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Book Review: Your Cosmic Context: An Introduction to Modern Cosmology

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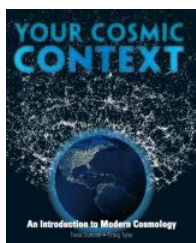
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Your cosmic context : an introduction to modern cosmology



Duncan, Todd. by Todd Duncan and Craig Tyler Pearson Addison-Wesley, 2008

466p, 0132400103 \$80.00, 9780132400107 \$80.00

LC Call Number: [QB981](#)

Duncan (Pacific Univ.) and Tyler (Fort Lewis College) offer up a refreshing new book on cosmology-- arguably today's most active area of astronomical research. Cosmology is usually relegated to the last chapter or two in conventional astronomy works; here, it is the framework for learning about science as a whole. The authors take what they call a "spiral staircase" approach, moving from basic to more difficult concepts by combining historical context, personal perspective, and repetition of key ideas in subsequent chapters, knitting it all together. Their informal writing style is richly peppered with "terminology advisories," "already seen principles," everyday analogies, and sketches to reinforce essential concepts such as the expansion of the universe, dark matter, dark energy, etc., that are often tricky to convey to beginners. On the other hand, the origin of life gets short shrift in light of the book's theme, "What are we doing here?" It would have been nice to have the color images in the text, rather than collected in two galleries. Minor quibbles aside, this is a valuable addition to an already crowded field of cosmology books-- a must have for cosmology buffs or anyone who wants a refresher course.

Summing Up: Highly recommended. General readers; undergraduate, graduate, and technical program students.

Reviewer: [T. D. Oswalt](#), Florida Institute of Technology

Recommendation: Highly recommended

Readership Level: General Readers, Lower-division Undergraduates, Upper-division Undergraduates, Graduate Students, Two-Year Technical Program Students

Interdisciplinary Subjects:

Subject: [Science & Technology - Astronautics & Astronomy](#)