

UC Davis Public Lecture

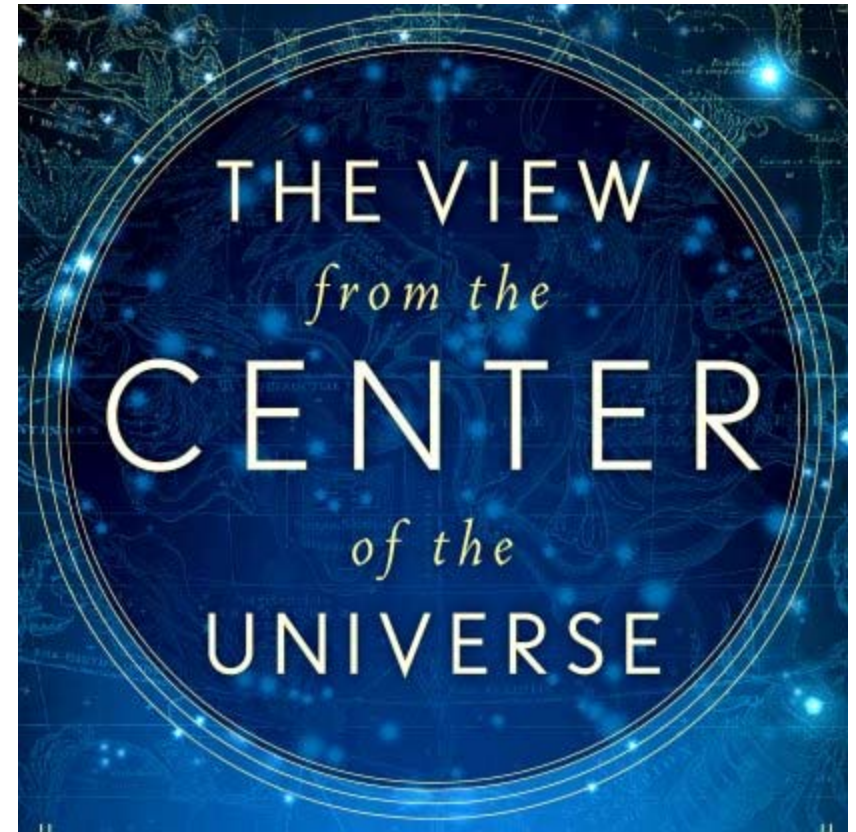
"The View from the Center of the Universe: Discovering our Extraordinary Place in the Cosmos"

Joel Primack and Nancy Abrams

Cosmology is going through a scientific revolution that is creating humanity's first picture of the universe that might actually be true. This lecture explains and visualizes the evolution of the universe, the fact that the universe is made mostly of dark matter and dark energy with visible matter making up only about half a percent of the total, and the remarkable fact that humans - and indeed intelligent life anywhere in the universe - must have a size that is in the middle of all possible size scales. Joel and Nancy alternate frequently during the presentation, presenting scientific and philosophical viewpoints. They show spectacular new images and videos, using both updated ancient symbols and the latest astronomical data and simulations. They also use humorous cartoons to illustrate how cosmological ideas have widespread cultural implications. The talk is both entertaining and educational, and it can be enjoyed by everyone from people who know nothing about modern astronomy to experts in the field.

Joel Primack, Professor of Physics at UCSC, is one of the world's leading cosmologists and an originator and developer of the theory of evolution of the universe. He and his team use some of the world's biggest supercomputers to simulate the evolution of the universe, and they compare the results with observational data.

Nancy Abrams is a lawyer, writer, and former Fulbright Scholar, with a long-term interest in the history, philosophy, and politics of science. While working on the staff of the U.S. Congress, she co-created a novel method by which government agencies can make wise policy decisions in cases involving scientific uncertainty.



University of California, Davis

Wednesday, May 3, 2006

8:00-9:15 pm

123 Sciences Lecture Hall

Host: Physics Department

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