



Warped Passages: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Universe's Hidden Dimensions

By Lisa Randall

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The universe has many secrets. It may hide additional dimensions of space other than the familiar three we recognize. There might even be another universe adjacent to ours, invisible and unattainable . . . for now.

Warped Passages is a brilliantly readable and altogether exhilarating journey that tracks the arc of discovery from early twentieth-century physics to the razor's edge of modern scientific theory. One of the world's leading theoretical physicists, Lisa Randall provides astonishing scientific possibilities that, until recently, were restricted to the realm of science fiction. Unraveling the twisted threads of the most current debates on relativity, quantum mechanics, and gravity, she explores some of the most fundamental questions posed by Nature—taking us into the warped, hidden dimensions underpinning the universe we live in, demystifying the science of the myriad worlds that may exist just beyond our own.

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Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1818 in eBooks
- Published on: 2009-10-21
- Released on: 2009-11-10
- Format: Kindle eBook



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The concept of additional spatial dimensions is as far from intuitive as any idea can be. Indeed, although Harvard physicist Randall does a very nice job of explaining—often deftly through the use of creative analogies—how our universe may have many unseen dimensions, readers' heads are likely to be swimming by the end of the book. Randall works hard to make her astoundingly complex material understandable, providing a great deal of background for recent advances in string and supersymmetry theory. As coauthor of the two most important scientific papers on this topic, she's ideally suited to popularize the idea. What is absolutely clear is that physicists simply do not yet know if there are extra dimensions a fraction of a millimeter in size, dimensions of infinite size or only the dimensions we see. What's also clear is that the large hadron collider, the world's most powerful tool for studying subatomic particles, is likely to provide information permitting scientists to differentiate among these ideas soon after it begins operation in Switzerland in 2007. Randall brings much of the excitement of her field to life as she describes her quest to understand the structure of the universe. B&w illus.

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From *The New Yorker*

Randall, a professor of physics at Harvard, offers a tour of current questions in particle physics, string theory, and cosmology, paying particular attention to the thesis that more physical dimensions exist than are usually acknowledged. Writing for a general audience, Randall is patient and kind: she encourages readers to skip around in the text, corrals mathematical equations in an appendix at the back, and starts off each chapter with an allegorical story, in a manner recalling the work of George Gamow. Although the subject itself is intractably difficult to follow, the exuberance of Randall's narration is appealing. She's honest about the limits of the known, and almost revels in the uncertainties that underlie her work—including the possibility that some day it may all be proved wrong.

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From *Booklist*

A theoretical physicist who specializes in the so-called standard model of particle physics, Randall explains the particles and forces depicted in that model, and where the model fails as a picture of the real subatomic world. (For example, it does not explain gravity's weakness compared with electromagnetism and the weak and strong nuclear forces.) Randall's renown among physicists derives from her proposed solutions to deficiencies in the standard model, which, unlike some of the outre propositions of string theory, can be experimentally tested. That she borrows from string theory the concept of "branes" will be of high interest to science readers, for if vindicated by results from particle accelerators, she will have discovered evidence that extra dimensions are real places that gravity leaks into, an achievement that would seem to be Nobel Prize territory. Randall writes as clearly as possible, but in order to follow her text, readers will need to persevere; those who attentively do can consider themselves inducted into the fifth dimension. *Gilbert Taylor*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sandra Davis:

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