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Book Review: The Scientific Exploration of Venus

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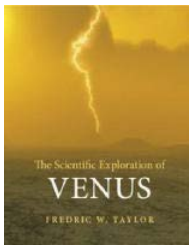
The scientific exploration of Venus



Taylor, Fredric W. Cambridge, 2014

295p bibl index, 9781107023482 $48.00
LC Call Number: QB621

Taylor (Univ. of Oxford, UK), who has been studying Venus for decades, offers a fascinating compendium containing nearly everything currently known about Earth's nearest planetary neighbor, from ancient times to the present. Venus is the brightest astronomical object in the sky, other than the sun and moon. Most everyone has seen it as the "morning" or "evening" star. It is sometimes referred to as “Earth’s twin” because of its similarity to Earth’s size and mass. “Earth’s evil twin” is more apt, though. Venus's thick atmosphere, mostly carbon dioxide laced with sulfuric acid, causes runaway greenhouse warming and a surface pressure that rivals the bottom of Earth’s deepest oceans—truly a hellish place. Taylor chronicles how scientists came to know this through ground- and space-based studies. He discusses the planet's formation, internal structure, surface geology, meteorology, etc. and how they dramatically diverged from an origin similar to Earth's. Also included are detailed descriptions of all major spacecraft sent to Venus, from *Mariner* and *Venera* through the *Venus Express* mission and on to some very speculative future missions. This is a nonmathematical, yet detailed, reference on Venus. It will be valuable to anyone interested in exploration of the solar system.

Summing Up: Highly recommended. All levels/libraries.

Reviewer: T. D. Oswalt, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Recommendation: Highly recommended
Readership Level: All Readership Levels, General Readers, Lower-division Undergraduates, Upper-division Undergraduates, Graduate Students, Researchers/Faculty, Two-Year Technical Program Students, Professionals/Practitioners
Interdisciplinary Subjects:
Subject: Science & Technology - Astronautics & Astronomy
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