

**Massive: The Hunt  
for the God Particle,**  
by Ian Sample  
(Virgin, £8.99)



IAN SAMPLE

The large hadron collider - "the largest, most sophisticated machine mankind has ever built" - is designed to resolve a fundamental problem. As Sample, the Guardian's science correspondent, says, "scientists cannot explain why stuff weighs what it does". In 1964, British scientist Peter Higgs proposed an answer. He posited an invisible field extending throughout the cosmos: "A particle's mass is simply a measure of how much it gets bogged down in the field." It is hoped the LHC will reveal the true nature of this field, by creating ripples that appear as particles known as Higgs bosons, aka the god particle. If the more than 3,000 physicists working with the LHC discover the Higgs particle it may herald the next revolution in scientific understanding. It could even be the bridge to hidden worlds and dimensions. Sample's story of "how the universe got its mass" is told through the life and science of Higgs. The result is a compelling work of popular science, full of mind-boggling ideas and a real sense of the excitement of scientific discovery.

**PD Smith**