

KITTY FERGUSON

# MEASURING THE UNIVERSE

*Our Historic Quest to Chart the  
Horizons of Space and Time*

FOREWORD BY NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON,  
ASTROPHYSICIST AND DIRECTOR, MUSEUM OF PLANETARIUM

# Measuring The Universe Our Historic Quest To Chart The Horizons Of Space And Time

**Kitty Ferguson**



## **Measuring The Universe Our Historic Quest To Chart The Horizons Of Space And Time:**

Measuring the Universe Kitty Ferguson, 2000-08-01 More than 2 000 years ago Eratosthenes in Alexandria used a stick a hole in the ground sunlight at summer solstice and elementary geometry to measure the circumference of the Earth with surprising accuracy long before anyone was able to circumnavigate it Today scientists are attempting to measure the entire universe and to determine its origin Although the methods have changed the quest to chart the horizons of space and time continues to be one of the great adventures of science *Measuring the Universe* is an eloquent chronicle of the men and women from Aristarchus to Cassini Sir Isaac Newton to Henrietta Leavitt and Stephen Hawking who have gradually unlocked the mysteries of how far and in so doing have changed our ideas about the size and nature of the universe and our place in it Kitty Ferguson reveals their methods to have been as inventive as their results were and are eye opening Advances such as Copernicus s revolutionary insights about the arrangement of the solar system William Herschel s meticulous creation of the first three dimensional map of the universe and Edwin Hubble s astonishing discovery that the universe is expanding have by turns revolutionized our concept of the universe Connecting centuries of breakthroughs with the political and cultural events surrounding them Ferguson makes astronomy part of the sweep of history To measure the seemingly immeasurable scientists have always pushed the boundaries of the imagination today for example facing the paradox of an ever expanding universe that doesn t appear to expand into anything In Kitty Ferguson s skillful hands the unimaginable becomes accessible and the splendid quest something we all can share

*Measuring the Universe* Kitty Ferguson, 1999 More than 2 000 years ago Eratosthenes in Alexandria used a stick a hole in the ground sunlight at summer solstice and elementary geometry to measure the circumference of the Earth with surprising accuracy long before anyone was able to circumnavigate it Today scientists are attempting to measure the entire universe and to determine its origin Although the methods have changed the quest to chart the horizons of space and time continues to be one of the great adventures of science *Measuring the Universe* is an eloquent chronicle of the men and women from Aristarchus to Cassini Sir Isaac Newton to Henrietta Leavitt and Stephen Hawking who have gradually unlocked the mysteries of how far and in so doing have changed our ideas about the size and nature of the universe and our place in it Kitty Ferguson reveals their methods to have been as inventive as their results were and are eye opening Advances such as Copernicus s revolutionary insights about the arrangement of the solar system William Herschel s meticulous creation of the first three dimensional map of the universe and Edwin Hubble s astonishing discovery that the universe is expanding have by turns revolutionized our concept of the universe Connecting centuries of breakthroughs with the political and cultural events surrounding them Ferguson makes astronomy part of the sweep of history To measure the seemingly immeasurable scientists have always pushed the boundaries of the imagination today for example facing the paradox of an ever expanding universe that doesn t appear to expand into anything In Kitty Ferguson s skillful hands the unimaginable becomes accessible and the splendid quest something we all can share **Ibn**

**‘Arabî - Time and Cosmology** Mohamed Haj Yousef,2014-04-04 This book is the first comprehensive attempt to explain Ibn Arab s distinctive view of time and its role in the process of creating the cosmos and its relation with the Creator By comparing this original view with modern theories of physics and cosmology Mohamed Haj Yousef constructs a new cosmological model that may deepen and extend our understanding of the world while potentially solving some of the drawbacks in the current models such as the historical Zeno s paradoxes of motion and the recent Einstein Podolsky Rosen paradox EPR that underlines the discrepancies between Quantum Mechanics and Relativity DECODING STARLIGHT: AN ELEMENTARY TALE OF GENESIS Dr. Sudipta Das, Our Universe is majestic magnificent in its splendour and deeply mysterious at the same time Throughout this book we shall try to act as Cosmic Detectives Through careful observation of some very elementary clues scattered across the sky we try to gradually discover some of the deepest and darkest secrets or mysteries of the Universe From our familiar shoreline on the Earth we dare to venture into the harrowing depths of vast unknown Cosmic abyss Believe me it will be a fascinating journey indeed *The Dream of the West, Pt II* Brian Lasater,2008 This volume looks at the ancient heritage of Greek philosophy and Mesopotamian astronomy and examines the history of map making coastal and celestial navigation and astronomy from 1487 1727 *Gaither's Dictionary of Scientific Quotations* Carl C. Gaither,Alma E. Cavazos-Gaither,2012-01-05 This unprecedented collection of 27 000 quotations is the most comprehensive and carefully researched of its kind covering all fields of science and mathematics With this vast compendium you can readily conceptualize and embrace the written images of scientists laymen politicians novelists playwrights and poets about humankind s scientific achievements Approximately 9000 high quality entries have been added to this new edition to provide a rich selection of quotations for the student the educator and the scientist who would like to introduce a presentation with a relevant quotation that provides perspective and historical background on his subject Gaither s Dictionary of Scientific Quotations Second Edition provides the finest reference source of science quotations for all audiences The new edition adds greater depth to the number of quotations in the various thematic arrangements and also provides new thematic categories *The Physics of the Buffyverse* Jennifer Ouellette,2006-12-26 Physics with a Buffy the Vampire Slayer pop culture chaser In the tradition of the bestselling *The Physics of Star Trek* acclaimed science writer Jennifer Ouellette explains fundamental concepts in the physical sciences through examples culled from the hit TV shows Buffy the Vampire Slayer and its spin off Angel The weird and wonderful world of the Buffyverse where the melding of magic and science is an everyday occurrence provides a fantastical jumping off point for looking at complex theories of biology chemistry and theoretical physics From surreal vampires demons and interdimensional portals to energy conservation black holes and string theory *The Physics of the Buffyverse* is serious and palatable science for the rest of us **Gaining the High Ground over Evolutionism** Robert J. O'Keefe,2012-10-24 The controversy surrounding the origin of the universe earth and all living things is an ongoing debate in the public sphere In *Gaining the High Ground over Evolutionism* author Robert J O'Keefe

presents analysis leading to the realization that to obtain knowledge of origin is also to discover the origin of knowledge. Gaining the High Ground over Evolutionism recognizes the ideological nature of the topic of origin. It steps out of the realm of science and begins to deal with the question by reviewing the scientific revolution and its implications in Western thought, studying the interpretation of Genesis 1 and describing relevant aspects of the history of geology, biology, and astronomy. O'Keefe summarizes science as a means of gaining knowledge and discusses the scientific method as it is applied to natural history. He examines how the court system has dealt with the controversy, draws points from C. S. Lewis's argument against naturalism, and then confronts the ideology behind evolutionary science, the philosophy of naturalism, presenting what he sees are the best arguments against it. Finally, he summons back the grounds for the authority of the Bible and discusses the partnership of reason and faith. Expanding the scope of inquiry beyond the confines of science, O'Keefe shows that the idea of a creator needs to be attended with more seriousness than post-Enlightenment science and philosophy have ever thought necessary.

*Thomas Hardy's Novel Universe* Pamela Gossin, 2017-03-02 In this, the first book-length study of astronomy in Hardy's writing, historian of science and literary scholar Pamela Gossin brings the analytical tools of both disciplines to bear as she offers unexpected and sophisticated readings of seven novels that enrich Darwinian and feminist perspectives on his work, extend formalist evaluations of his achievement as a writer, and provide fresh interpretations of enigmatic passages and scenes. In an elegantly crafted introduction, Gossin draws together the shared critical values and methods of literary studies and the history of science to articulate a hybrid model of scholarly interpretation and analysis that promotes cross-disciplinary compassion and understanding within the current contention of the science/culture wars. She then situates Hardy's own deeply interdisciplinary knowledge of astronomy and cosmology within both literary and scientific traditions, from the ancient world through the Victorian era. Gossin offers insightful new assessments of *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *The Return of the Native*, *Two on a Tower*, *The Woodlanders*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, and *Jude the Obscure*, arguing that Hardy's personal synthesis of ancient and modern astronomy with mythopoetic and scientific cosmologies enabled him to write as a literary cosmologist for the post-Darwinian world. The profound new myths that comprise Hardy's novel universe can be read as a sustained set of literary thought experiments by which he critiques the possibilities, limitations, and dangers of living out the storylines that such imaginative cosmologies project for his time and ours.

**The Story of Western Science** Susan Wise Bauer, 2015-04-27 A riveting road map to the development of modern scientific thought. In the tradition of her perennial bestseller *The Well-Educated Mind*, Susan Wise Bauer delivers an accessible, entertaining, and illuminating springboard into the scientific education you never had. Far too often, public discussion of science is carried out by journalists, voters, and politicians who have received their science secondhand. *The Story of Western Science* shows us the joy and importance of reading groundbreaking science writing for ourselves and guides us back to the masterpieces that have changed the way we think about our world, our cosmos, and ourselves. Able to be referenced.

individually or read together as the narrative of Western scientific development the book's twenty eight succinct chapters lead readers from the first science texts by Hippocrates Plato and Aristotle through twentieth century classics in biology physics and cosmology The Story of Western Science illuminates everything from mankind's earliest inquiries to the butterfly effect from the birth of the scientific method to the rise of earth science and the flowering of modern biology Each chapter recommends one or more classic books and provides entertaining accounts of crucial contributions to science vivid sketches of the scientist writers and clear explanations of the mechanics underlying each concept The Story of Western Science reveals science to be a dramatic undertaking practiced by some of history's most memorable characters It reminds us that scientific inquiry is a human pursuit an essential often deeply personal sometimes flawed frequently brilliant way of understanding the world The Story of Western Science is an entertaining and unique synthesis Times Higher Education a fluidly written narrative that celebrates the inexorable force of human curiosity Wall Street Journal and a bright informative resource for readers seeking to understand science through the eyes of the men and women who shaped its history Kirkus

Previously published as The Story of Science      Learning to Read the Earth and Sky Russ Colson ,Mary Colson,2016-12-01 Is it time to refresh the way you think about teaching Earth science Learning to Read the Earth and Sky is the multifaceted resource you need to bring authentic science and enthusiasm into your classroom It offers inspiration for reaching beyond prepared curricula engaging in discovery along with your students and using your lessons to support the Next Generation Science Standards NGSS The book provides examples of Earth science labs and activities you and your students can do as co investigators insights into student expectations and misconceptions plus ideas for inspiring true investigation stories of real scientific discovery translated for classroom consideration exploration of how you can mentor students as a teacher scholar and guidance on how to translate the sweeping core ideas of the NGSS into specific examples students can touch see and experience The authors of Learning to Read the Earth and Sky are husband and wife educators who promote science as something to figure out not just something to know They write It is our hope that readers will find our book short on edu speak long on the joy of doing science and full of stories of students classrooms scientists and Earth and sky      **The Big Bang** Joseph Silk,2000-12-06 Provides a history of scientific discovery about the birth of the universe      **Scripture and Cosmology** Kyle Greenwood,2015-09-03 Kyle Greenwood introduces readers to ancient Near Eastern cosmology and the ways in which the Bible speaks within that context He then traces the way the Bible was read through Aristotelian and Copernican cosmologies and discusses how its ancient conceptions should be understood in light of Scripture's authority and contemporary science      *The Ancient Beginnings of Science From Pre-Science to the Age of Greece, With Modern-Day Applications* Ronald A. Brown,2020-03-17 The Ancient Beginnings of Science From Pre Science to the Age of Greece With Modern Day Applications By Ronald A Brown For more than 2 500 years it has been assumed that science and mathematics originated solely in ancient Greece however this assumption is now known to be invalid Recently available knowledge has

shown that the ancient Hindus must also be included as one of the earliest precursors of modern mathematics and science according to a set of criteria developed by Ronald A Brown namely the trifecta of philosophy theory and abstract mathematics This trifecta implies that only the early Hindus and Greeks are true forerunners of modern science as they alone were the first to recognize that nature is rational and can therefore be understood by human reason The ensuing developments including selected modern topics are discussed in historical detail and demonstrate that the role of history is to clarify what is significant what remains after having distilled out what is not essential

**The Single Monad Model of the Cosmos** Mohamed Haj Yousef, 2014-06-27 Ibn Arabi is the only scholar who was able to formulate a unique cosmological model that is capable of explaining our observations as well as many phenomena in physics and cosmology and even solve some perplexing modern and historical riddles in science and philosophy such as the EPR paradox and Zeno paradoxes of motion Moreover the Single Monad Model explains for the first time in history the importance of the week as a basic unit of space and time together This prodigious theory is based on the notion of the intertwining days where Ibn Arabi shows that at every instance of time there is indeed one full week of creation that takes place in the globe Since its publication in 2008 this book has triggered an overwhelming response and I hope this expanded edition will help promote further Ibn Arabi's wisdom that is still buried in his multitudes of books and treatises Ibn Arabi is one of the most prominent figures in Islamic history especially in relation to Sufism and Islamic philosophy and theology In this book we want to explore his cosmology and in particular his view of time in that cosmological context comparing his approaches to the relevant conclusions and principles of modern physics whenever possible We shall see that Ibn Arabi had a unique and comprehensive view of time which has never been discussed by any other philosopher or scientist before or even after Ibn Arabi In the final two chapters we shall discuss some of the ways his novel view of time and cosmology may be used to build a complete model of the cosmos that may deepen and extend our understanding of the world while potentially solving some of the drawbacks and paradoxes in the current cosmological models of modern physics As we discuss in the opening chapter there is no doubt that time is one of the most important issues in physics cosmology philosophy and theology and hundreds of books and articles have been published in these fields However none of these studies have fully developed Ibn Arabi's unique view of time in its cosmological dimensions although his conception of time is indeed central to understanding for example his controversial theory of the oneness of being One possible reason for this relative neglect is the difficult symbolic language he usually used Also he didn't discuss this subject at length in any single place in his extant works not even in chapters 59 291 and 390 of the Fut h t whose titles relate directly to time so we must piece together his overall cosmological understanding of time from his scattered treatments in many works and different contexts within his magnum opus the Fut h t and other books Therefore this book may be considered the first comprehensive attempt to set forth all the relevant dimensions of time in Ibn Arabi's wider cosmology and cosmogony To start with Ibn Arabi considers time to be a product of our human imagination without any real

separately existing entity Nevertheless he still considers it to be one of the four main constituents of existence We need this imagined conception of time to chronologically arrange events and what for us are the practically defining motions of the celestial orbs and other physical objects but for Ibn Arab real existence is attributable only to the actually existing thing that moves not to motion nor to time nor space in which this motion is observed Thus Ibn Arab distinguishes between two kinds of time natural and para natural and he explains that they both originate from the two forces of the soul the active force and the intellective force respectively Then he explains that this imaginary time is cyclical circular relative discrete and inhomogeneous Ibn Arab also gives a precise definition drawing on the specific usage of the Qur'an and earlier Arab conceptions of time of the day daytime and night showing how these definitions are related to the relative motions of the celestial orbs including the earth where every orb has its own day and those days are normally measured by our normal observable day that we count on the earth

Pythagoras Kitty Ferguson,2011-03-03 This is the story of Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans whose insights transformed the ancient world and still inspire the realms of science mathematics philosophy and the arts Einstein said that the most incredible thing about our universe was that it was comprehensible at all As Kitty Ferguson explains Pythagoras had much the same idea but 2 500 years earlier Though known by many only for his famous Theorem in fact the pillars of our scientific tradition belief that the universe is rational that there is unity to all things and that numbers and mathematics are a powerful guide to truth about nature and the cosmos hark back to the convictions of this legendary scholar Kitty Ferguson brilliantly evokes Pythagoras ancient world of showing how ideas spread in antiquity and chronicles the incredible influence he and his followers have had on so many extraordinary people in the history of Western thought and science Pythagoras influence on the ideas and therefore on the destiny of the human race was probably greater than that of any single man before or after him Arthur Koestler

**The Privileged Planet** Guillermo Gonzalez,Jay W. Richards,2020-01-07 Earth The Final Frontier Contrary to popular belief Earth is not an insignificant blip on the universe's radar Our world proves anything but average in Guillermo Gonzalez and Jay W Richards The Privileged Planet How Our Place in the Cosmos Is Designed for Discovery But what exactly does Earth bring to the table How does it prove its worth among numerous planets and constellations in the vastness of the Milky Way In The Privileged Planet you'll learn about the world's life sustaining capabilities water and its miraculous makeup protection by the planetary giants and how our planet came into existence in the first place

**Understanding Physics** David C. Cassidy,Gerald Holton,F. James Rutherford,2013-11-27 Understanding Physics provides a thorough grounding in contemporary physics while placing physics into its social and historical context Based in large part on the highly respected Project Physics Course developed by two of the authors it also integrates the results of recent pedagogical research The text thus teaches about the basic phenomena in the physical world and the concepts developed to explain them shows that science is a rational human endeavor with a long and continuing tradition involving many different cultures and people develops facility in critical thinking reasoned



argumentation evaluation of evidence mathematical modeling and ethical values The treatment emphasizes not only what we know but also how we know it why we believe it and what effects that knowledge has Why do we believe the Earth and planets revolve around the Sun Why do we believe that matter is made of atoms How do relativity theory and quantum mechanics alter our conception of Nature and in what ways do they leave the classical concepts unchanged What impact does the knowledge of finite energy resources have on our society How have applications of fundamental science such as the steam engine the laser the electric generator the transistor affected our lives How does the evidence for non scientific ideas such as UFOs ESP and the like differ from the evidence for accepted scientific results

**The Music of Pythagoras** Kitty Ferguson, 2011-01-10 The enthralling story of Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans whose insights transformed the ancient world and still inspire the realms of science mathematics philosophy and the arts Pythagoras's influence on the ideas and therefore on the destiny of the human race was probably greater than that of any single man before or after him wrote Arthur Koestler Though most people know of him only for the famous Pythagorean Theorem  $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$  in fact the pillars of our scientific tradition belief that the universe is rational that there is unity to all things and that numbers and mathematics are a powerful guide to truth about nature and the cosmos hark back to the convictions of this legendary sixth century B C scholar Born around 570 B C on the cultured Aegean island of Samos Pythagoras according to ancient tales studied with the sage Thales nearby at Miletus and with priests and scribes in Egypt and Babylon Eventually he founded his own school at Croton in southern Italy where he and his followers began to unravel the surprising deep truths concealed behind such ordinary tasks as tuning a lyre While considering why some string lengths produced beautiful sounds and others discordant ones they uncovered the ratios of musical harmony and recognized that hidden behind the confusion and complexity of nature are patterns and orderly relationships They had surprised the Creator at his drafting board and had glimpsed the mind of God Some of them later would also find something darker in numbers and nature irrationality a revelation so unsettling and subversive that it may have contributed to the destruction of their brotherhood

*Apollo's Fire* Michael Sims, 2008 A lighthearted tour of the developmental synergies of life throughout the course of a single day touches on a broad variety of cultural and natural topics from the color of the sky and the course of the sun to the iconography of prehistoric Egyptian sculpture and the circadian rhythms of Japanese moon imagery By the author of *Adam's Navel* Reprint

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