



The Fourth Dimension: A Guided Tour of the Higher Universes

Rudy Rucker, David Povilaitis (Illustrator), Martin Gardner (Foreword by)

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The Fourth Dimension — it's a myth, a reality, a dream, an equation, a hypercube, the face of God, the photograph of everything at once ... and now, *The Fourth Dimension* is this handy paperback. The result is a fantastic, enlightening, and mind-expanding reading experience. In text, pictures, and puzzles, master science and science fiction writer Rudy Rucker immerses his readers in an amazing exploration of a mysterious realm — a realm once seen only by mystics, physicists, and mathematicians. More accessible than *Gödel, Escher, Bach* and more playful than *The Tao of Physics*, Rucker's *The Fourth Dimension* is the most engaging tour of other dimensions since *Flatland*.

David Povilaitis' 200 drawings illustrate Rucker's heady insights while dozens of puzzles and problems make the book a delight to the eye and mind. As Eileen Pollack has written in her rave review, *The Fourth Dimension* is "magical ... Its effects persist beyond its covers." That's because, like everything else in the fourth dimension, this is more than a book, it is a mental spaceship capable of grand tours of universes far beyond our own.

The Fourth Dimension: A Guided Tour of the Higher Universes Details

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Author : Rudy Rucker , David Povilaitis (Illustrator) , Martin Gardner (Foreword by)

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From Reader Review The Fourth Dimension: A Guided Tour of the Higher Universes for online ebook

Brian Sison says

This book takes complex material and presents it in a simple lay-man's language that is accessible to all. Rucker does an amazing job exploring the topics of time travel, higher dimensional life, and relativity. The graphics keep the book on an entertaining level and away from the text-book feel that it could have easily fallen into.

Jason Meinig says

Very challenging, yet humorous book pushing into the concepts and realities of higher dimensions and how to actually conceptualize higher dimensions. The book is basically a long thought experiment that keeps expanding to encompass more and more implications of reality when viewed in expansive and creative ways. Very fun, intellectually enticing and packed full of titles and thinkers to look into afterwards. There are also many puzzles to concepts encountered, which I'm going to go back through now that I'm through the text.

Dave Doyle says

I loved this book. I really started me thinking about the 4th dimension. What it meant, and how to envision it.

Carlos Alonso-Niemeyer says

The nerd in me is always interested in Math. My wife is a math major and one of my best friends and personal heroes is also a math wiz.

This book walks you through how our mind could eventually begin to understand what the fourth dimension is. Great book for high school AP students and up.

It carries a philosophical view to the fourth dimension.

It makes a lot of references to "Flatland". I will read it some day.

Treff says

This guy is an ass hole who really does not have shit to say.

Maurizio Codogno says

Rudy Rucker è un matematico e uno scrittore di fantascienza. Le due cose non sono necessariamente disgiunte; fortunatamente però Rucker scrive in modo brillante e non fa le solite spiatteggiate della cosiddetta "Hard SF" che a mio parere sono pure ostentazioni di cultura e fanno solo male alla scienza. Comunque qui la fantascienza è secondaria; il libro è un saggio che spiega per l'appunto il concetto di quarta dimensione, partendo dai classici (la teoria della relatività, ma anche Flatlandia) per giungere alla sua teoria filosofica pseudoempirista che vede l'universo come uno spazio di Hilbert a infinite dimensioni; cosa matematicamente ben più logica di averne solo tre o quattro, ma non molto sostenibile. Ecco, forse il finale è la parte più debole del testo, insieme alla sciagurata scelta di inserire tantissime lunghe citazioni - e questo di per sé è un bene - ma con lo stesso font del testo - e questo è Molto Male. Carini i problemi (non matematici, non preoccupatevi!) all'interno del libro; ottima la traduzione, ma da Longo non mi sarei aspettato nulla di diverso.

fateme manavi says

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Nancy says

Some friends & I read this book in early 90s & LOVED it! The illustrations (simple drawings) are fantastic! but if you want some good animation explaining what Rudy Rucker is talking about regarding beings visiting from higher dimensions, take a look at Dr. Quantum video. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWyTxC...>

Kelly says

I originally read this book in 1997 while doing a paper in my high school physics class about time travel. For some reason it just stuck with me and parts of it would come back to me over the years. So recently I went online and saw that it was out of print; I ordered a used copy for super cheap. It's such a fun, easy-to-read book on how to conceptualize other dimensions in space, and also addresses space-time and paradoxes in time travel. The author uses multiple illustrations, puzzles (with answers in the appendix), and quotes heavily from Edwin Abbott's book Flatland. I definitely recommend this book for anyone interested in something a little different!

Randy says

Don't let the title fool you. The book is written for tourists, not experts. But in the process, you feel like you become an expert. Easy to read, very engaging and informative.

This book really changed my perspective on a lot of things. Perhaps the real me is fourth-dimensional after all, and the entity typing this is just my three-dimensional "shadow".

Ste Pic says

Verso l'infinito e oltre

Sì sì è un bel libro di fisica, divulgativo e per fortuna lontano anni luce da un altro adelphi con la copertina azzurrina tanto in voga in questi mesi. Il bello è che è anche un libro di logica con l'autore che si scatena in particolare con i paradossi delle macchine del tempo. Il bello è che è anche un libro di filosofia (facile! l'autore è il pronipote di Hegel) che esplora concetti metafisici con uno stile impeccabilmente piano, ma mai piatto. Il bello è che è anche un libro di psicologia e, umoristicamente, di parapsicologia. Il bello è che è un libro di letteratura che cita Borges, Carroll (ovviamente), Shakespeare, Nabokov, Omero... Il bello è che è un libro folle perché nel testo sono inframezzate citazioni lunghe anche una pagina di vari autori, molti a me sconosciuti, disegnini a volte chiarificatori a volte irritanti e, come in un testo scolastico, problemini con tanto di soluzione da sbirciare alla fine del libro. Il bello è che è un libro serio, seppur non contenga neppure una formula (per mia fortuna), documentato, con una bibliografia ben fatta, in grado di stimolarmi la salivazione, e un indice analitico curato seppur sintetico. Pochi i difetti se non talvolta una certa tendenza a disperdersi nel suo dichiarato ed evidente enciclopedismo culturale e per il fatto che richiede di aver letto (e io per fortuna l'avevo fatto) almeno il mitico racconto "Flatland" di Abbott da cui prende le mosse per provare a farci immaginare, più che visualizzare la quarta dimensione (e pure quelle successive), in tutti i suoi straordinari travestimenti.

Adam says

I think this is, quite possibly, one of the best books I've read on the fourth dimension. For those saying "but the fourth dimension is time", all I have to say is, no, not in this case. We're discussing four spatial dimensions, which we can only really represent with mathematics in our three dimensional world. Naturally this is written by a mathematician and he did quite an exquisite job at explaining the nature of this utterly foreign dimension.

Now readers won't walk away being able to picture four dimensional beings or structures, but one will be able to grasp a fairly general understanding of what it would be like for a four dimensional being or object to exist and interact with our dimension. Naturally Rucker does this by explaining the relations between the dimensions by changing our perspective and having us think two dimensionally. For this he relies heavily on a book written by Edwin Abbott called "Flatland". I highly recommend you read "Flatland" before you attempt to tackle Rucker's book, as he constantly quotes "Flatland", almost to his books detriment. He also quotes other texts like "Spaceland" (which Rucker also wrote) or "Flatterland" here and there, but the one he relies upon most is "Flatland". "Flatland" is a natural and easy introduction to learning how to think from the perspective of a different dimension and helps the reader to fully grasp Rucker's analogy as he projects the

relationship from the second and third dimensions to a relationship between the third and the fourth dimension. Naturally he points out that some of these points are mere conjecture as we cannot observe fourth dimensional objects in our reality... yet. "The 4th Dimension" is also illustrated with all kinds of silly cartoons to give the book a much lighter feel to its fairly heavy topic. The illustrations will certainly help anyone who really needs to see a drawing of some of the concepts Rucker talks about.

I was originally introduced to some of these concepts via Michio Kaku's book "Hyperspace". While he did a pretty good job explaining four spatial dimensions, I think this book really delves into it a lot deeper. The reader walks away with a much fuller understanding of the concepts concerning this different dimension. Not only will you learn about this, Rucker also goes through a very interesting history concerning humanity's fascination with things beyond our own dimension. He delves into metaphysics and explanations for ghosts as well as recounting the mathematical history (which is the real mainstay of this book). The spiritual aspects of this book are more anecdotal to help give the reader some historical or philosophical perspective in lieu of the mathematics.

If you're really curious about the possibility of other spatial dimensions then this book is a great read. The physics and universe research may be a little outdated by this point since the book originally came out in the 1980's, but it's application in helping a person think of how the fourth dimensional being would react is still applicable. While I'm pretty sure it's agreed that there are more than three spatial dimensions in existence, this book still treats that aspect as if there's still a major debate going on about it. After finding absolute proof of Black Holes in the universe, I think the multi-dimensional universe (or multiverse) concept is pretty realistic, since if the Black Hole singularity transcends our space and time... it has to go somewhere! Anyway, don't forget to read "Flatland" before you pick this up and I think people will find this a fun and informative read.

Pvw says

A good follow-up of Edwin Abbott's classic Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions. Rudy Ruckers continues the adventures of A Square in a less story-like and more scientific manner. Almost a century later, Rucker adds new theories and recent insights to the analogy started by Abbott.

What I liked a lot (and what horrid pseudo philosophical disasters like "What the bleep do we know" don't know how to) is to do away with religion and free will from the very start. Those two concepts are dear to most humans, but once you start thinking thoroughly about what reality might really be like, they are probably impossible to maintain. Many authors have really mutilated their own theories in a desperate attempt to save religion, free will or, usually, both. It is like a child wanting to draw a geographically accurate map of the North Pole but stubbornly reserving a location for the home town of Santa.

Anyway, Rucker doesn't waste time on such wishful thinking and just takes the reader along some difficult but terribly interesting concepts. If you are interested in a fascinating tale about how reality might be totally different than how we generally perceive it, be sure to read this well-written introduction that does not require deep mathematical knowledge, although a keen imagination is very welcome!

Laura says

A little outdated and clunky to read. But it does have some interesting perspectives.

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