

Professor Martin Rees - Citation

Martin Rees is the most distinguished astrophysicist and cosmologist in the UK, and also within the international arena. He completed his academic degrees at Cambridge University, and was appointed as a professor at Sussex University at the age of 30. Two years later, in 1973 he was appointed as the Plumian Professor of Astronomy and Experimental Philosophy at Cambridge University, a position he held for nearly 20 years. During that period he served for ten years as the director of the Institute of Astronomy in Cambridge. His current positions include Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, President of the Royal Society, Professor of Cosmology and Astrophysics at Cambridge University, and Astronomer Royal.

Professor Rees has made many major contributions to astrophysics and cosmology over a career spanning more than four decades. He is an author on more than 500 research papers mainly in cosmology and astrophysics. His highest impact research papers are in the areas of high energy astrophysics, where he has investigated the nature of gamma ray bursts, black hole formation and radiative processes, and quasars. He has also made major contributions in the area of cosmic structure formation and in particular to our understanding of the first generation of stars and galaxies, and the Epoch of Reionisation. However his contributions cover almost every topic in modern cosmology. Professor Rees has mentored several generations of astrophysicists and cosmologists who hold key roles in the discipline internationally.

Martin Rees received a life peerage in 2005, as Baron Rees of Ludlow. Amongst his other awards and distinctions are an Order of Merit, a personal gift of the Queen in 2007, Gruber Prize for Cosmology in 2001 the Crafoord prize of the Royal Swedish Academy and the Faraday Award of the Royal Society (2004). He serves on many trusts and councils promoting and enabling scientific achievement and collaboration at all levels both in the UK and internationally. He is sought after as a public lecturer, giving outstanding dissertations, both to professional audiences, to the general public on cosmology and astrophysics, and more recently on the state and evolution of the planet and humanity's role in that evolution. Professor Rees has written a number of popular books on astronomy and cosmology, including '*Gravity's Fatal Attraction: Black Holes in the Universe (1995)*', '*Just Six Numbers: The Deep Forces That Shape the Universe (2000)*', '*Our Cosmic Habitat (2001)* and '*Our Final Hour: A Scientist's Warning: How Terror, Error, and Environmental Disaster Threaten Humankind's Future In This Century—On Earth and Beyond (2003)*'. Professor Rees will be the 2010 Reith lecturer for the BBC.

It is fitting that the Faculty of Science recognise such a distinguished astrophysicist and cosmologist through the award of the degree of Doctor of Science *honoris causa*.