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Book Review: Exploring Mars: Chronicles from a Decade of Discovery

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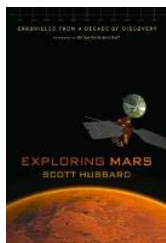
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Exploring Mars : chronicles from a decade of discovery



Hubbard, Scott. Arizona, 2011

194p, 9780816521111 \$45.00, 9780816528967 \$17.95

LC Call Number: [QB643](#)

Exploring Mars is a surprisingly frank account of the exploration of Mars through the eyes of NASA's "Mars Czar" Scott Hubbard. Hubbard (Stanford Univ.), who spent 20 years at NASA, provides the inside story of how he led NASA's Mars program. He even shares with readers some of his personal correspondence and notes from the early planning stages of the Mars Odyssey mission. "Mars Is Hard," the title of one of the chapters, would have been an apt title for the book. Every mission is the result of a sometimes capricious journey through myriad conflicting political, financial, scientific, and technical constraints. In many respects, these are more challenging than getting the spacecraft onto the surface of Mars. This book is not really about Mars; rather, it is a history of the "faster, cheaper, better" decade of NASA's planetary exploration program. Hubbard does a superb job explaining how a mission wends its way through a quagmire of huge egos, outright intrigue, and budget cuts. Along the way readers learn a lot about the red planet (it is actually orange!) and why it is of central importance to NASA's planetary science program.

Summing Up: Highly recommended. All readers.

Reviewer: [T. D. Oswalt](#), Florida Institute of Technology

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](#)