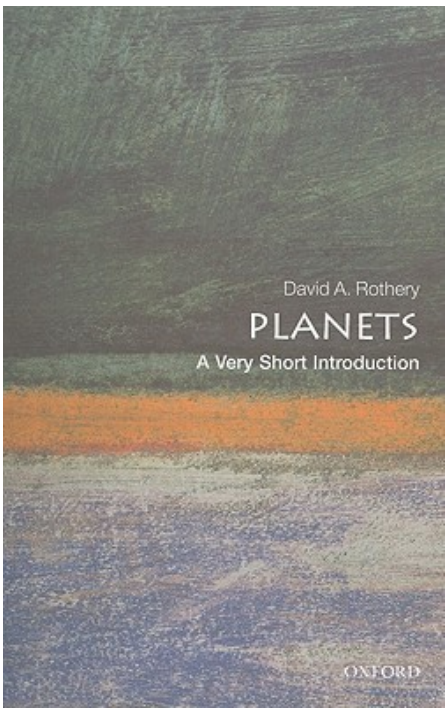

Planets: A Very Short Introduction

David A. Rothery

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Planets: A Very Short Introduction David A. Rothery
From the rings of Saturn to the "canals" of Mars and the Great Red Dot of Jupiter, the planets of our Solar System have long fascinated humanity. Featuring many striking photos, this Very Short Introduction offers a fascinating portrait of the unique world of each planet as well as an illuminating discussion of moons, asteroids, and Trans-Neptunian objects. Leading planetary scientist David A. Rothery, who has chaired the European Space Agency's Mercury surface and composition working group since 2007, gives a stimulating overview of the origin, nature, and evolution of our Solar System, including the controversial issues of what qualifies as a planet, and what conditions are required for a planetary body to support life. He explains how the surfaces of planets and moons have been sculpted by geology, weather, and impacts by meteors and asteroids. Rothery shows how our knowledge has advanced over the centuries, and how it has expanded at a dramatic rate in recent years, going far beyond our Solar System to explore planets orbiting distant stars.

Planets: A Very Short Introduction Details

Date	:	Published December 9th 2010 by Oxford University Press, USA (first published 2000)
ISBN	:	9780199573509
Author	:	David A. Rothery
Format	:	Paperback 135 pages
Genre	:	Science, Astronomy, Physics, Nonfiction

From Reader Review Planets: A Very Short Introduction for online ebook

Jina says

There is so much to learn from space, but I think David Rothery did a good job staying focused in this book. He got a little too technical for an introductory book, on a few occasions, but mostly his writing was very easy to follow and comprehend. I really enjoyed reading about how fascinating a handful of the other planet’s satellites are, particularly Europa. There’s actually a 2013 movie, called Europa Report, that I didn’t realize was so heavily based on realistic theories about this satellite. I also feel a little less upset over Pluto, though I don’t know if I’m ready to let go of calling it a planet (despite knowing otherwise). I liked how he ended the book on the thought of other intelligent life in the universe. There an estimated 100 million habitable terrestrial planets are in our galaxy (not even counting habitable satellites). With a pessimistic view that life only has one in 100 chance of starting, that still leaves a million worlds with life. “Is intelligent life rare after all or are we too stupid to see the evidence?”

Phil Syphe says

I didn’t like this as much as I expected to.

Having done an online course about moons led by David Rothery, who was engaging and entertaining in the videos, I thought his upbeat approach would be apparent in his literature. Instead, I found his style rather dull, not helped by the amount of maths and tables involved – most things numerical leave me scratching my head.

The subject interests me but the way facts and speculations are presented bored me a lot of the time. At times, though, I was engaged, hence why I’ve rated “Planets” three stars.

Luis says

A very good reading for those who are keen to Astronomy but have no time to get up-to-date with the Astronomy magazines and websites. It provides a good panorama of our neighbours in the Solar System, including not only the planets, as the title suggests, but also comets and "Trans-Neptunian-Objects", i. e., whatever exists outside the orbiter of Neptune. I would like to have a Tardis to check some of the facts stated in the book. :-)

Med Ghanfari says

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Karen says

An good short overview of the types of planets, both in our solar system and those elsewhere in the galaxy. The book was published in 2010 and could use an update now that several of the space missions mentioned (Dawn, Cassini) have flown by their target celestial bodies, but otherwise a solid read. The author is conversational, but not chatty.

David says

I would have rated it at three stars if I was not interested in the subject matter. However, Rothery engages the reader well enough, so I would go for 3.5 stars if I could.

One plus is that it is recent enough to discuss the changes to definitions that caused Pluto to lose planetary status.

The biggest drawback is the lack of a clear thesis. The book is chock-full of knowledge and interesting facts, but there is no thesis to pull it all together.

Very worthwhile if you're interested in the subject matter.

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Connie says

A “very short introduction” this may be, but it is also extremely dense in information. I quite enjoyed it despite its being rather dry in its presentation and being a bit of brain exercise. I learned a ton.

One of the best things about it is that he is very clear about the proofs for each thing we know about our solar system. And if something is less well known and more speculative, he goes into the evidence for and against it. He is very clear about what is more an inference and what is more well known.

Really just the information about the topic is fantastic. Taking our solar system from a geological standpoint is genius. It makes for a great way to learn about our little corner of the Milky Way.

Ahmed Omer says

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David Roberts says

The book I read to research this post was Planets A Very Short Introduction which is an excellent book which I bought from kindle. The solar system only has eight bodies classified as planets. Pluto was reclassified as a dwarf planet of asteroid some time ago which groups with bodies like Ceres & Makemake. Makemake is named after a pacific deighty as apparently they had used up all the roman and greek gods. There is some confusion about the size of Sedna which was discovered recently and is only just about in our solar system. There are some 700 exoplanets in various other solar systems, the nearest is 10 light years a way and probably the most interesting one is 20 light years away. This is one that is approximately twice the size of the earth although this planet is so hot it can't support an atmosphere let alone life. This does show however that there is a good chance planets similiar to earth are out there. An interesting satelitte in our solar system is titan which has an atmosphere of mostly nitrogen. On the surface are great lakes with mostly methane but this moon has a tidal system similiar to the earth. Titan is Saturn's largest moon and there has been talk of this planet having life in its lakes. Another interesting moon is Lo which has ice that is melted further down by volcanic activity creating speculation there might be simple life there. Mars interestingly has the biggest volcano in the solar system that is a whopping 24 kilometres hire. It is thought lava has poured out of that volcano for billions of years which is why that is so huge. Mercury is the only terrestrial planet apart from Earth that has a magnetic field. The giant planets have magnetic fields hundreds of times stronger.

Ahmed Ezzeldien says

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Daniel Wright says

Chapter 1: The Solar System
Chapter 2: Rocky planets
Chapter 3: Giant planets
Chapter 4: Giant planets' satellites and rings
Chapter 5: Asteroids
Chapter 6: Trans-Neptunian objects
Chapter 7: Exoplanets

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Margarita says

Excellent. I did David's very free course Moons on FutureLearn platform and was impressed by his teaching ability. Although I've since read more in depth stuff about planetary science, this remains a useful reference book.

Charlotte says

A brilliant read. It has definitely piqued my interest. Naturally, there are aspects which I don't quite understand but the OU module in October on Planetary Science should help me to understand better. Looking forward to it!
