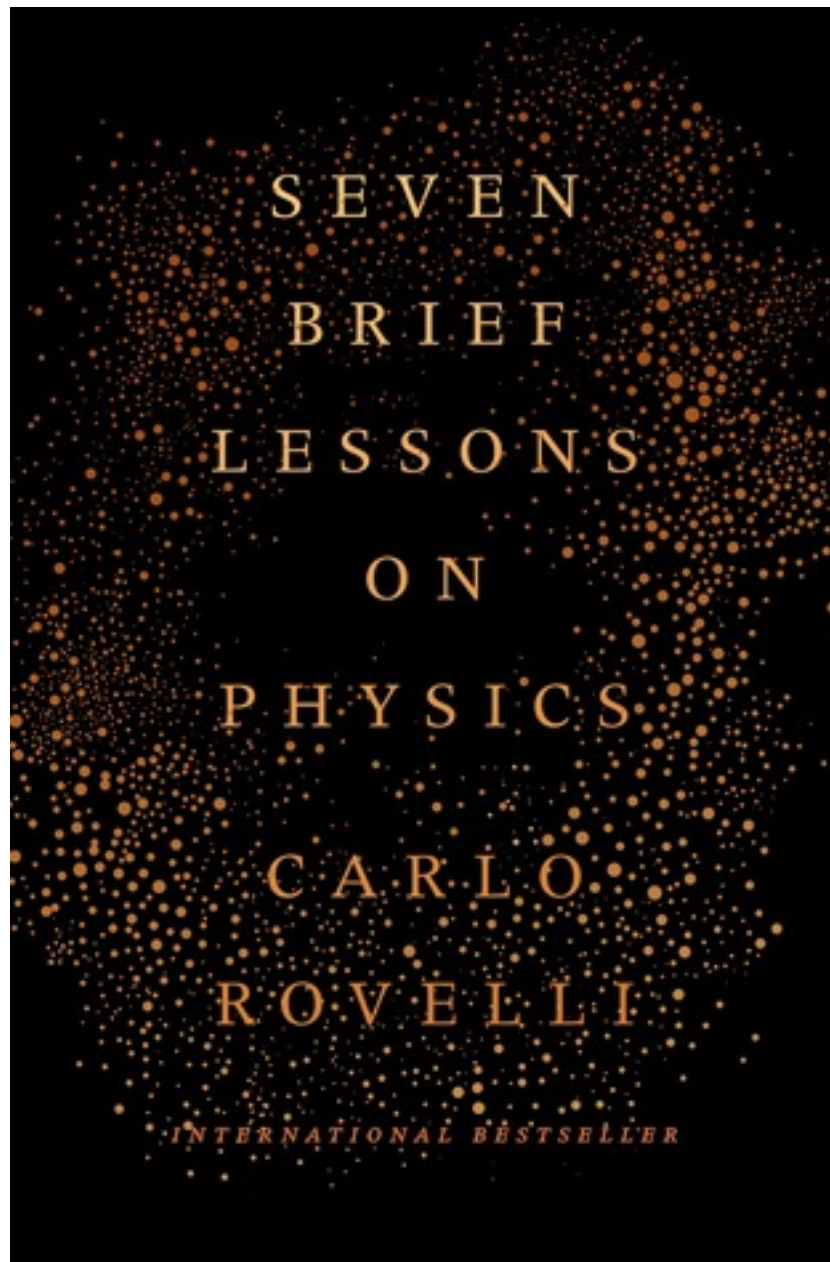


## Seven Brief Lessons on Physics Book PDF Download



By:  
**Carlo Rovelli**

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### Darwin8u

â€• Carlo Rovelli, Seven Brief Lessons on Physics

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At the highest level a discussion of physics doesn't just operate on a mathematical level, but a poetic and philosophical level as well. Look closely at the writings of Aristotle, Lucretius, Einstein and Feynman, and one discovers not just some code to the operation of the Universe, but love songs to that Universe, a desire to connect to and explain the beauty and transcendence of Nature and our role in this complex and amazing world.

This book reminds me of a funeral I went to for a former (obvious) client of mine. He was the first nuclear medicine physician in my state and had his PhD and MD. He was a friend and an amazing person. At my table in the church's cultural hall, after the service (but before the burial) was his son, who had his PhD in genetics, a Pulitzer Prize winning political cartoonist, and a theoretical physicist from UC Santa Barbara. The conversation drifted from music to politics to art to nature. It was random, beautiful, and one of those moments that happens by accident and you cherish for years to come. I am reminded of this meal when I read this book.

This book is short. It is 7 chapters (Six lesson and a conclusion) of about 10 pages each. Imagine you are having a nice, elegant, six course Italian meal with physicists past and present, poets, and philosophers outside in pricy Roman restaurant garden. It is night. It is dark. The canopy of the heavens spins above your heads. Each course brings a new topic. You discuss Einstein and the theory of relativity while eating the appetizer, you move onto Quanta as you eat the soup. The pasta is served just as the conversation turns to the architecture of the Cosmos. When the main course is served, people are already talking about Quarks and the Standard Model. The discussion gets intense. A Romaine salad is served and the host interrupts to talk about the grains of space and, since he is paying, he also talks about loop quantum gravity. Things are slowing down. It is late, the discussion jumps to probability, time, and the heat of black holes as the desert dishes are set down. Finally, as everyone is given their bitter digestifs, they move away to the table to walk in the gardens to discuss everyone's favorite subject: ourselves. Poetry and alcohol flow quickly, conversations grow hot and cold. The center cannot hold. The company departs.

Anyway, I loved it.

## Brian Clegg

This strikes me as the kind of book that would really impress an arts graduate who thought it was giving deep insights into science in an elegant fashion, but for me it was a triumph of style over substance - far too little content to do justice to the subject. It is, in effect, seven articles strung together as a mini-book that can be read comfortably in an hour, but is priced like a full-length work.

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Don't get me wrong, Carlo Rovelli knows his stuff when it comes to physics and gives us postcard sketches of a number of key areas, mostly in the hot fields like cosmology and quantum gravity (though interestingly focussing on the generally rather less popular loop quantum gravity). However he's not so good on his history of science, and can, as scientists often do when writing for the general public, over-simplify.

The last of the articles is different from the rest - rather than take in a specific field (quantum physics, say) as the earlier articles do, it looks at how people and science interact. In some ways this is the freshest and most interesting part of the content... it's just hard to see why it's a 'lesson in physics.'

This book came across to me like a taster menu from a fancy restaurant. It will certainly hit the mental tastebuds, and contains a number of delights - but it is insubstantial and leaves you wanting far more. I can see the title doing very well as a gift book. It looks pretty and is handsomely bound, but there are plenty of better options out there if a reader really wants to be introduced to the wonders of modern physics.

## Elizabeth

This review was originally published on

.

In those moments of life when the grim figures of anxiety, stress, or panic grip me tight and threaten to never let go, I have learned that the one thing sure to scare them off is a nice little face-off with the end of the universe.

Thatâ€™s my super casual way of saying Iâ€™ve been having a bit of a hard time with anxiety recently. Anxiety is a fucker because it messes with my ability to concentrate which is something very necessary

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In those moments of life when the grim figures of anxiety, stress, or panic grip me tight and threaten to never let go, I have learned that the one thing sure to scare them off is a nice little face-off with the end of the universe.

Thatâ€™s my super casual way of saying Iâ€™ve been having a bit of a hard time with anxiety recently. Anxiety is a fucker because it messes with my ability to concentrate which is something very necessary for actually reading and enjoying books rather than continually picking them up and putting them down and wandering around the house worrying about the fact that you havenâ€™t read any damn books to talk about on your book-related social media and feeling like you should be doing something productive instead but not actually being able to do it and then worrying about that as well. BASTARD.

But back to the subject at hand: science books!

When none of my fictional favourites can hold my attention I find that often a little non-fiction does the job. And so on my latest foray to the book shops I spotted SEVEN BRIEF LESSONS ON PHYSICS by Carlo Rovelli and snapped it up. Itâ€™s such a wee little thing and yet so intriguing with its evocative title that it seemed perfect. 78 pages of basic science, what could possibly be more innocuous. Little did I know.

## Sean Gibson

It should be noted as a point of fact that â€œbriefâ€• does not mean â€œsimple.â€•

I really like physics. It explains how everything works, and it's a discipline that doesn't dogmatically cling to outmoded ideas when new evidence suggests that everything we thought we knew was completely and totally erroneous (I, conversely, very much enjoy clinging dogmatically to outmoded ideas, including, but not limited to, the idea that parachute pants are cool, Van Hagar was the best incarnation of Van Halen, and i

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Do I understand physics? Heck no. If you could have seen my brain (insert microscope joke here) as I read this slim but enlightening tome, it would have looked distressingly like one of those delightful taffy pulling machines you see at quaint, old-fashioned candy stores on Mackinac Island or a boardwalk somewhere.

That said, for someone who hasn't read much on physics in about 20 years, this is an excellent (and mercifully high-level) overview of the current state of the field and includes brief forays into topics ranging from general relativity to cutting-edge loop quantum gravity theory. Of particular note is the current thinking on the dimension of time and how our perception of time may, in fact, be just that—a perception and not a fixed value (reading that section was the point at which my poor taffy puller exploded and left me all sticky—insert atrocious double entendre here).

If you're an armchair science enthusiast like me, this is probably just the right amount of detail; if you're smarter than I am (likely) or more well read on what's going on in physics these days, though, you may want to look elsewhere for a dose of enlightenment.

## Jamie

Quick read. I felt the author talked about himself more than any of the theories he was trying to convey in his book.

These are such complex theories, that were so dumb down it was impossible to read at times.