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It is interesting to go through one's life like this. It has taken a rather linear path, from the *How and Why Wonder Books* to today, with few deviations. I have not achieved my early science fiction goals, nor explained why there is something rather than nothing, but I have had an impact on the most fundamental questions of science. But it was a close thing: you could say that at the age of forty I had not lived up to my potential. And if someone else had stepped in during the six or more years between my finding D-branes and figuring out what they were good for, that might still be true.

How far are we from finding the fundamental theory of physics, and what will we learn from it? Again, I am an agnostic, and not good at predicting things. I only follow my nose. Happily, my nose is very busy, with the firewall, chaos, entanglement, and quantum information. So we may be close, or we may still have big steps ahead. I hope to help figure this out.

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Memories of a Theoretical Physicist

A Journey across the Landscape of Strings, Black Holes,
and the Multiverse

By: Joseph Polchinski

Edited by: Ahmed Almheiri

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