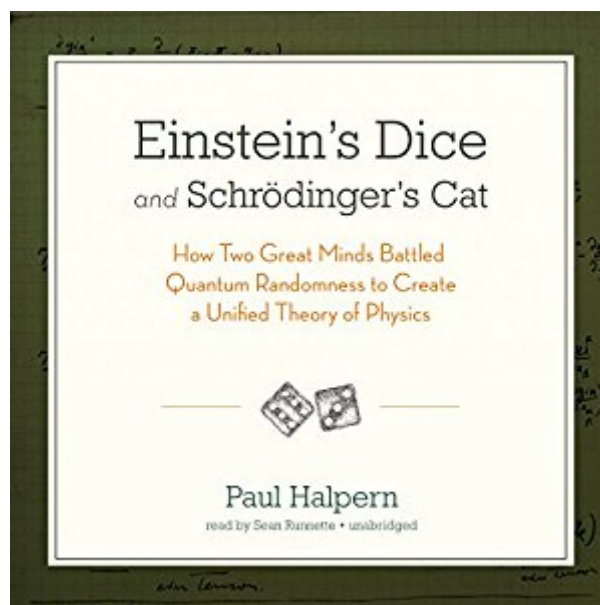




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# Einstein's Dice And Schrödinger's Cat: How Two Great Minds Battled Quantum Randomness To Create A Unified Theory Of Physics



## Synopsis

Albert Einstein and Erwin Schrödinger were friends and comrades-in-arms against what they considered the most preposterous aspects of quantum physics: its indeterminacy. Einstein famously quipped that God does not play dice with the universe, and Schrödinger is equally well known for his thought experiment about the cat in the box who ends up "spread out" in a probabilistic state, neither wholly alive nor wholly dead. Both of these famous images arose from these two men's dissatisfaction with quantum weirdness and with their assertion that underneath it all, there must be some essentially deterministic world. Even though it was Einstein's own theories that made quantum mechanics possible, both he and Schrödinger could not bear the idea that the universe was, at its most fundamental level, random. As the Second World War raged, both men struggled to produce a theory that would describe in full the universe's ultimate design, first as collaborators, then as competitors. They both ultimately failed in their search for a grand unified theory - not only because quantum mechanics is true but because Einstein and Schrödinger were also missing a key component: of the four forces we recognize today (gravity, electromagnetism, the weak force, and the strong force), only gravity and electromagnetism were known at the time. Despite their failures, much of modern physics remains focused on the search for a grand unified theory. As Halpern explains, the recent discovery of the Higgs boson makes the standard model - the closest thing we have to a unified theory - nearly complete. And while Einstein and Schrödinger tried and failed to explain everything in the cosmos through pure geometry, the development of string theory has, in its own quantum way, brought this idea back into vogue. As in so many things, even when he was wrong, Einstein couldn't help but be right.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Awesome account of Einstein and Schrodinger's relationship and personal lives. Gives a light treatment of the physics they were pursuing, but this isn't a technical book. Dr. Halpern is an engaging and thorough author, and I am delighted to read his work.

Very readable. The book provides real insight into the character of Einstein and Schrodinger as well as a layman's history of the evolution of quantum mechanics and cosmology in the 20th century. The discussion of the impact of Baruch Spinoza, and other philosophers, on both physicists has led me to start reading about Spinoza and his thoughts.

This is an outstanding book. Halpern blends the professional and personal lives very well. I recommend it! People not versed in all of the math and science can still get a lot of insight from this book.

Quantum mechanics is all the rage these days. It also happens to explain the universe, along with general relativity. Hard to reconcile them though. This book makes a valiant effort. Well written even for us non-particle physicists. You will learn a lot.

One might think that humanizing general relativity and quantum theory would be impossible, but the author has done it.

Excellent; a lot of interesting information regarding the personal interactions of these great scientists.

Brilliant!

It is a great book very easy to follow and understand for a non physicist like me.

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