

NEW BOOKS & MEDIA

Foundation

David S. Goyer and Josh Friedman
Apple TV+, 2021

Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy is one of the seminal sci-fi series of the 1940s and 1950s, but it contains little action and suspense. To modernize the story for television, Apple TV+'s well-acted new series foregrounds action only hinted at in the book series and enhances it with superb technology and costume design. Researchers may be intrigued by the incredible sky elevator. They may also appreciate how *Foundation* addresses the continuing debate on scientific reason versus religious faith and engagingly depicts a character calculating their position in space without the help of a navigation computer. After a shaky start, the series gently pulls you into its world and asks: How much free will do individuals actually have? —PKG



Among the Stars

Ben Turner
Disney+, 2021

Within the first 10 minutes of the documentary series *Among the Stars*, viewers see firsthand how any spacewalk can quickly go wrong. While he was working on the exterior of the International Space Station in July 2013, astronaut Luca Parmitano began to feel water pooling in his helmet. At risk of drowning in his suit, he had to rush back to the station in utter darkness. Footage from the helmet cameras and mission control bring home the agonizing few minutes before Parmitano made it back. But that harrowing tale is just a prelude to the documentary's main story: the mission to repair the Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer. We follow Parmitano and fellow astronaut Andrew Morgan as they train to fix the instrument, which they ultimately did over four spacewalks between November 2019 and January 2020. The six-part series brings home the meticulous preparation behind every minute in space. —RD PT



Frequently Asked Questions About the Universe

Jorge Cham and Daniel Whiteson
Riverhead Books, 2021. \$28.00

Why can't I travel back in time? What happens if I get sucked into a black hole? Where did the universe come from? Those are just a few of the questions addressed by engineer-turned-cartoonist Jorge Cham and physicist Daniel Whiteson in their new book, *Frequently Asked Questions About the Universe*. Inspired by listeners of their podcast, *Daniel and Jorge Explain the Universe*, Cham and Whiteson use nontechnical language and humor to discuss the most up-to-date theories about the cosmos and humans' place in it. Illustrated with Cham's science-themed cartoons, the book is both educational and entertaining. —CC



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Faculty Positions

The Physics Department of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, invites applications for the faculty positions described below. Faculty members at MIT conduct research, teach undergraduate and graduate physics courses, and supervise graduate and undergraduate participation in research. Candidates must show promise in teaching as well as in research. A Ph.D. in physics or physics-related discipline is required by the start of employment. Preference will be given to applicants at the Assistant Professor level.

Apply to the positions at <http://www.academicjobsonline.org>. Complete applications should include a cover letter; a curriculum vitae; a list of publications; and statements describing the applicant's accomplishments, interests, and goals with regard to research (2-3 pages) and with regard to teaching, mentoring, advising, service and/or activities promoting an inclusive work environment (1-2 pages). Applicants should also arrange for at least three letters of reference to be uploaded to the same site. Only web submissions will be accepted.

Candidates who are uncertain whether they fit into a particular search should contact the most relevant search chair.

EXPERIMENTAL NUCLEAR & PARTICLE PHYSICS: The Physics Department of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology invites applications for a faculty position in the Experimental Particle and Nuclear Physics Division. Anticipated start date for this position is summer 2023. We encourage applicants doing research in all areas of nuclear and particle physics. Currently, research groups in the MIT Laboratory for Nuclear Science (<http://web.mit.edu/lns/>) have a wide range of interests, including strong interaction physics, nuclear structure physics, electroweak symmetry breaking, dark matter searches, neutrino physics, and physics beyond the standard model, new detector development and the physics of beams. The deadline for applications is December 1, 2021. Any enquiries should be directed to Professor Gunther Roland, Search Committee Chair, rolandg@mit.edu.

THEORETICAL PHYSICS: The Center for Theoretical Physics at MIT is seeking applications for a junior faculty appointment in high-energy, nuclear, and/or quantum physics, to begin on July 1, 2023. We encourage applicants doing relevant research at any energy scale, including areas such as particle theory in and beyond the standard model; cosmology, dark matter, and astroparticle physics; quantum field theory; QCD and strong interactions, including applications to hot/dense matter and astrophysics; string theory, classical and quantum gravity, holography, and mathematical physics; and quantum computing and quantum information. The deadline for applications is November 15, 2021. Interviews will occur in February 2022. Any inquiries should be directed to Professor Tracy Slatyer, Search Committee Chair, at ctp-facultysearch@mit.edu.

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