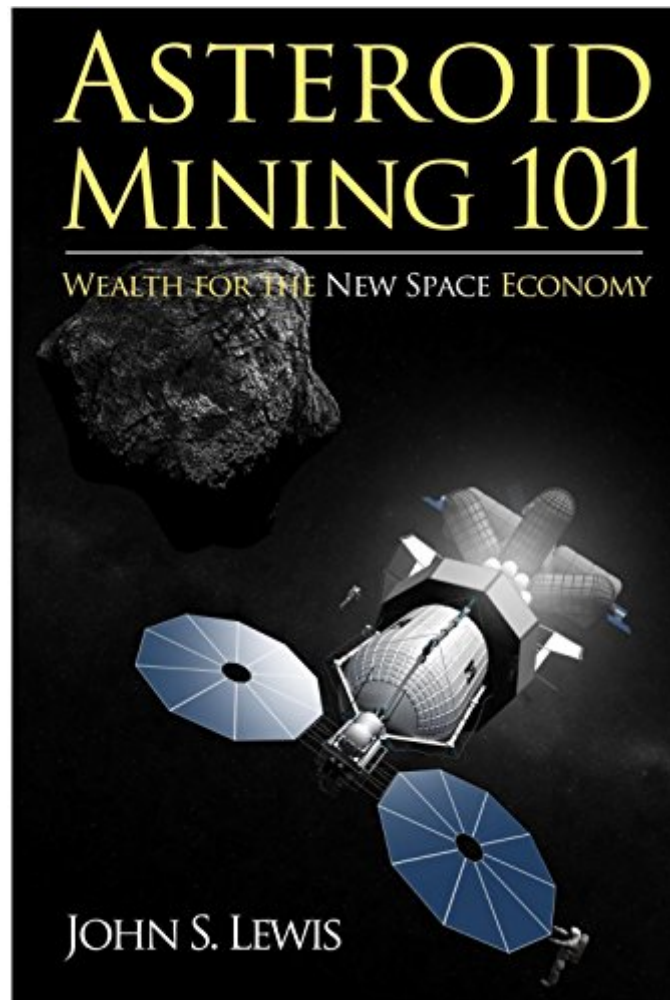




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Asteroid Mining 101: Wealth For The New Space Economy



Synopsis

The emerging asteroid mining industry has extremely ambitious intentions. It is within the realm of possibility that their work may usher in a change in global economics as profound as the Industrial Revolution. As may be expected, press reports dealing with asteroid mining have been numerous, ranging in scope from short and breezy to broad and serious, and in quality from accurate to impressionistic to simply uninformed. There is good reason to be curious about what may be the biggest game-changer in human economic history. And there is good reason to look closely at the underlying science and engineering that form the foundation of this work.

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Customer Reviews

Book review for "Asteroid Mining 101" Date of this review: 03 FEB 2015 The book itself is high quality and has clear, easy to read text and many color illustrations. The book is a follow-up of Mr. Lewis's earlier book "Mining the Sky" but the information here is much more complete, updated to what is known in 2014, and is much more technical. It would be extremely useful, for example, for

politicians, investors, or business executives needing to quickly understand the basis for the recent interest and practicality of asteroid mining. I have bachelor's degrees in applied physics and computer science and it took me about a week to read this book, spending a few hours a night on it. I enjoyed it very much and I will probably read it 2 or 3 more times just to be sure that I understand everything because there is a lot in it to take in. To get the most out of this book I recommend you read Mr. Lewis's other book, "Mining the Sky", first, especially if you don't have a background in science. I did not see any factual errors in the book and it is obvious Mr. Lewis knows the material and has done a lot of quality research bringing this information together. Once I started to understand the ideas presented in "Mining the Sky" and then in this book, I realized that we (the human race) need to go to space as soon as we possibly can. To me, the human race is similar to a crowd of bored, starving people standing on a sidewalk fighting over a few dried up grains of rice (energy and resources on Earth) who don't realize that all they have to do is turn around and cross a moderately busy street to get to an all you can eat 5 star steak house giving away food for free (the asteroids and comets and other resources in our solar system). Mr. Lewis has given us the tools to pass the biggest IQ test of all time with his books on asteroid mining. In my opinion, Mr. Lewis deserves a Nobel peace prize or at the very least a statue of him made from all of the platinum in the M type asteroid 16 Psyche. Elon Musk said that he started SpaceX and wants to go to Mars because he thinks a future where humans go into space will be much more interesting than one which it doesn't. I agree with him and I would add my own corollary to his statement: humans living in a future where humans don't go into space ultimately have no hope. Probably 90% or more of the problems this world has are political problems, wars, acts of oppression, etc. that are traced back to competition for resources and energy. Mr. Lewis has done a very good job of showing that it doesn't have to be that way because there are enough resources in our solar system to support a population and economy millions of times bigger than what we have now. If we just grow up, start doing a little more long term planning, start believing that we can do this, stop saying it is too hard or too expensive, and put our minds to it so that we can go to space and our future really will be far more interesting. This book gives me hope.

James S. Berry, KE6WLI
Eureka, California

Since there is no look inside feature for the book I have included an abbreviated table of contents:

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There aren't very many science books about space exploitation that rate five stars, but here at last we have one. Lewis states in his preface that he's not going to try to hype the subject matter, and he doesn't disappoint! His presentation is purely matter-of-fact. In a little more than two hundred pages (including appendix) he packs just about all there is to know about all the asteroids: the near-earthers, the main belt, the Centaurs, the Trojans from Earth to Saturn, the hard-to-access high-inclination space rocks, and even the outermost retrograde-orbiting satellites of Jupiter and Saturn. He explains their orbital statistics and kinematics, the optimal trajectories for reaching them, their minerology (based upon telescopic spectroscopy and meteorite data), and their profit potential. Necessary technologies and techniques for capturing them and extraction of their ores are described thoroughly, though specific engineering solutions are only suggested. This covers just about the whole ball game! The book is replete with charts, lists, and color photos. There is zero fat here. In his final chapter Lewis asserts that fission nuclear power is a non-starter for environmental and political reasons, and instead suggests thermonuclear fusion. As he admits, this is probably a long way off (as they say, it's always gonna be the energy of the future), and he suggests that we will have to do the best possible with solar power. I hope the potential for advanced fission reactors for electrical power generation is not overlooked. These could be used to power electric plasma or ion engines, or to beam microwaves to distant sail craft. The outer reaches of the Belt are somewhat dim, though it is true that the current JUNO mission en route to Jupiter makes do with solar power alone. If asteroid mining interests you, you will not be disappointed with this book!

I found this book by John Lewis quite interesting and valuable. Although I have always been interested in space development and colonization, I had recently been discounting the importance of planetary defense as the basis for arguing for increased investment in the space program. I thought most hazardous asteroids had been identified and the risk of a really significant impact anytime soon was pretty low. After reading this book, I realized how unpredictable the solar system can be due to complex gravitational interactions among bodies of various shapes and sizes. Now I'm back to using defense from asteroid and comet strikes as an important justification for investment in NASA. Of course, in the long run money gained from mining will be the big motivator, but a bunch of billionaires have already figured that out so I don't have to argue that point with them. There were some technical issues with this book, one whole page is duplicated, but overall I recommend it highly for the semi-lay person like me due to the value of its content.

Very technical but now I am ready to go out and mine the asteroids. I may not see the time come when the information held within the pages of this book come true but I think this 101 series will make it possible for someone to start the process one day and then we will see something really important happen. This book is for the truly interested people who wish to get a jump on mining in space. It is very technical and will not appeal to all.

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