



In Search of Dark Matter (Springer Praxis Books)

By Ken Freeman, Geoff McNamara

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Written for the educated non-scientist and scientist alike, it spans a variety of scientific disciplines, from observational astronomy to particle physics. Concepts that the reader will encounter along the way are at the cutting edge of scientific research. However the themes are explained in such a way that no prior understanding of science beyond a high school education is necessary.

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Review

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"Foremost amongst our talents is deduction. Using logic and reasoning, a truth can be determined without direct evidence. Ken Freeman and Geoff McNamara in their book ... showcase this talent. ... Given the state of unknown portrayed, this book would be a great tool to lure undergraduate students into the field of astronomy. ... Throughout, there are well appointed photographs to entice the reader ... the book will bring fundamental answers about our existence and likely a lot of fame to the finder." (www.universetoday.com, December, 2006)

"Pinning down exactly how much dark matter there is in the Universe, and discovering what this enigmatic stuff is made of, has to be among the most important issues in modern astronomy. ... Arguments are presented simply ... so this is a read that is suitable for a beginner without patronizing those already familiar with many of the ideas. ... In Search of Dark Matter really is an excellent little book." (Alan Longstaff, Astronomy Now, September, 2006)

"'In Search of Dark Matter' has a textbook feel ... It is a concise chronicle of the discovery of dark matter and the efforts to find out what it is and what part it plays in the Universe, from the Big Bang to the present." (Helen Close, Astronomy and Space, January, 2007)

"This little book (158 p.) is an excellent introduction for non-specialists to the search of dark matter, and more generally to modern observational cosmology. ... More than 30 illustrations, photographs and sketches, accompany the text, in a pleasant and effective way. ... The book is thus both accessible to readers with little academic training in physics, and useful to physicists to whom it provides a lot of information on this fascinating and rapidly expanding field. ... I warmly recommend it." (Pierre Marage, Physicalia Magazine, Vol. 29 (2), 2007)

About the Author

Ken Freeman is Duffield Professor of Astronomy at the Australian National University (Research School of Astronomy & Astrophysics, Mount Stromlo Observatory) in Canberra. He studied mathematics at the University of Western Australia and theoretical astrophysics at the University of Cambridge, followed by a postdoctoral year at McDonald Observatory (University of Texas) with G. de Vaucouleurs and a year as a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. He returned to Australia in 1967 and has been there ever since.

His research interests are in the formation and dynamics of galaxies and globular clusters, and particularly in the problem of dark matter in galaxies: he was one of the first to point out (1970) that spiral galaxies contain a large fraction of dark matter. Since then, he has written many papers on dark matter in spiral and elliptical galaxies. He was a founding member of the MACHO collaboration which used microlensing techniques to search for galactic dark matter in the form of compact stellar-mass objects.

For his current research, he uses the optical and radio telescopes in Australia, and also observes with the Hubble Space Telescope and large optical telescopes in Spain, Chile, and Hawaii. He has written about 500 research articles.

Geoff McNamara has been writing about and teaching science and technology since the mid-1980s. He has had approximately 150 articles published in magazines ranging from Electronics Australia, Astronomy, Sky & Space, and Nature Australia.

In 1997 he coauthored a popular level science book "Ripples on a Cosmic Sea - the search for gravitational waves" with Associate Professor David Blair (Allen & Unwin, 1997), and contributed a chapter to "The Universe Revealed" (Mitchell Beazley, 1998).

He taught Ophthalmic Optics at Sydney Institute of Technology from 1987 to 1999, and has presented many courses and talks on astronomy for the public. He has been teaching science at Campbell High School in Canberra since 2000. In 2003 he began teaching Astronomy and the course has continued to grow in popularity. In 2005 the Astronomy courses were completed by approximately 130 students.

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