



The Edge of the Sky: All You Need to Know About the All-There-Is

By Roberto Trotta

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From the big bang to black holes, from dark matter to dark energy, from the origins of the universe to its ultimate destiny, *The Edge of the Sky* tells the story of the most important discoveries and mysteries in modern cosmology—with a twist. The book's lexicon is limited to the thousand most common words in the English language, excluding *physics*, *energy*, *galaxy*, or even *universe*. Through the eyes of a fictional scientist (Student-People) hunting for dark matter with one of the biggest telescopes (Big-Seers) on Earth (Home-World), cosmologist Roberto Trotta explores the most important ideas about our universe (All-there-is) in language simple enough for anyone to understand.

A unique blend of literary experimentation and science popularization, this delightful book is a perfect gift for any aspiring astronomer. *The Edge of the Sky* tells the story of the universe on a human scale, and the result is out of this world.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Our Universe is described by only six numbers. In this entertaining and enjoyable book, Trotta recounts our knowledge of the cosmos with only the most 700-odd used words in the English dictionary. His extremely original approach conveys all the information with the most minimalistic use of language. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in learning about the latest discoveries about our Universe within the framework of an "avant-garde" and experimental writing style."

—**Raul Jimenez, Professor of Theoretical Physics and Astrophysics, University of Barcelona**

"How many different chords must you know before you can appreciate a symphony? How many different brush strokes must you master before you can appreciate a painting? How many different words do you need to use to appreciate the wonders of the universe? Roberto Trotta claims just 1,000, and bravely put pen to paper to try and prove it in this enjoyable short volume."

—**Lawrence M. Krauss, Foundation Professor and Director of the Origins Project at Arizona State University, and the author *A Universe from Nothing* and *The Physics of Star Trek*.**

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—**Lawrence M. Krauss, Foundation Professor and Director of the Origins Project at Arizona State University, and the author *A Universe from Nothing* and *The Physics of Star Trek*.**

"The extraordinary story of the Universe and our journey to understand it is not an easy one to tell to the general public. But because it is the story that binds us all together, it is important to tell it in myriad ways to reach as many people as possible. *The Edge of the Sky* is an inventive, enjoyable and thought-provoking contribution to that effort."

—*Nature*

"*The Edge of the Sky*... is probably the strangest and most poetic popular science book I've ever read. [Trotta] limits himself to using the 1,000 most common words in English... the effect is to produce a strangely hypnotic, poetic quality that reminded me of Longfellow attempting a science prose poem."

—**Brian Clegg, *Huffington Post* blog**

"A remarkable feat."—**Vocabulary.com**

"If you are puzzled by the reports from the telescopes (Far-Seers) moving through space finding new things, then this book will satisfy the scientist (Student-Person) in you."—**Roanoke Times**

"This charmingly accessible book is ideal for someone just dipping a toe into astrophysics and cosmology for the first time, with an interesting gimmick that lends his prose the flavor of folklore or myth."—**Jennifer Ouellette, *Scientific American's* Cocktail Party Physics blog**

"A delightful little gem for adults and children alike that leads you on a unique journey with its hypnotic, disarming prose. There are many books that attempt to creatively explain the universe in simple terms; this is one of the few that succeeds."

—**Bruce Bassett, Head of Cosmology at the African Institute of Mathematical Sciences and Professor of Applied Mathematics at the University of Cape Town, and author of *Introducing Relativity***

"*The Edge of the Sky* ranges from exoplanets, through dark matter and dark energy and even supersymmetry... without any technical words. Speaking as someone who works on the "Big Ring" in the "city in a land full of safe places to put your money in": this is big fun, and amazing that so much can be said in so few words."

—**Jonathan Butterworth, Professor of Physics, University College London**

"*The Edge of the Sky* is a highly original book, which explains the foundations and the latest discoveries and ideas in astronomy: from planets and life elsewhere in the universe to dark energy and the multiverse. Roberto Trotta, a leading cosmologist from Imperial College London, has managed to achieve this by only using fewer than the 1,000 most common words of the English language. This is an inspiring book for everyone."

—**Ofer Lahav, Perren Professor of Astronomy, University College London**

"Cosmology and astrophysics are confusing at the best of times. But, against all the quantum odds, Dr. Roberto Trotta has managed to explain the topics using just 1,000 unique words. Readers of *The Edge Of The Sky* will be treated to a delightful, poetic journey into our world, other worlds and beyond without ever feeling like their vocabulary is holding them back.

And yet that is not this book's greatest achievement. More impressive than the linguistic poetry and more profound than the hard science herein is the overwhelming sense of awe and wonder this book gifts the reader.

This book will appeal to any adult who as eight year child looked up to the stars and wondered about the universe. Best of all, the eight year olds of today don't have to wait until they are adults to discover it for themselves."

—**Stephen Follows, Writer and Film Producer**

"Roberto Trotta's clever metaphors illuminate dark matter and dark energy. This book is a delightful, poetic, and informative read about all there is in the Universe."

—**Edward Frenkel, Professor of Mathematics, University of California, Berkeley, and author of *Love and Math***

"*The Edge of the Sky* is an enthralling read that turns on its head the conventional (and in my view thoroughly misguided) wisdom that complicated scientific ideas can only be described using complicated language. Roberto Trotta takes the reader on a fascinating and entertaining journey through the very latest discoveries in astrophysics and cosmology, using only the 1000 most common English words, but never

compromising on the clarity and detail of his scientific descriptions. *The Edge of the Sky* captures with child-like wonder the mysteries of the cosmos in language accessible to everyone, making it eminently suitable for children of all ages!"

—**Martin Hendry, Professor of Astrophysics, University of Glasgow**

"A wonder-full not-afraid story-telling try-it-and-see, about big-sky-study of today with only the ten-hundred most used words. Very not-usual, most good. Fun, too. Buy now!"

—**Ian Stewart, Emeritus Professor of Mathematics at the University of Warwick, and author of *Visions of Infinity***

"Never before did we know so much about our universe, the All-There-Is. But are we getting any closer to understanding essential components of its true nature, dark matter and dark energy, which dominate by far over the visible, familiar matter? With rare candor and true learning, Roberto Trotta takes us on an intimate adventure in search of possible answers, as he charts the story of our universe from a tiny fraction of a second after the Big Bang to the present - while conveying at the same time the very human, at once exhilarating and humbling experience of this search. All this by using merely seven hundred and seven out of the thousand most common words of the English language, charmingly arranged to shake off the familiar, leaving us to marvel at our Home-World and at the mysteries that lie beyond its edge."

—**Laura Baudis, Professor of Physics, University of Zurich**

"Jargon is a perpetual problem in communicating frontier science to a general audience: everyday specialists are so immersed in their specialized argot that we cease to be aware of the barrier it creates. I therefore applaud this attempt to describe the current state of cosmology in the most stripped-down language possible. The result is transparent, and also full of marvelously vivid turns of phrase, such as "Mr. Einstein's Dark Push." Definitely an original and distinctive addition to the literature in this area."

—**John Peacock FRS, Professor of Cosmology, University of Edinburgh**

"A tale as beautiful as the great spiritual stories - with the difference that this one is built on a solid foundation of fact."

—**David J Hand, Emeritus Professor of Mathematics, Imperial College London, and author of *The Improbability Principle***

"A delightful little gem for adults and children alike that leads you on a unique journey with its hypnotic, disarming prose. There are many books that attempt to creatively explain the universe in simple terms; this is one of the few that succeeds."

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universe. Best of all, the eight year olds of today don't have to wait until they are adults to discover it for themselves."

—**Stephen Follows, Writer and Film Producer**

"A simplified but by no means simplistic introduction to modern cosmology and physics – the flagship sciences of the 'All-There-Is.'... An entertaining exercise...for those student-people who like to ponder the All-There-Is while testing the always-inadequate limits of language."

—**Kirkus Reviews**

"Trotta's deft word choices quickly draw the reader into a surprisingly vivid alternate reality where student-persons (scientists) strive to pierce the mysteries of the All-There-Is: the universe.... [T]he spare writing is elegant, even poetic. Literary experiments tend either to work or to flail with awkwardness; in Trotta's hands, this beautifully written book, with its limited vocabulary, soars."

—**Publishers Weekly, starred review**

"[A] surprisingly clear, and often poetic, primer on such complicated topics as the big bang, dark energy and the possibility of multiverses."

—**Scientific American**

"[A] poetic primer on the universe.... *The Edge of the Sky: All You Need to Know About the All-There-Is* is one part children's book for grownups, one part imaginative exercise in economical yet lyrical language, and wholly wonderful."

—**Brain Pickings**

About the Author

Roberto Trotta is a theoretical cosmologist in the astrophysics group of Imperial College London. He has held research positions at the University of Geneva and the University of Oxford, as well as visiting positions at the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences in Cape Town, the Institut d'Astrophysique de Paris, and the University of California at Santa Barbara. One of the world's leading figures in 'astrostatistics,' a new discipline focusing on the use of statistical methods to solve problems in cosmology and astrophysics, he has published more than fifty scientific papers, contributed to two books and received numerous awards for his research, including the Michelson Prize of Case Western Reserve University, the Lord Kelvin Award of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and a Public Engagement Fellowship by the Science and Technology Facilities Council, UK. www.robertotrotta.com

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Luis Acosta:

The feeling that you get from *The Edge of the Sky: All You Need to Know About the All-There-Is* is the more deep you searching the information that hide inside words the more you get considering reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to recognise but *The Edge of the Sky: All You Need to Know About the All-There-Is* giving you joy feeling of reading. The writer conveys their point in specific way that can be understood simply by anyone who read this because the author of this publication is well-known enough. This particular book also makes your vocabulary increase well. It is therefore easy to understand then can go

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