

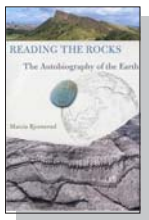
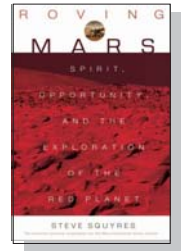
NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

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BOOKS

Roving Mars: Spirit, Opportunity and the Exploration of the Red Planet. By Steve Squyres. Hyperion Books, 2005. 434 pp., Hardcover, \$25.95. www.hyperionbooks.com

Dr. Steve Squyres, the face and voice of NASA's Mars Exploration Rover mission, dreamed up the mission in 1987, saw it through from conception in 1995 to a successful landing in 2004, and serves as the principal scientist of its \$400 million payload. He has gained a rare inside look at what it took for the rovers Spirit and Opportunity to land on the Red Planet in January 2004 — and knows firsthand their findings. Combining the journey of a young scientist with the history of NASA's Mars space program, *Roving Mars* offers a dramatic account of one of the most amazing adventures of our time. In a conversational and compelling voice, Squyres goes into detail about how the MER mission was born, covering the politics, mistakes, and confusion that ensued, and presents the technical aspects of the mission in a way that is accessible to the most unscientifically minded among us. Squyres leads us through the exhausting and exhilarating race to get the rovers to the launchpad in time, and finally, the amazing story of the journey of Spirit and Opportunity to Mars and what they found there.

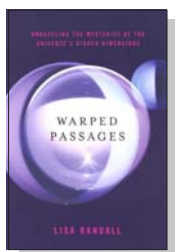


Reading the Rocks: The Autobiography of the Earth. By Marcia Bjornerud. Basic Books, 2005. 237 pp., Hardcover, \$26.00. www.perseusbooksgroup.com

To many of us, Earth's crust is a relic of ancient, unknowable history. But to a geologist, stones are richly illustrated narratives, telling gothic tales of cataclysm and reincarnation. For more than four billion years, in beach sand, granite, and garnet schists, the planet has kept a rich and idiosyncratic journal of its past. Fulbright Scholar Bjornerud takes the reader along on an eye-opening tour of Deep Time, explaining in elegant prose what we see and feel beneath our feet. Both scientist and storyteller, Bjornerud uses anecdotes and metaphors to remind us that our home is a living thing with lessons to teach. She shows how our planet has long maintained a delicate balance, and how the global give-and-take has sustained life on Earth through numerous upheavals. But with the rapidly escalating effects of human beings on their home planet, that cosmic balance is being threatened — and the consequences may be catastrophic. Containing a glossary and detailed timescale, as well as vivid descriptions and historic accounts, *Reading the Rocks* is literally a history of the world, for all friends of Earth.

Theaters of Time and Space: American Planetaria, 1930–1970. By Jordan D. Marché II. Rutgers University Press, 2005. 266 pp., Hardcover, \$49.95. rutgerspress.rutgers.edu

Every year, millions of Americans visit planetariums and are captivated by their strikingly realistic portrayals of the night sky. Today, it is difficult to imagine astronomy education without these magnificent celestial theaters. But projection planetariums, first developed in Germany, have been a part of American museum pedagogy only since the early twentieth century and were not widespread until the 1960s. Former planetarium director and historian of science Marché offers the first complete account of the community of individuals and institutions that, during the period between 1930 and 1970, made planetariums the popular teaching aids they are today. The book addresses issues such as the role of gender and social developments within the planetarium community, institutional patronage, and the popularization of science. Offering an insightful, wide-ranging look into the origins of an institution that has fascinated millions, *Theaters of Time and Space* brings new perspectives to how one educational community changed the cultural complexion of science, helped shape public attitudes toward the U.S. space program, and even contributed to policy decisions regarding allocations for future space research.



Warped Passages: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Universe's Hidden Dimensions. By Lisa Randall. Ecco, 2005. 512 pp., Hardcover, \$27.95. www.harpercollins.com

The universe has its secrets. It may even hide extra dimensions, different from anything ever imagined. A whole raft of remarkable concepts now rides atop the scientific firmament, including parallel universes, warped geometry, and three-dimensional sinkholes. We understand far more about the world than we did just a few short years ago, and yet we are more uncertain about the true nature of the universe than ever before. Have we reached a point of scientific discovery so advanced that the laws of physics as we know them are simply not sufficient? Will we all soon have to accept explanations that previously remained in the realm of science fiction? Randall takes us into the incredible world of warped, hidden dimensions that underpin the universe we

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY (continued)

live in, describing how we might prove their existence, while examining the questions that they still leave unanswered. *Warped Passages* provides an overview that tracks the arc of discovery from early twentieth-century physics to the razor's edge of today's particle physics and string theory, unweaving the current debates about relativity, quantum mechanics, and gravity.

Moondust: In Search of the Men Who Fell to Earth. By Andrew Smith. Fourth Estate, 2005. 384 pp., Hardcover, \$24.95. www.harpercollins.com

Twelve astronauts made the greatest of all journeys — to the Moon — during the Apollo era, and all were indelibly marked by it. *Moondust* reveals the stories of the nine men still alive who were caught between the gravitational pull of the Moon and Earth's collective dreaming. These astronauts, trained by NASA for every eventuality in deep space, were completely unprepared for the fame that resulted from being in the center of the enormous global media event that was the Apollo program. Possibilities bloomed, and marriages crumbled under the strain. And the world was changing, too — the wild and happy experimentations of the 1960s gave way to the cynicism and self-doubt of the 1970s. How could they find the meaning of life after Apollo when the biggest adventure they could possibly have was a memory? Some traded on past glories, others tried to move on. Some found God; some sought oblivion. Some reinvented themselves and discovered a measure of happiness in a completely unexpected place. A thrilling blend of history, reporting, and memoir, *Moondust* rekindles the hopeful excitement of an incandescent hour in American history and captures the bittersweet heroism of those who risked everything to hurl themselves out of the known world, and who were never again quite able to accept its familiar bounds.



DVD



Beyond the Moon: Failure is Not an Option 2 DVD. Presented by the History Channel, 2005. 100 minutes, one disc, \$29.95. store.aetv.com/html/home/index.jhtml

In May 1961, President Kennedy set a goal for the nation: Beat the Russians to the Moon, and do it within the decade. In July 1969, NASA met that goal. But no one ever defined what should happen next. In 1969, the engineers of Mission Control assume that America's great push would continue: a moon base, shuttle, space station, manned flights to Mars, etc. But as a growing number of political, social and economic problems vie for the nation's attention — and money — Congress, Presidents, and the American public are not so sure. Is manned space flight really worth the cost? Is it worth the risk? To some, answers to these questions remain unclear even today. But for legendary flight director Gene Kranz and the men and women of Mission Control, there is no doubt. Despite waning public support and shrinking budgets, they still have a job to do, a job where lives hang in the balance and there is no room for error. *Beyond the Moon: Failure is Not an Option 2* tells the little-known story of America's post-Apollo space program, from the point of view of the engineers of Mission Control. Through their experiences, we get a firsthand look at life inside Mission Control, as these driven engineers continue to push the boundaries of space flight from 1972 into the new century.

MISCELLANEOUS

STS-107 Mural Memorial Poster. Available from The Space Store, 2005. \$15.95. www.thespacestore.com

On February 1, 2003, the space shuttle Columbia (STS-107) and her crew were lost over the western United States during reentry into Earth's atmosphere. To honor our fallen heroes, artist Richard Wood created oil on canvas portraits of the STS-107 crew, which became part of an 8' x 16' mural memorial. The Painting an Empty Sky Project mural was created by art students in the Clear Creek Independent School District and the children of the astronauts of the space shuttle Columbia. The poster includes the names of the astronauts along with the words "The world sees them as heroes — Clear Creek I.S.D. and the NASA Community knew them as family." Proceeds of the sale of this poster go to the Clear Lake High School Art Department.

