



Big History: The Big Bang, Life on Earth, and the Rise of Humanity

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How is it possible for the disciplines of cosmology, geology, anthropology, biology, and history to fit together? These 48 lectures answer that question by weaving a single story from accounts of the past developed by a variety of scholarly disciplines. The result is a story stretching from the origins of the universe to the present day and beyond, in which human history is seen as part of the history of our Earth and biosphere, and the Earth's history, in turn, is seen as part of the history of the universe.

Like traditional creation stories told by the world's great religions and mythologies, this lecture series provides a map of our place in space and time. But it does so using the insights and knowledge of modern science, as synthesized by a renowned historian. While you may have heard parts of this story before in courses on geology, history, anthropology, biology, cosmology, and other scholarly disciplines, Professor Christian provides more than just a recap of those disciplines. "Because of the scale on which we look at the past, you should not expect to find in it many of the familiar details, names, and personalities that you'll find in other types of historical teaching and writing," he explains. "For example, the French Revolution and the Renaissance will barely get a mention. They'll zoom past in a blur. You'll barely see them. Instead, what we're going to see are some less familiar aspects of the past. We'll be looking, above all, for the very large patterns, the shape of the past.

"Prepare yourself for a journey through time and across space, from the first moments of existence to the distant reaches of the far future."

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