



## Stephen Hawking: A Life in Science

By John Gribbin, Michael White

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**An updated edition of the definitive biography on Stephen Hawking that marries biography and science to tell the story of one of the most remarkable men in history**

Stephen Hawking is no ordinary scientist. He has broadened our basic understanding of the universe and his theoretical work on black holes and the origins of the cosmos have been groundbreaking, if not downright revolutionary. He has also spent much of his adult life confined to a wheelchair, a victim of ALS. But his physical limitations have done nothing to confine him intellectually.

Hawking would already be remarkable for his cutting-edge work in theoretical physics alone. However, he has also managed to popularize science unlike anyone else. He achieved almost cult-like fame with his *A Brief History of Time* and has since become a household name by making the complexities of cosmology accessible to millions of people.

In *Stephen Hawking*, science writers White and Gribbin have painted a compelling portrait of a scientific mind that seemingly knows no bounds. Weaving together clear explanations of Hawking's science with a detailed, balanced, and sensitive personal history, readers will come to know and appreciate both sides of this incredible man.

**Includes new updates in Hawking's biography and the recent discovery of the Higgs-Boson (or "God") particle.**

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### Editorial Review

#### From Publishers Weekly

The forces shaping the life of renowned physicist Hawking seem as strangely charged as those he describes in his physics. His British biographers, both scientists, examine their subject's personal history and ably fill in the spaces between his great leaps of theory. They avoid sentimentalizing the physicist's disabling ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), which struck him in his early 20s, while acknowledging that the condition has had a dramatic impact on his life and reputation. Gathering information from Hawking's colleagues (but not his estranged wife), the authors discuss his authorial success as well as his academic career, not failing to offer such bits of humanizing gossip as that he has a poster of Marilyn Monroe on his office door. Readers of Hawking's bestselling *A Brief History of Time* will find much of interest in this longer view of physics at work in one extraordinary person's life.

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#### From School Library Journal

YA-- This biography is really two books in one: the story of Hawking's life, and an explanation of the theoretical concepts related to his research into black holes and the origin of our universe. The authors describe his early life as a gifted, but not always motivated, student in the British school system and his eventual rise to scientific and popular celebrity status. The chapters that chronicle his heroic struggle with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) are particularly poignant. Those chapters that deal with the physics behind Hawking's research are written in a nontechnical style not unlike Hawking's own *A Brief History of Time* (Bantam, 1990). In fact, they provide a very accessible introduction to some of the most esoteric areas of modern physics and quantum mechanics. YAs interested in science will enjoy and relate to this title.

- Dennis McFaden, Thomas Jefferson Sci-Tech, Fairfax County, VA

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#### From Library Journal

Perhaps today's reigning world superstar of science--arguably a contemporary Einstein--is the brilliant, inspirational, and tragic Stephen Hawking. Stricken with the genetic affliction that in the United States is most commonly called "Lou Gehrig's Disease," Hawking has, from his wheelchair and through a speech synthesizer, conceived many of the truly revolutionary theories of modern physics. This biography draws upon interviews with many of Hawking's family, friends, and professional colleagues. In doing so, it conveys a very human, very readable account of the life and career of the enigmatic author of the technical best seller *A Brief History of Time* (LJ 4/15/88). White and Gribbin, two excellent science writers, are an ideal combination for this biography. It is sure to be popular in public libraries and will also be useful in undergraduate libraries. A complete scholarly biography of Hawking is probably several years away, but it is something that should be anticipated eagerly.

-Gregg Sapp, Montana State Univ. Libs., Bozeman

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