



The Fabric of Reality: The Science of Parallel Universes--and Its Implications

By David Deutsch

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For David Deutsch, a young physicist of unusual originality, quantum theory contains our most fundamental knowledge of the physical world. Taken literally, it implies that there are many universes “parallel” to the one we see around us. This multiplicity of universes, according to Deutsch, turns out to be the key to achieving a new worldview, one which synthesizes the theories of evolution, computation, and knowledge with quantum physics. Considered jointly, these four strands of explanation reveal a unified fabric of reality that is both objective and comprehensible, the subject of this daring, challenging book. **The Fabric of Reality** explains and connects many topics at the leading edge of current research and thinking, such as quantum computers (which work by effectively collaborating with their counterparts in other universes), the physics of time travel, the comprehensibility of nature and the physical limits of virtual reality, the significance of human life, and the ultimate fate of the universe. Here, for scientist and layperson alike, for philosopher, science-fiction reader, biologist, and computer expert, is a startlingly complete and rational synthesis of disciplines, and a new, optimistic message about existence.

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Editorial Review

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"Our best theories are not only truer than common sense, they make more sense than common sense," writes physicist David Deutsch. In *The Fabric of Reality*, Deutsch traces what he considers the four main strands of scientific explanation: quantum theory, evolution, computation, and the theory of knowledge. "The four of them taken together form a coherent explanatory structure that is so far-reaching, and has come to encompass so much of our understanding of the world, that in my view it may already properly be called the first Theory of Everything." Deutsch covers some difficult material with unusual clarity. Each chapter ends with a summary and definitions of important terms, which makes the work an invaluable sourcebook.

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Common sense and reality diverge and then come together again in this mind-blowing book. Maintaining that the best explanation for certain quantum phenomena is that there are parallel universes, i.e., multiverses, Oxford physicist Deutsch posits and then attempts to unify four basic strands—quantum physics, epistemology, evolution, and the theory of computation. Just one astonishing consequence is that quantum computers can collaborate between universes. Deutsch's ideas are exotic and challenging, but his text is surprisingly accessible, and he supplies a glossary and summary at the end of every chapter. For motivated readers, this book is a feast for the mind. Strongly recommended for academic and larger public libraries. —Gregg Sapp, Univ. of Miami Lib., Coral Gables, Fla.
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In the library of physics for laypeople, Deutsch's book is unique. Correction: it is multiversal, existing in innumerable universes that Deutsch argues exist alongside the "real" universe that people perceive. Explaining that, and persuading the reader of its scientific truth, makes this work unique. Another of Deutsch's mindbenders is that each person could be resurrected near the Big Crunch (if there is one) by a universal computer with infinite memory, a conclusion discussed (and unfairly dismissed by most scientists, according to Deutsch) in Frank Tipler's *The Physics of Immortality* (1994). Deutsch, a quantum physicist at Oxford University, builds toward the computerized second coming on the basis of the well-known, reproducible experiment that conclusively establishes the quantum nature of light and of reality. He then discusses three more topics—computation theory, evolution, and epistemology—combining them with quantum theory to construct his Theory of Everything, the grail of all theoretical physicists. Deutsch allows that his is a minority view among his peers, but the confidence with which he presents his views, and the absence of condescension in his style, accesses nonscientists to his seemingly alien world(s). *Gilbert Taylor*

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