

BBC Sky at Night Magazine

Book of the Month, May 2018

Ladybird Expert books rarely disappoint, and *Big Bang* by Marcus Chown certainly doesn't. This beautiful pocket-sized book discusses exactly what the big bang is, how the theory came about and how it has evolved over the years given the physical evidence, such as the "bolt-ons" of dark matter, dark energy and inflation.

It's remarkable that the author manages to cover everything you would expect in so few pages. Also impressive is the thought that has gone into the book in terms of its flow and layout. Each page of copy is separated by a stunning retro image, which really helps to demarcate the concepts and stop the reader from feeling overwhelmed.

At times, but not often, the wonderfully concise writing dances around the fine line of needing more explanation. However, the author never loses the audience. Yes the concepts are challenging, but the book does explain every term it introduces and is accessible to a non-expert. There are also some lovely analogies throughout which I will be borrowing for the next time I introduce certain topics, my favourite being a tanker merging from the fog to explain the epoch of last scattering.

Overall, this book is a fountain production to the big bang and one that you can read in the short time; perhaps on a commute to work. Be warned, though, it is likely to stimulate your interest in cosmology and leave you eager to learn more.