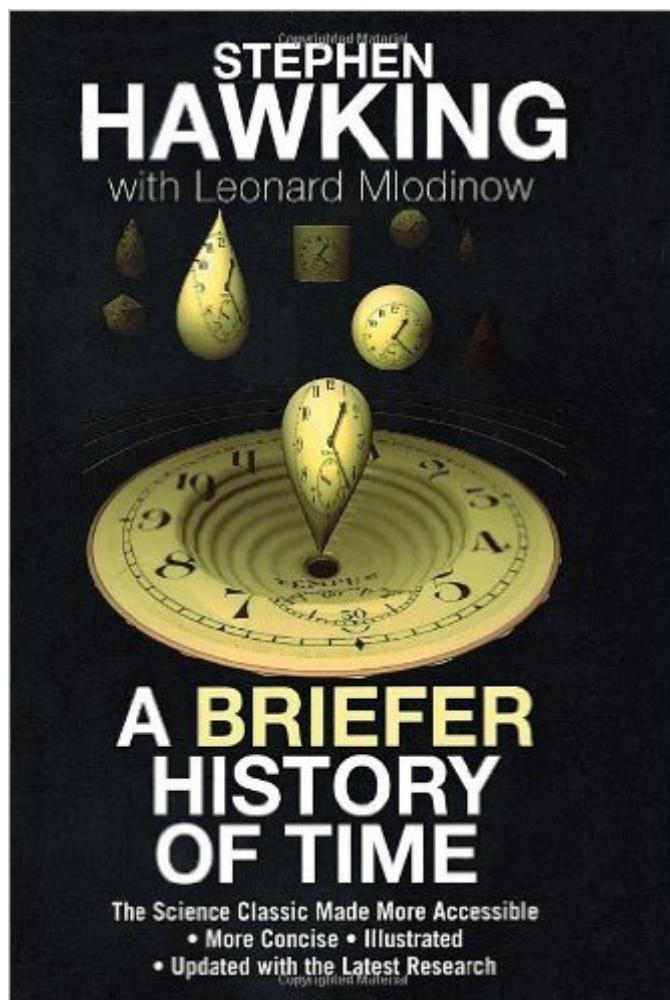


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A Briefer History Of Time: A Special Edition Of The Science Classic



Synopsis

FROM ONE OF THE MOST BRILLIANT MINDS OF OUR TIME COMES A BOOK THAT CLARIFIES HIS MOST IMPORTANT IDEAS Â Stephen Hawkingâ™s worldwide bestseller A Brief History of Time remains a landmark volume in scientific writing. But for readers who have asked for a more accessible formulation of its key conceptsâ "the nature of space and time, the role of God in creation, and the history and future of the universeâ "A Briefer History of Time is Professor Hawkingâ™s response. Â Although âœbriefer,â • this book is much more than a mere explanation of Hawkingâ™s earlier work. A Briefer History of Time both clarifies and expands on the great subjects of the original, and records the latest developments in the fieldâ "from string theory to the search for a unified theory of all the forces of physics. Thirty-seven full-color illustrations enhance the text and make A Briefer History of Time an exhilarating and must-have addition in its own right to the great literature of science and ideas.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I do not have a science background, and I did not read a Brief History of Time when it was originally published or thereafter. So this review is written to a fairly small category of potential readers -- those like me with an interest in modern physics but without much background. I thought the book was exceptionally well written, and it was outstanding in places. It was certainly a very fun read, and I think it achieves a very lofty goal -- making liberal arts grads like me understand both the desirability and potential implications of reconciling general relativity and quantum physics. But,

overall, I thought it tried to walk too fine a tightrope between discussing complex subjects and at the same time attempting to be as conversational and accessible as possible. That is a lofty goal -- hard to achieve I think. The reality is that some of these concepts are very very difficult to the uninitiated, so the cursory treatment the authors sometimes give them, in their attempt to make the book accessible and to live up to the "briefER" in the title, actually at times makes the book harder to understand, not easier. It is most acute in the book's introduction to uncertainty, quantum physics, and understanding the implications of interference experiments. More detail, not less, was needed here to reach the authors' goal of accessibility. Don't get me wrong, I wasn't seeking a text heavily laden with mathematics or equations. I just think the overriding editorial doctrine with this book was to condense wherever possible, and that is just not always possible or desirable.

+++++ "In this book are lucid revelations on the frontiers of physics, astronomy, cosmology [the study of the universe as a whole], and courage [Dr. Stephen Hawking has ALS, also called Lou Gehrig's disease or motor neuron disease contracted when he was young and now is wheelchair bound]. This is also a book about God...or perhaps about the absence of God. The word God fills these pages. Hawking embarks on a quest to answer Einstein's famous question about whether God had any choice in creating the universe. Hawking is attempting, as he explicitly states, to understand the mind of God. And this makes all the more unexpected the conclusion of the effort, at least so far: a universe with no edge in space, no beginning or end in time, and nothing for a Creator to do." These are the words in the last paragraph of the introduction to Hawking's very first or original book "A Brief History of Time" (1988). These words were written by the late, great Dr. Carl Sagan. (In his introduction, Sagan calls Hawking a "legend.") Nothing has changed with this new book with respect to what Sagan says above. But as a reader of Hawking's first book, I did notice welcome changes. First, this new book is more concise. This does not mean this book is drastically shorter than the original. This new book is about twenty pages less than the original. Also this new book contains one more chapter than the original! What this book does is cut out extraneous technical detail from the original and focuses only on the most important concepts but still maintains the essence of the original. Thus, the book seems much more concise. Next, and this is very important, this book is more accessible.

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