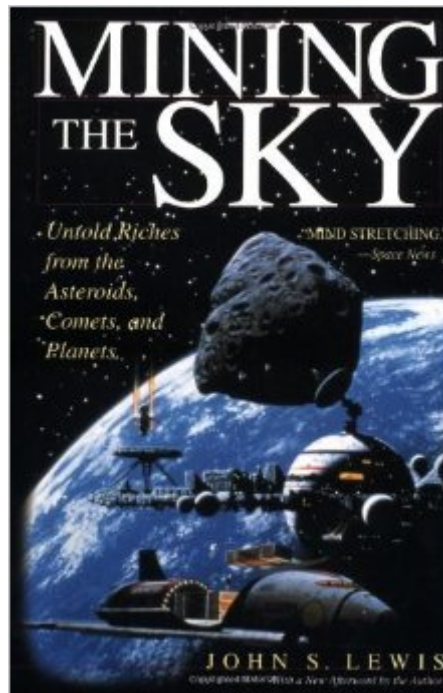


The book was found

Mining The Sky: Untold Riches From The Asteroids, Comets, And Planets (Helix Book)



Synopsis

While we worry over the depletion of the earth's natural resources, the pollution of our planet, and the challenges presented by the earth's growing population, billions of dollars worth of metals, fuels, and life-sustaining substances await us in nearby space. In this visionary book, noted planetary scientist John S. Lewis explains how we can mine these precious metals from the asteroids, comets, and planets in our own solar system for use in space construction projects. And this is just one of the possibilities. Join John S. Lewis as he contemplates milking the moons of Mars for water and hollowing out asteroids for space-bound homesteaders—all while demonstrating the economic and technical feasibility of plans that were once considered pure fiction.

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Customer Reviews

Dr. Lewis without a doubt deserves to be one of the most influential leaders in space development. I found *Mining the Sky* by accident in a hometown book shop while in high school and bought it because I had a few dollars. Five years later, I'm 9 months away from becoming an Air Force space officer with an astronautics degree. This book is that impressive. This book is the clearest and accessible book on the economic impacts space will provide the human race to date. Most of its ideas aren't fanciful and can be easily imagined as maturing in the next 20-30 years or sooner, given an effort. Maybe even sooner, as at least one private company was inspired by Dr. Lewis' writings. Dr. Lewis' positive outlook is tempered by a realistic engineering and economic approach

to space. Keep in mind this book is first and foremost about space industrialization, not exploration. A true space enthusaist should know that one cannot be without the other. Dr. Lewis could not have given a better general survey of whats out there. A brief addendum concerning other reviewers' criticisms. This book could be made much more technical. However, this book was meant to appeal to a large, nontechnical audience. For more information, see Dr. Lewis' earlier book (and parent to Mining the Sky) Resources of Near Earth Space. It is the standard text for space materials prospects. Mining the Sky is a toned down version of RoNES meant to explain to a layman (me, when I first read Mining) the opportunities that await those courageous enough to reach out. Thank you, Dr. Lewis. And everyone even remotely interested in space and mankind's future in it, READ THIS BOOK!

This is a fascinating integration of science, technology and business. The author makes an excellent case for the necessity, feasibility and promise of free market space exploration and exploitation. His justification is the long-range goal of self-sufficient space flight, which he contrasts eloquently with the wasteful, short-term and politically-motivated excursions of the last 40 years. A number of facts may surprise you: the amount of information garnered from extensive research into the subject; the amount of considerate planning scientists and businessmen have devoted to the prospect; and how soon profitable space-mining could begin. The author, one of the field's leading scientist-businessmen, is well-qualified to present the material. I found the book's wealth of scientific data overwhelming at times. Readers more familiar with physics and chemistry will find it easier to read. Nonetheless, the scientific data is important to support the author's "conservative" (his word) projections of how much wealth we can create by "mining the sky." There is some poor explicit philosophy in the concluding chapters. Be aware of it and disregard it—it does nothing to advance or discredit his primary thesis: that the sky—indeed, the universe—is ours for the taking.

This book is entertaining and mind-expanding. The opportunity for exploitation of near-Earth resources is apparent. Dr. Lewis supports his assertions with good science and broad foresight. This is a great job of presenting both the scientific and social benefits of using space resources. The future is built upon visionary ideas, not always immediately appreciated. This book makes a convincing case for advancing beyond the confines of this planet and how such an exodus is not only practical, but may well be profitable.

Rating: A+ (ideas); A- (writing). An entertaining and visionary look at the future of humanity in a

space-based economy. The idea of moving mining to space dates back at least to Russian space visionary Konstantin Tsiolkovski (1903). Robert Goddard's pioneering rocketry experiments in the 1920's were paid for by the Guggenheim foundation, with money from mining (Asarco). Goddard himself envisioned the migration of industry and people to space (1918). Mr. Lewis, Codirector of the Space Engineering Research Center at the University of Arizona, brings these speculations up to date for the turn of the 21st century. The resources available in the asteroid belt are truly staggering. Lewis estimates that there is enough iron there to cover the earth to a depth of one-half mile(!). At present-day prices, this iron would be worth about \$7 billion for each person now alive. Add in nickel, platinum, copper, gold, uranium and so on, and the total exceeds \$100 billion per person. Makes the "Limits to Growth" folks look pretty silly. Of course, there are a *few* steps to be taken before these resources become economic, not the least mustering the courage and imagination to take them. Yogi Berra reminds us that "the trouble with predicting the future is that it is very hard", but from an engineering standpoint, there's no reason why everyone can't become healthy, wealthy and very numerous. Just can't do it all *here*... review copyright 1998 by Peter D. Tillman Consulting Geologist, Tucson & Santa Fe (USA)

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