



Newton's Principia for the Common Reader (Physics)

By S. Chandrasekhar

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Representing a decade's work from one of the world's most distinguished physicists, this major publication is, as far as is known, the first comprehensive analysis of Newton's Principia without recourse to secondary sources. Chandrasekhar analyses some 150 propositions which form a direct chain leading to Newton's formulation of his universal law of gravitation. In each case, Newton's proofs are arranged in a linear sequence of equations and arguments, avoiding the need to unravel the necessarily convoluted style of Newton's connected prose. In almost every case, a modern version of the proofs is given to bring into sharp focus the beauty, clarity, and breathtaking economy of Newton's methods. This book will stimulate great interest and debate among the scientific community, illuminating the brilliance of Newton's work under the steady gaze of Chandrasekhar's rare perception.

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Editorial Review

Review

"It is, perhaps, the greatest single work of the scientific canon--and undoubtedly the most influential. . . Yet remarkably few people today, even among physicists and engineers, have read the *Principia* itself. . . That a book of such importance should go unread seemed a pity to the astrophysicist Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar, who spent a lifetime bringing clarity to the world. Chandra, as he was known to his colleagues, was the last of the great mathematical astrophysicists, a direct spiritual descendant of Newton's, and, by any measure, one of the great minds of the twentieth century. His work was marked by the purity of his mathematical vision, the depth of his understanding and the elegance of his speech and writing. . . Chandra's death in August has left the world a poorer place, but this, his last volume, will remain to inspire generations of common readers to come." --*The Sciences*

"Following a long tradition of commentaries and explanation of Newton's great masterpiece, Chandrasekhar's new book, *Newton's Principia for the Common Reader* is a very valuable personal view by one of the great astrophysicists of our century."--*American Journal of Physics*

"This is a valuable guide to the *Principia*--certainly beyond the level of the "common reader"--that will take its place in the succession of major commentaries on the *Principia* of the past three centuries."--*Physics Today*

"In almost every case, a modern version of the proof is given to bring into sharp focus the beauty, clarity and breathtaking economy of Newton's methods . . . This book will stimulate great interest and debate among the scientific community, illuminating the brilliance of Newton's work."--*Mathematical Reviews*

About the Author

S. Chandrasekhar is Emeritus Professor, Laboratory for Astrophysics and Space Research, The Enrico Fermi Institute at University of Chicago.

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