



The Second Creation: Makers of the Revolution in Twentieth-Century Physics

By Robert P Crease, Charles C Mann

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The Second Creation is a dramatic--and human--chronicle of scientific investigators at the last frontier of knowledge. Robert Crease and Charles Mann take the reader on a fascinating journey in search of "unification" (a description of how matter behaves that can apply equally to everything) with brilliant scientists such as Niels Bohr, Max Planck, Albert Einstein, Erwin Schrödinger, Richard Feynman, Murray Gell-Mann, Sheldon Glashow, Steven Weinberg, and many others. They provide the definitive and highly entertaining story of the development of modern physics, and the human story of the physicists who set out to find the "theory of everything."

The Second Creation tells the story of some of the most talented and idiosyncratic people in the world--many times in their own words. Crease and Mann conducted hundreds of interviews to capture the thinking and the personalities as well as the science. The authors make this complex subject matter clear and absorbing.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A perfect model of "free enterprise" at work is the competitive-cooperative pursuit of knowledge about nature's fundamental particles by our century's physicists. Columbia University science historian Crease and Technology Illustrated editor Mann here trace virtually the entire story of what is today known as particle physics from Einstein's 1905 theory suggesting matter was both particles and waves, while at the same time Rutherford made his first proposals about the nature of the atom, through Bohr, Dirac, Schrodinger, and others who developed quantum theory and quantum mechanics. These authors describe the heated arguments, debates, conferences and world-wide exchanges that took physicists, especially in the 1970s, to the discoveries of quarks, mesons, gluons and other such breakthroughs. Today, decades after Einstein's failure, Unification theories tying together the four fundamental forces—the fourth, gravity, remains elusive, however rare are formulated almost daily. This is a demanding book, and gripping in an epochal sense.

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From Library Journal

This is the latest effort at a popular treatment of the "Grand Unified Theory" contemporary theoretical physicists are aiming to achieve. It presents a human-interest-style history of quantum electrodynamics and the ensuing elementary particle theory, enlivened by brief sketches of many of the key participants. As a whole, it is an entertaining volume, but some of the judgments and interpretations are questionable. Also, the complex mathematics of modern physics is entirely omitted, and a novice is likely to end his reading with some notion of the historical background but without a coherent understanding of the current "standard model" in elementary particle theory. Recommended, with reservations, for academic and public libraries.

Jack W. Weigel, Univ. of Michigan Lib., Ann Arbor

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From [The New Yorker](#)

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Dorothy Delarosa:

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