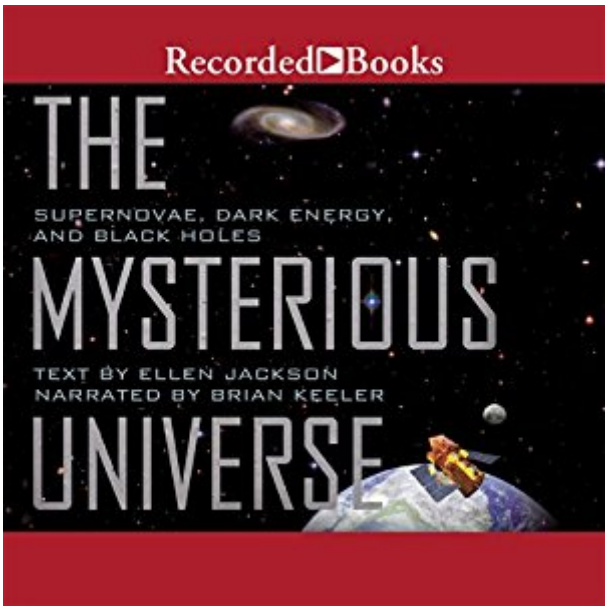
The Mysterious Universe: Supernovae, Dark Energy, And Black Holes



Synopsis

The universe is rapidly expanding. Of that much scientists are certain. But how fast? And with what implications regarding the fate of the universe? Ellen Jackson and Nic Bishop follow Dr. Alex Fillippenko and his High-Z Supernova Search Team to Mauna Kea volcano in Hawaii, where they will study space phenomena and look for supernovae, dying stars that explode with the power of billions of hydrogen bombs. Dr. Fillippenko looks for black holes--areas in space with such a strong gravitational pull that no matter or energy can escape from them--with his robotic telescope. And they study the effects of dark energy, the mysterious force that scientists believe is pushing the universe apart, causing its constant and accelerating expansion.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I should have read the title close enough before buying this book for my kid who is very interested in space. This book is about a scientist, not about about Supernovae, Dark Energy and Black holes. It discusses a scientist and his family. If I recall it has more pictures of this scientist than it does space. I can’t fault the author though because it’s clearly titled with "(Scientists in the Field Series)."If your kid is interested in knowing more about a scientists life than actually learning about space than this book might be OK for you. My kid actually likes reading about space (particularly Black Holes) so he dropped this book after ten minutes and moved on.I’m giving this review three stars because even if it is about scientists in the field I feel it didn’t really explain what it’s really like to be that hard working scientist pouring over numbers for days on end (not that I’d really know I guess).

This another great book for libraries that allows students to see what an astronomer does - very well

written and engaging.

amazing book- 5/6th grade for a strong reader, otherwise 7/8th grade. High level but very engaging and follow one scientist and his work in Hawaii

"'If it weren't for supernovae, we wouldn't exist,' says Alex [Filippenko]. 'The carbon in our cells, the oxygen that we breathe, the calcium in our bones -- all were cooked up in the stars and expelled in to space by these explosions.'"The heat and pressure in stars fuse simple atoms, tiny particles of matter that make up everything we see, into other, more complex atoms. Without supernovae, these larger atoms, such as carbon and iron, would stay locked inside the stars forever. But when supernovae explode, they scatter these atoms throughout space."Eventually the atoms created in supernovae swirl together like water in a whirlpool to form stars and planets, such as Earth. Carbon and other atoms come together to make up our bodies and the bodies of the plants and animals we see around us. Without supernovae, there would be no flowers or forests, no hummingbirds or humans."Supernovae are also helping scientists understand a mystery that lurks in space. The discovery of a new substance called dark energy has stunned the scientific world. Until the 1990s, no one knew this strange energy existed. In fact, if you had asked a scientist about dark energy twenty years ago, you would have been told to stop watching so many science fiction movies. In contrast, today astronomers think it's very real."This stuff is all so amazing! When I consider how little of the information in this book I knew --- when you consider how little of this information anyone knew until recent years -- you come to understand why it is so essential that dated science books be constantly removed from libraries and classrooms in order to make room for such exceptionally engaging, up-to-date, and stunningly beautiful, informational books as THE MYSTERIOUS UNIVERSE."According to Carl Sagan, a well-known astronomer, the total number of stars is greater than all the grains of sand on all the beaches of Earth combined."THE MYSTERIOUS UNIVERSE is out of this world! Similar to what I've found from reading other volumes of the noted SCIENTISTS IN THE FIELD series, I just learned a wealth of mind-blowing facts -- this time about the universe and matter -- by following an inspirational scientist doing his thing. As noted in the book's fore-matter, Dr. Alex Filippenko is a Berkeley prof who has been voted the "Best Professor on Campus" five times. We trail Alex and one of his student assistants to their nights of observations at the twin Keck telescopes which are perched 13,796 feet above sea level at the peak of Hawaii's Mauna Kea volcano. Then we ride shotgun as Alex heads up to the Lick Observatory on Mount Hamilton, to the east of Silicon Valley."A teaspoon of material from a neutron star would weigh more than a pile of a

billion cars."It’s all in the presentation: I can just imagine how boring this subject matter could have been presented if it had been done Twentieth-century institutional-text style. Instead, you have a work of art that is dominated by the craftsmanship of award-winning photographer Nic Bishop (and whatever higher power may be responsible for setting in motion the process that results in spectacularly stunning supernovae, along with dark energy and black holes). The actual text here takes up roughly thirty percent of the book. The remainder is a rich mix of vivid, captioned photos. The book concludes with resources, bibliography, glossary, and indexing.Scientists now hypothesize that 96 percent of the universe is composed of dark matter and dark energy. If you only know about the other four percent, you definitely need to take a serious look at THE MYSTERIOUS UNIVERSE.

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