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Book Review: Observer's Guide to Stellar Evolution: The Birth, Life, and Death of Stars

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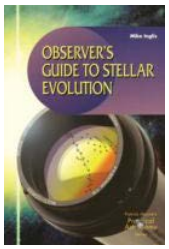
Observer's guide to stellar evolution : the birth, life, and death of stars



Inglis, Mike. Springer, 2003

236p, 1-85233-465-7 $44.95
LC Call Number: QB857

Inglis has taken on the daunting task of bridging the gap between an amateur's qualitative appreciation for stars and a professional's understanding of their physical structure and evolution. He takes a typical introductory astronomy textbook approach but weaves into it many easy-to-use charts for objects in the sky that any amateur can find. The book offers an unusually good description of how astronomers use spectroscopy to investigate the properties of stars. Mathematical concepts are carefully placed within special sections for those interested in a more rigorous explanation. The central thread is stellar evolution, from the birth of stars in gaseous nebulae to their death as white dwarfs or supernovae. Want to know the difference between a globular cluster and an open cluster? A red giant and a white dwarf? Want to find some in the sky? This is the book for you. Although not suitable for an entire course in astronomy, it would be useful as a supplementary text for an undergraduate introductory course or observational techniques course. Weak points include a sparse reference list and a minimal collection of only six color images. Overall, Inglis has done a good job.

Summing Up: Recommended. General readers; lower-division undergraduates through graduate students.

Reviewer: T. D. Oswalt, Florida Institute of Technology
Recommendation: Recommended
Readership Level: General Readers, Lower-division Undergraduates, Upper-division Undergraduates, Graduate Students
Interdisciplinary Subjects:
Subject: Science & Technology - Astronautics & Astronomy
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