

NEW BOOKS & MEDIA

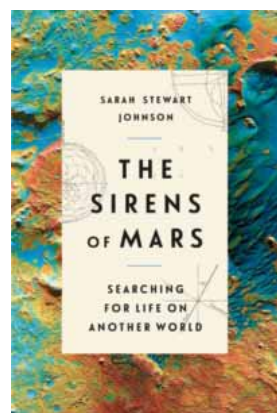
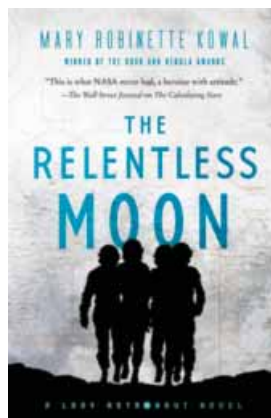
The Relentless Moon

Mary Robinette Kowal

Tor Books, 2020. \$17.99 (paper)

Mary Robinette Kowal's Lady Astronaut series takes place in an alternate universe where the catastrophic effects of a meteor impact in 1952 force humans to throw their full weight behind spaceflight in an attempt to escape their dying planet. The first two books, *The Calculating Stars* and *The Fated Sky*, followed the story of Elma York, a mathematician and pilot who becomes the first woman in space. In the third book, *The Relentless Moon*, Kowal brings in a new narrator: Nicole Wargin, an astronaut who is married to the governor of Kansas. Wargin's story loosely parallels the fascinating life of Janey Hart, an activist, pilot, and senator's wife who hoped to become an astronaut but was thwarted by NASA's men-only policy. Kowal also brings some real-life historical figures into *The Relentless Moon*, including physicist Otto Frisch.

—MB



The Sirens of Mars

Searching for Life on Another World

Sarah Stewart Johnson

Crown, 2020. \$28.99

Planetary scientist Sarah Stewart Johnson answers the siren call of the red planet with this retrospective of Mars missions and the search for extraterrestrial life. Hers is a very personal account, in which she intersperses stories of various spacecraft and some of the key scientists involved with reminiscences of her childhood, development as a scientist, and experiences working on such projects as NASA's *Curiosity* rover and traveling to some of the most remote and hostile environments on Earth

in pursuit of exotic life forms. Through her vivid observations and descriptions, Johnson aptly conveys the seemingly quixotic search for the answer to one of the most fundamental questions facing humanity: Are we alone in the universe?

—CC

Once Upon a Time I Lived on Mars

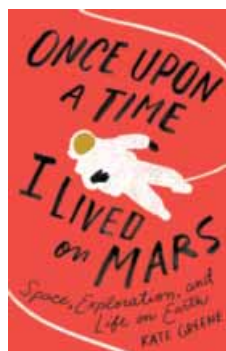
Space, Exploration, and Life on Earth

Kate Greene

St Martin's Press, 2020. \$27.99

Between April and August 2013, science journalist Kate Greene joined five other pseudo-astronauts to live in a two-story geodesic dome on Hawaii's Mauna Loa as part of the first Hawaii Space Exploration Analog and Simulation (HI-SEAS). The mission's focus was to study the psychological effects of food and whether the opportunity to cook meals and prepare favorite dishes, instead of consuming only rehydrated fare, could improve astronaut morale and appetite during an extended stay on Mars. In her thoughtful, well-written account of the mission, Greene not only discusses what it was like to spend several months cooped up indoors with five strangers and limited resources but also reflects on what this and other space missions can teach us about ourselves and life on Earth.

—CC

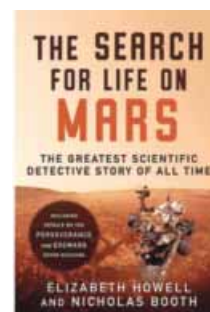


The Search for Life on Mars

The Greatest Scientific Detective Story of All Time

Elizabeth Howell and Nicholas Booth

Arcade, 2020. \$27.99



Hardly a traditional whodunit, *The Search for Life on Mars* does have elements of detective fiction: forensic evidence of Mars's surface and interior obtained by numerous unmanned orbiters and landers, principal investigators analyzing it for vital clues, and plenty of red herrings and false leads. In this ambitious collaboration, journalists Elizabeth Howell and Nicholas Booth attempt to present more than five decades of Martian exploration and make it readable for people with no technical background. Although there is no big reveal at the end—we still don't know if there is, or ever was, life on Mars—scientists hope to glean a more definitive answer to that mystery from a plethora of upcoming missions, including NASA's *Perseverance* rover, which is scheduled to launch later this month.

—CC

Subatomic

An Atom Building Game

John J.

Coveyou

Genius Games, 2019 (2nd ed.). \$39.99

The goal of this innovative board game is to build an atom from photons and quarks. Players are dealt cards of subatomic particles and must combine them to form real elements in order to win the game. To help build their elements, players can hire famous physicists like J. J. Thomson, Maria Goeppert Mayer, and Ernest Rutherford to aid their efforts. For ages 10 and up.

—MB **TY**

