



Mars Direct: Space Exploration, the Red Planet, and the Human Future: A Special from Tarcher/ Penguin

Robert Zubrin

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“Bob Zubrin really, nearly alone, changed our thinking on this issue.”

—Carl Sagan, *The Denver Post*

If you ever daydream about space travel and human space flight—or hope to one day rove the Red Planet alongside *Curiosity*—then MARS DIRECT will teach you how we can get there

The human race is at a crossroads. In the coming decades, we will make decisions regarding our human spaceflight program that will lead to one of two familiar futures: the open universe of *Star Trek*, where we allow ourselves the opportunity to spread our wings and attempt to flourish as an interplanetary species—or the closed, dystopian, and ultimately self-destructive world of *Soylent Green*, constantly at war with one another over humanity’s “limited” resources. If we plan to survive ourselves and one day travel to the stars, the human race’s next stepping-stone must be a manned mission to and the eventual colonization of Mars.

In this four-part e-special, Mars Society founder Dr. Robert Zubrin details the challenges of a manned Earth-to-Mars mission. Challenges which, according to Zubrin, we are technologically more prepared to overcome than the obstacles of the missions to the moon of the sixties and seventies. Dr. Zubrin’s relatively simple plan, called Mars Direct, could feasibly have humans on the surface of Mars within a decade. Zubrin also discusses the current predicament of NASA, the promise of privatized space flight from companies like SpaceX, and the larger implication behind the absolute necessity to open the final frontier and transform from a planetary society into an interplanetary society. Our future as a species requires us to take baby steps away from the cradle that is planet Earth or, ultimately, perish here.

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