



Stephen Hawking: A Biography

Kristine Larsen

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"His devilishly complex cosmological theories are handled engagingly in accessible language for the lay reader.... [T]his is a touching portrait that will grace any bookshelf." —Astronomy Now

Stephen Hawking is arguably the most famous physicist since Albert Einstein. His decades-long struggle with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), combined with his singular brilliance as a cosmologist, has fascinated both the public and his colleagues in science.

In this engagingly written biography, Kristine Larsen, a physicist and astronomer herself, presents a candid and insightful portrait of Hawking's personal and professional life. Avoiding the hero-worship sometimes found in popular works on Hawking, Larsen emphasizes that Hawking is first and foremost a scientist whose work has made significant contributions to our understanding of the nature and origins of the universe.

Writing in nontechnical language for the lay reader, Larsen clearly explains Hawking's complex scientific accomplishments, while telling the story of his challenging life.

Topics include Hawking's early lack of focus as a college student; the impact of ALS on his career and personal life; his groundbreaking work on radiating black holes; his later cutting-edge theories of black holes, cosmology, and the anthropic principle; the amazing publishing success of *A Brief History of Time*; and his status as a pop icon and spokesperson for the interplay of science and society. Larsen situates Hawking's sometimes-controversial work within the broader context of scientific peer review and public debate, and discusses his personal life with compassion, respect, and honesty.

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