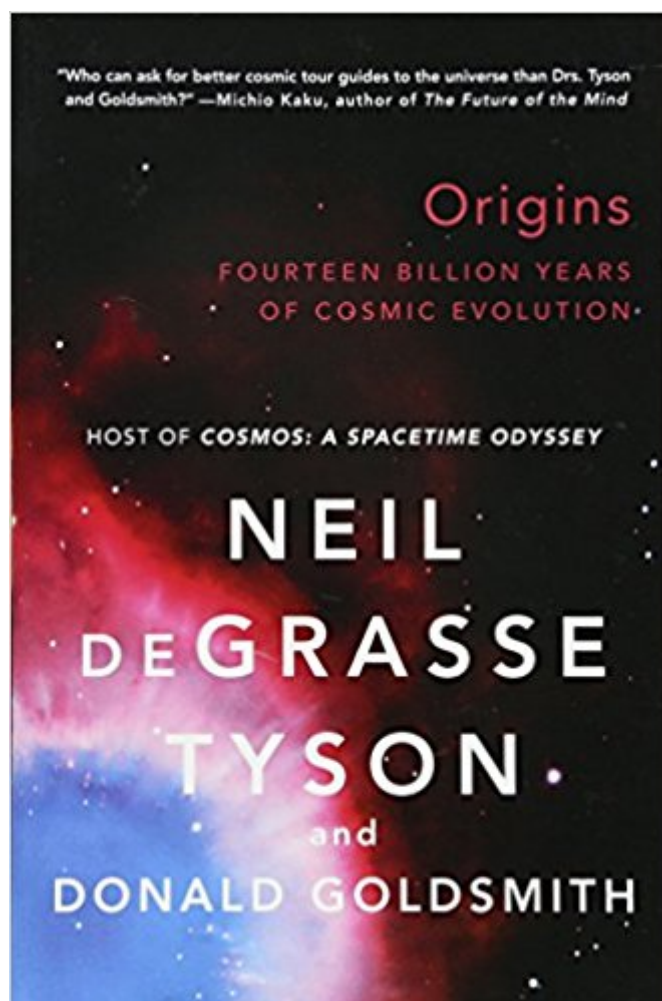


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Origins: Fourteen Billion Years Of Cosmic Evolution



Synopsis

Who can ask for better cosmic tour guides to the universe than Drs. Tyson and Goldsmith? Michio Kaku, author of *Hyperspace* and *Parallel Worlds* Our true origins are not just human, or even terrestrial, but in fact cosmic. Drawing on recent scientific breakthroughs and the current cross-pollination among geology, biology, astrophysics, and cosmology, *Origins* explains the soul-stirring leaps in our understanding of the cosmos. From the first image of a galaxy birth to Spirit Rover's exploration of Mars, to the discovery of water on one of Jupiter's moons, coauthors Neil deGrasse Tyson and Donald Goldsmith conduct a galvanizing tour of the cosmos with clarity and exuberance. 32 pages of color illustrations

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Customer Reviews

In this companion volume to the two-part NOVA television special by the same title, astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson and astronomy writer Donald Goldsmith attempt to cram 14 billion years of history into 300 pages. The result of this audacious exercise is a surprising and engrossing book, one that far surpasses the droning tone of so many astronomy texts. Starting (of course) with the Big Bang and ending with the search for extraterrestrial life, the authors synthesize the results of several scientific fields to present a sort of cosmological consilience. They also emphasize the scientific method and its inherent skepticism as the only way to understand such mysteries as dark matter, stellar formation, and the origin of life on Earth. Although several books are published each year that provide overviews of various branches of science, what's different about this one is the

accessible tone of the writing. The authors use mild humor throughout to keep readers going in difficult sections; for instance, when assessing the question of why we live during the rare time when the amounts of dark and not-dark energy are roughly equal in the universe, they relate that cosmologist Michael Turner calls the situation the "'Nancy Kerrigan problem,' in honor of the Olympic figure skater, who asked... 'Why me? Why now?'" Combining 21st-century astronomy, astrobiology, astrochemistry, and other disciplines, *Origins* is a fine guidebook with which to journey "back to the beginning of everything." --Therese Littleton --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is the most informative, congenial and accessible general look at cosmology to come along since Carl Sagan's *Cosmos* 27 years ago --and, like *Cosmos*, it's a companion to a PBS series, in this case a *Nova* special (to air on September 28 and 29). But Tyson (*The Sky Is Not the Limit*, etc.), who's director of Manhattan's Hayden Planetarium, and Goldsmith (*Connecting with the Cosmos*, etc.) are no Sagan clones; they bring a distinct point of view and tone to this title. The point of view surfaces right away, both with their concerted effort to draw in numerous branches of science to explain the story of cosmic evolution, and with the statement that "science depends on organized skepticism." The authors continually refer to the reach and limits of science, explaining, as they offer a chronological tour of cosmic history, just what they think science can tell us and what it can't (as they end the journey, focusing on the possibility of extraterrestrial life, they deliver several sharp blows to true believers of UFOs). The tone is informational, aimed at high clarity, and laced with giddy humor: "A hundred billion years from now... all but the closest galaxies will have vanished over our horizon of visibility. Enjoy the view while you can." Beginning at the beginning, Tyson and Goldsmith tackle the origin of the universe and its nature --from antimatter to dark matter and dark energy to the possibility of multiverses; how the universe became organized; the origin of stars; a fascinating look at the periodic table; the origin of planets, including a vivid discuss of planets outside our solar system; and the origin of life. Much of this material will necessarily be familiar to regular readers of popular science, but even they will benefit from Tyson and Goldsmith's incorporation of the latest cosmological developments, from string theory to recent thinking on dark energy; and if this book breaks out, as it has real potential to do, general readers of every stripe will benefit from the authors' sophisticated, deeply knowledgeable presentation. If the casual book buyer purchases one science book this year, this should be the one. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As with other books by Mr. Tyson, each story is abound with great enthusiastic wonder where we're headed and where we're from in our universe. Though I've only started reading again about the cosmos, for years I've spent countless nights staring at our heavens wondering of their calculated yet chaotic expansion and in some cases death. "A wonderful read"

At his wittiest

Mr. Neil Degrasse Tyson has the amazing talent of making very complex subjects seem easily comprehensible. This book is very well-written and was engaging from the beginning till the end. I recommend it highly.

Informative and FUN read. How could it be anything else when it's from Neil DeGrasse Tyson. Who doesn't have questions about space, black holes and the entire universe? Tyson answers them brilliantly, clearly, and with his natural infectious humor.

Tyson is simply stunning in this overview of cosmology, very readable with just enough math to support the incredible detective work that we have accomplished from our tiny corner of the universe. Highly recommended.

My husband and I read this at night while we go to bed. It's well written and doesn't make you feel stupid - LOL! Neil explains things in a way where you're not required to run to the dictionary every two minutes due to being lost in the use of excessive pompous words... He's just the best! Anyway, great read

Dr. Tyson takes us on a wonderful journey through time and space. You will find yourself looking up at the sky rather than down to the earth...which is wonderful to think of our earth as just a part of the cosmos..one small dot in the universe and it us up to us to take care of our home. Did you see the movie Titanic? Dr. Tyson did and contacted the director James Cameron to tell him that the sky over Jack while clinging on for dear life..was wrong! For that latitude and longitude at that time of year the constellations were WRONG. So Cameron went back and changed the film with Dr. Tyson's suggestion! Well written without being textbook boring. BTW--subscribe free to Dr. Tyson's weekly podcast! If I were still teaching I would give this to my students..and it doesn't matter which field!

The writing was excellent. It's condensed to be a synopsis of the fourteen billion years of cosmic evolution into layman's terms that anybody can understand. Tyson's writing is awe-inspiring and thought-provoking giving us science that some of us even if we're in the Science World didn't know.

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