

# [PDF] Faster Than The Speed Of Light: The Story Of A Scientific Speculation

Joao Magueijo - pdf download free book

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## Books Details:

Title: Faster Than the Speed of Light

Author: Joao Magueijo

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## Description:

Among physicists, it is widely assumed that one's greatest chance for a breakthrough discovery will come before one reaches the age of 30. True or not, this idea leads young physicists such as João Magueijo to pull out all the intellectual stops in the search for glory and immortality. In *Faster Than the Speed of Light*, Magueijo reveals the short, brilliant history of his possibly groundbreaking speculation--VSL, or Variable Light Speed. This notion--that the speed of light changed as the universe expanded after the Big Bang--contradicts no less prominent a figure than Albert Einstein. Because of this, Magueijo has suffered more than a few slings and arrows from hidebound, jealous, or perplexed colleagues. But the young scientist persisted, found a few important allies, and finally managed to shake up the establishment enough to get the attention he merited and craved.

Magueijo begins the book with a suitably accessible explanation of special and general relativity, then moves on to the ideas that laid the groundwork for VSL. In the process, he rips the doors off of scientific academia and airs quite a bit of dirty laundry. Comparing himself to Einstein throughout the book, Magueijo approaches his topic and its dissemination with cocksure genius, expecting readers to sympathize with him as he battles to win favor. And we do. The scientific process is "rigorous, competitive, emotional, and argumentative," writes Magueijo. His theory could knock down two solid pillars of cosmology--inflation and relativity. Not only does his radical notion deserve a trial by fire, it also deserves a champion like Magueijo, who isn't afraid of the flames. --*Therese Littleton*

**From Publishers Weekly** Could Einstein be wrong and Magueijo right? Equally pressing for Magueijo, a lecturer in theoretical physics at London's Imperial College, is whether the physics editor at the preeminent science journal *Nature* is in fact "a first class moron" for rejecting his last paper. And did that cosmologist from Princeton steal his idea? What about all those hours wasted writing requests for funding from those "parasites," those "ex-scientists well past their prime" who dispense the monies that make contemporary science possible? Welcome to the world of career science, disclosed here in all its flawed brilliance. Magueijo's heretical idea-that the speed of light is not constant; light traveled faster in the early universe-challenges the most fundamental tenet of modern physics. Deceptively simple, the theory came to the author during a bad hangover one damp morning in Cambridge, England (many of the author's breakthroughs seem to arrive at unexpected moments, like while he's urinating outside a Goan bar). If true, Magueijo's Variant Speed of Light theory, or VSL, rectifies apparent inconsistencies in the Big Bang theory. Magueijo cunningly frames his journey with the stories of other famous, courageous heretics, notably Einstein himself, and one suspects an apologetics at work here. Magueijo, a 35-year-old native of Portugal, is opinionated and can seem immature and almost bratty in his diatribes against the banalities of academia or the hypocrisy and backbiting of peer review. But his science is lucidly rendered, and even his penchant for sturm und drang sheds light on the tensions felt by scientists incubating new ideas. This book shows how science is done-and so easily can be undone.  
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