



Spacefarers: How Humans Will Settle the Moon, Mars, and Beyond

Christopher Wanjek

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Christopher Wanjek's *Spacefarers* charts the way to an intriguing, not-too-distant future.

Humans could be living in space within ten years. In some ways, that sounds far-fetched, and yet fifty years after humans first set foot on the moon, shouldn't we already be living on Mars? Harnessing credible research, innovative problem solving, and inspiring ingenuity, Wanjek argues that human beings living in space soon is not only possible, but may be probable.

Settlements on the moon, Mars, and perhaps even less hospitable corners of outer space come to seem possible in the course of the work. Though these possibilities have all been explored in science fiction, the book dispenses with fiction and still brims with alluring imagination. Its optimistic considerations of the future remain cognizant of the hard-to-surmount obstacles and life-and-death risks that such endeavors entail.

Its visions based on the history of space exploration, which is interpreted with engaging appreciation and honesty, the book compares and contrasts the actions of the United States and Soviet Union in the 1960s with the realities of today's space race with China—a pursuit that's under the radar but, given the economic implications, that could soon ramp up.

Lessons from space-like situations on Earth, including in Antarctica and on submarines, inform the book's considerations of the myriad challenges of life in space, including its lack of breathable air. Still, the book is consistent and sincere in declaring that people will overcome these challenges. Commanding authority even as it speculates, the book's excited looks ahead are informed by sober judgement.

Though the childlike wonder that took ahold of Americans during the Apollo era seems gone, *Spacefarers* suggests that a future in space is within reach, inspiring wonder in an age of skepticism.

MELISSA WUSKE (May / June 2020)

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