



Bursts: The Hidden Patterns Behind Everything We Do, from Your E-mail to Bloody Crusades

By Albert-Laszlo Barabasi

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The bestselling author of *Linked* returns with a ground breaking new theory that will enthrall fans of *The Tipping Point*

Can we scientifically predict our future? It's a mystery that has nagged scientists for perhaps thousand of years. Now Albert-László Barabási-the award-winning author of the sleeper hit *Linked*- explains how the digital age has yielded a massive, previously unavailable data set that proves the daily pattern of human activity isn't random, it's "bursty." We work and fight and play in short flourishes of activity followed by next to nothing.

Compellingly illustrated with the account of a bloody medieval crusade in sixteenth-century Transylvania and the modern tale of a contemporary artist hunted by the FBI, *Bursts* reveals that we are far more predictable than we like to think.

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- Sales Rank: #121390 in Books
- Published on: 2011-05-31
- Released on: 2011-05-31
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.40" h x .70" w x 5.50" l, .59 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 320 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"In *Linked*, Barabasi showed us how complex networks unfold in space. In *Bursts*, he shows us how they unfold in time. Your life may look random to you, but everything from your visits to a web page to your visits to the doctor are predictable, and happen in bursts."

-Clay Shirky, author of *Here Comes Everybody*

"Barabasi is one of the few people in the world who understand the deep structure of empirical reality."

-Nassim Nicholas Taleb, author of *The Black Swan*

"Barabasi brings a physicist's penetrating eye to a sweeping range of human activities, from migration to web browsing, from wars to billionaires, from illnesses to letter writing, from the Department of Homeland Security to the Conclave of Cardinals. Barabasi shows how a pattern of bursts appears in what has long seemed a random mess. These bursts are both mathematically predictable and beautiful. What a joy it is to read him. You feel like you have emerged to see a new vista that, while it had always been there, you had just never seen."

-Nicholas A. Christakis, M.D., Ph.D., coauthor of *Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives*

"*Bursts* is a rich, rewarding read that illuminates a cutting-edge topic: the patterns of human mobility in an era of total surveillance. The narrative structure of Barabasi's provocative book mimics the very pattern of bursts, as abrupt jumps through the lives of a post-modern sculptor, a medieval Hungarian revolutionist, and Albert Einstein eventually converge on a single theme: that our unthinking behaviors are governed by a deeper meaning that can only be deciphered through the brave lens of mathematics."

-Ogi Ogas, Ph.D., and Sai Gaddam, Ph.D., Boston University

"Barabasi, a distinguished scientist of complex networks, bravely tests his innovative theories on some historic events, including a sixteenth-century Crusade that went terribly wrong. Whether or not the concept of "burstiness" is the key to unlocking human behavior, it is nonetheless a fascinating new way to think about some very old questions."

-Thomas F. Madden, Ph.D., Professor of Medieval History, Saint Louis University, author of *The New Concise History of the Crusades*

About the Author

Albert-László Barabási is a pioneer of real-world network theory and author of the bestseller, *Linked: How Everything is Connected to Everything Else and What It Means for Business, Science, and Everyday Life*. At 32, he was the youngest professor to be named the Emil T. Hofmann Professor of Physics at the University of Notre Dame and has won numerous awards for his work, including the FEBS Anniversary Prize for Systems Biology and the John von Neumann Medal for outstanding achievements. He currently lives in Boston and is Distinguished Professor and Director of the Center for Network Science at Northeastern University.

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Sherman Etheridge:

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James Fitzgibbons:

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Brandi Johnson:

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