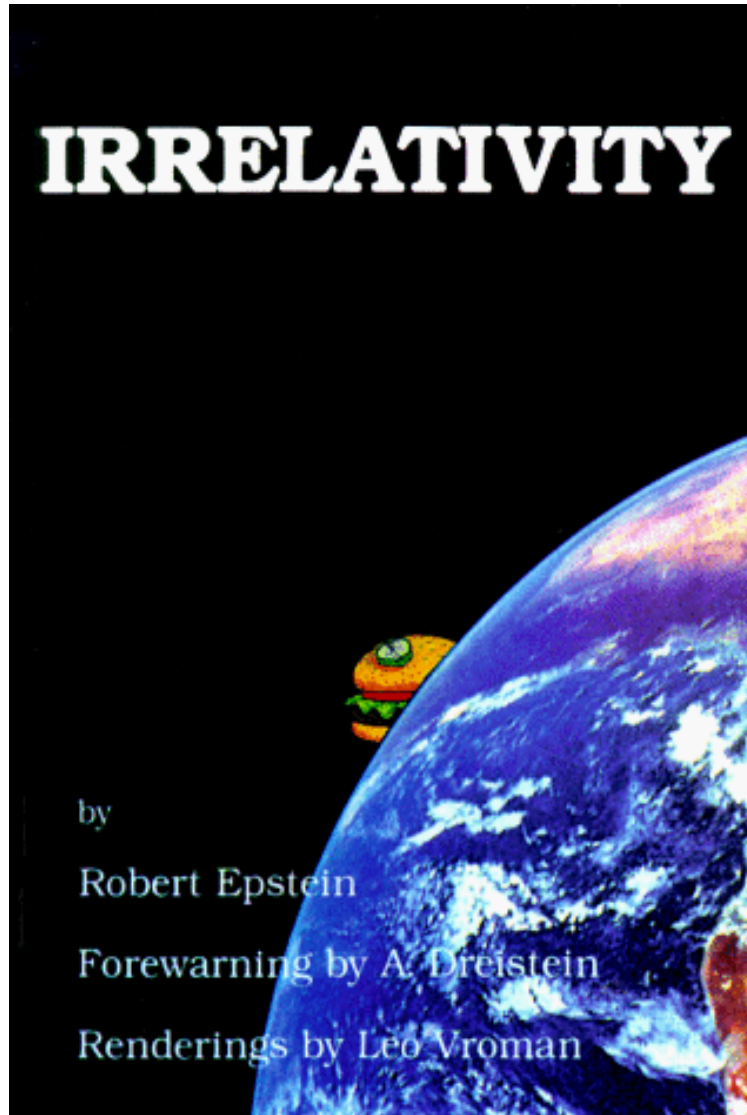


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## Irrelativity

*Robert Epstein, Leo Vroman*  
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**Robert Epstein, Leo Vroman : Irrelativity** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Irrelativity:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A funny/wry/satirical/clever look at time and science By A Customer  
The deeper you get into "Irrelativity," the more fun it becomes -- and I'm not a scientist. It is reminiscent of Lewis Thomas. Epstein writes extremely well, and places the reader into what really must be a "parallel universe," because you know this is satirical, but his silly science is so internally consistent that it still seems to make sense. Try it, you'll like it!

An engaging spoof of the modern view of the universe which, as the author shows, defies common sense to the point of absurdity. It presents in straightforward language the real Albert Einstein, and the fictitious, hapless U. T. Zalna with his theory of Irrelativity. Following the new theory's universal consequences, the author shows his gift for bringing theoretical science to life. He explains in detail, often with tongue in cheek, the conservation of matter and energy, the ether, black holes, the slowing of time, time travel, matter-energy systems, religion, the foundations of science, the mind-body problem, the physically possible, the impossible, the unknown, and the sublime; and how Irrelativity effects these. The clarity of his writing, his genius for narrative, his asides and frequent offhanded quips propel us through the book. When we pause to wonder, we discover the ridiculous and smiles turn to laughter. This refreshingly light-hearted, funny, yet thoughtful and well-crafted story makes us think hard and laugh harder.

The equivalent of Spike Jones to music, this dose of irreverence is a hoot. Epstein is legit, with a Ph.D. from Harvard, widely published in quality journals. But he just had to shake the jowls of that other -stein, Ein-, and give equal time to another scientist. A fictitious one called U.T. Zalna. His theory? Irrelativity. 'This is probably for the best, since the universe actually parts its hair somewhat differently than Einstein led us to believe.' ....Just throw caution to the relative wind and read on, as Epstein tickles. He jabs at modern physics and the extent to which it defies common sense. He wonders whether there really could be extra-dimensional burgers. Then he 'gets serious' with discourses on The Big Bore, Missing Bodies, the Mind-Body Problem, Religion and Black Holes. 'The black hole, the greatest of all swallows of everything, spits up radiation.' He concludes with a salute to his own Zalna and ponders Bathroom Graffiti on the Foundations of Science. His concoction makes life somewhat more easy to understand. None of that curved space and relative time stuff. Although...how can he zap his theories back in time to read as a kid, to pre-date Einstein? Like the movies? Then he remembers. His theory is not only irrelative, it's irrelevant. The book is not. One physicist reader winced, got angry - then broke down laughing. -- The Book Reader, Summer 1997, p.42

From the Publisher Among many letters received were three from outstanding writers of science fiction. "Einstein meets Seinfeld! An oddly satisfying romp through some really weird neighborhoods of both substance and theory. Douglas Adams, take a glance over your shoulder and say hello to Robert Epstein!" (Mike Sirota, author of *Bicycling Through Space and Time*) "A rich mix of fact and fantasy, told in a style somewhere between Martin Gardner and Henny Youngman. Epstein spoofs Big Science while simultaneously conveying real data about the universe. A fun book." (Charles Platt author of *The Silicon Man*) "An infuriating book! I can't count the times I winced, got angry...then broke down laughing." (David Brin, physicist, winner of the Hugo and Nebula awards, author of *Earth and The Postman*)

From the Back Cover the ideal book for people who don't already know everything about the universe. It synthesizes unequal parts of modern physics and the philosophy of science with perfectly necessary doses of wit and humor.