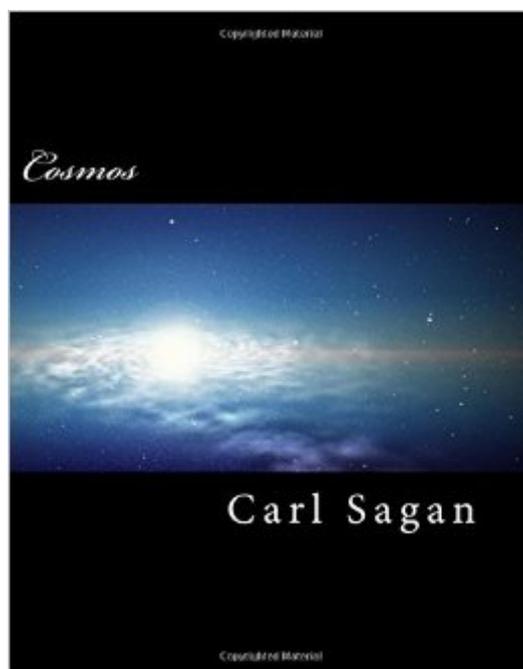


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Cosmos (Spanish Edition)



Synopsis

En esta cautivadora biografía de Carl Sagan, William Poundstone detalla como un joven astrónomo, apasionado por la ciencia y obsesionado con la búsqueda de vida en otros mundos, se transforma en una auténtica superestrella mediática. El Sagan inmediatamente reconocible, invitado imprescindible en la televisión y escritor de extraordinario éxito, abrió a los legos la puerta de entrada a los misterios tanto del cosmos como de la ciencia en general. Buena parte de la comunidad científica vio en él, sin embargo, a un paria, a un descarado buscador de publicidad que se preocupaba más de su imagen y de su fortuna que del avance de la ciencia. Poundstone revela y documenta con rigor los aspectos rara vez tratados de la vida de Sagan: el legítimo e importante trabajo al comienzo de su carrera científica, su capacidad casi obsesiva para embarcarse en proyectos infinitos como la búsqueda de vida extraterrestre, pasando por sus aventuras y desventuras matrimoniales, los avatares de su ambición académica y sus conexiones con otros personajes famosos como Isaac Asimov, Arthur C. Clarke o Steven Spielberg.

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Customer Reviews

As one of the great astronomer-writers of the Twentieth Century, Carl Sagan was extraordinarily communicative with the non-scientific public, able and willing to take the time and trouble to break down the mysteries of the universe into comprehensible fragments. The purpose of this book, which can be considered a companion to the acclaimed television series, is to explain what we know

about the universe from a cosmological perspective and why we need to know more about it. Physicists often talk of the unity of the branches of physics: the interrelation and application of mechanics, thermodynamics, electricity and magnetism, and optics to the motion of everything from galaxies to subatomic particles. Similarly, Sagan's major theme is the unity of cosmology with the natural and physical sciences that define what we know about the Earth. Does the stifling, carbon dioxide-choked atmosphere of Venus imply anything about the greenhouse effect on Earth? Was a nearby cosmic explosion called a supernova indirectly responsible for the disappearance of the dinosaurs? What would be the biological consequences for the survivors of a global nuclear war? The answers to these questions are vital to the continuation of life as we know it. Sagan also identifies cosmology with its own history. He lavishes reverent detail on the ancient Greek and Alexandrian study of the stars and planetary motions, the pioneering work by the Renaissance scientists Brahe, Kepler, Copernicus, Huygens, and others, and the men who revolutionized science with the formulation of laws of motion, Newton and Einstein.

I first saw the series COSMOS on TV in about 1980 when I was about 12, and have been searching for similar material ever since. Carl Sagan is able to capture the mystery and the beauty of astronomy, science, art and religion in a way that most people can follow, and in a way that is interesting and invigorating. He is a very clear thinker and presenter. And this book, based on that very popular TV series of the same name, I found in an old book store, which I immediately grabbed. Here was something of my childhood, and something very special. The book did not disappoint. It is filled with stunning images, photographs, illustrations, diagrams and so on. And the text is fun, enlightening, clear, visionary, and precise. Not surprising, since it is written by an astronomer at heart. It is also advisable to search around and buy the illustrated edition—the illustrations add much to the text. Carl places the earth on the shores of the cosmic ocean—the title of the first chapter. He traces religious, artistic and scientific investigations into the 'cosmos' throughout the millennia, and the amount of useful historical information he brings up is quite extraordinary. He draws together the thoughts of ancient cultures like the Greeks, Babylonians, Stone Age man, Renaissance thinkers, poets, artists, and famous scientists, and ties these in with many modern discoveries concerning the nature of the universe. One can see his strong leanings on the likelihood of extraterrestrial life and the SETI project between the lines, as well as his views on religion and its place in the human psyche. One particularly interesting piece describes the downfall of the old Greek science and the destruction of the library at Alexandria, and how these tie in with his views on history, science and religion in general.

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