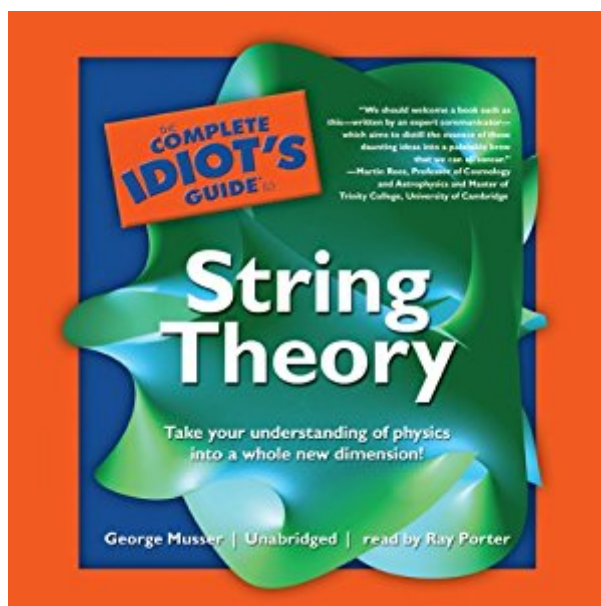


The book was found

The Complete Idiot's Guide To String Theory



Synopsis

Everything is connected… We're living in the midst of a scientific revolution that's captured the general public's attention and imagination. The aim of this new revolution is to develop a 'theory of everything' -- a set of laws of physics that will explain all that can be explained, ranging from the tiniest subatomic particle to the universe as a whole. Here, readers will learn the ideas behind the theories, and their effects upon our world, our civilization, and ourselves. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In this book, George Musser has made an attempt to introduce the concept of string theory to the masses; however, I don't think this "idiot's guide" really accomplishes that goal. Musser covers a wide range of topics in twenty-three bite size chapters of about ten to twelve pages each. I have found in chapter after chapter that the discussion is too superficial to really grasp the concepts discussed. If you think of the vast knowledge of this subject matter as being a large pond, this book will simply give you bits and pieces of information like a rock skimming across the surface of the pond. If you had no prior knowledge of the subject matter, I just think you would walk away with not much more than a smattering of facts and information, but no real depth of understanding. Of course, to be fair, this is a difficult subject to "translate" into the common vernacular so to speak, but I know some justice can be done to this feat. I know because I have read the books written by Brian Greene on the subject. For example, Green's book "The Elegant Universe" did a splendid job of presenting the concepts of string theory and the cosmos in a manner that allowed comprehension by the non-expert. Nevertheless, in his book, Musser touches on many subjects, such as relativity,

quantum theory and the world of the small, the Standard Model, black holes, the big bang, time travel, gravitons, strings, loop quantum gravity, extra dimensions, parallel universes, symmetry, branes, testing string theory, and more. New terms introduced are defined in sidebars as are explanations of key ideas and concepts albeit tersely. If you can be content by a collection of "fast facts" on this subject matter, you will probably find this book satisfying.

Book Review () Complete Idiot's Guide to String Theory This is a beautiful book, not only in its clarity but in its proper understanding that quanta are primary over particles. Yet it still tries to sell you on the idea that strings are physical, just as 19th century science tried to sell us on the concept that mind is physical. But, to get back to the controlling metaphor, IMHO just as we have minds, and our minds are primary (controlling) over our bodies, particles are controlled by quanta. Scientists so far have mixed the metaphor and have not been able to understand that quanta control particles, condemning strings to the physical world of the particle. So like Ponce de Leon, and his search for the fanciful fountain of youth, it seeks some fanciful solution to the "extra dimensions" necessary to explain particle activity in physical, rather than naturally in mental space. But in fact the "extra" dimensions are not hidden or curled up in physical dimensions, the extra dimensions, like all quanta, are mental and the extra, controlling dimensions are mental as well. -Ever since Hume, science has imprisoned us in the dark cave of materialism and blind empiricism and needs to restore us to the rational sunlight of plato (plotinus) -- see my website (...) or search in Google with a search term such as Clough platonic theory of mind Site: (...)

I read this book early on to gain understanding about String Theory, which had languished for years because of how this untested theory might effect a physicist's career. I found the book to be surprisingly insightful. Ed Witten finally united various string theories into one, by declaring that they were all just different views of the same thing. He called his unifying theory 'M Theory'. No one seems to know what the 'M' stands for, but there has been a lot of speculation. So it is.

I confess I'm still slogging through the first half. So much new information. A very good feature, is how this writer refers you to other parts of the book both material already covered and material in later chapters. I really appreciate the short glossary in Appendix A which I usually ignored in the past. Also some good follow up info in Appendix B. Especially the information about cosmology. This author also maintains a web site for errata plus some more resource links. When I finish George Musser's book I think I'll be prepared enough to tackle Brian Greene's "The Elegant

Universe" next. Maybe even dig out my old Hawkings book that I never finished.

I hide this inside my "Playboys" so no one knows what I'm reading

I don't go by one book on this subject. This book is very welcome while on this path.

I am always skeptical of physics for laypeople that avoids all the math. The math of string theory, however, is for experts only. Musser does a great job of explaining the lay of the land. He does not only string theory, but all the background needed to make sense of string theory. I do think string theory is seriously overhyped. It makes no testable predictions (as of yet).

Having some experience with this subject, I purchased this book to fill in gaps in knowledge I have about the "current state" of String Theory among physicists. The part that needs improvement is the "In The Loop" sections, that are supposed to give information about the physicists who are writing about the current state of study on the subject. It may only be the academic in me, but I wish the author had provided dates on the material included in "In the Loop" simply because it would give a clearer picture of where the reader is in spacetime when reading this book. ...since it is about spacetime and all...I would however recommend it for a great introduction to get one thinking about this exciting, emerging field that may well provide the Big Answer we as a people have been searching for since general relativity shook up the apple cart, so to speak.

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