

## BOOK REVIEW

Ralph Lorenz and Jacqueline Mitton (eds.): *Lifting Titan's Veil: Exploring the Giant Moon of Saturn*, Cambridge University Press, May 2002, 268 pages. ISBN: 0521793483, Hardbound £19.95.

Interest in Titan, Saturn's largest satellite, is growing, as the Huygens probe landing on Titan in January 2005 approaches. Ralph Lorenz and Jacqueline Mitton have written a readable yet knowledgeable account of this object, the second largest planetary satellite in the Solar System and the only one with a significant atmosphere. Spanning the era from its discovery by Christiaan Huygens in 1655 to the most recent results and interpretations from the Hubble Space Telescope and various sophisticated ground-based facilities, the book contains no equations. Therefore, it is accessible to a non-specialist reader, yet also has something for the serious amateur or professional astronomer who wants a primer on the subject. There is a lot of physics and chemistry here, at least at the conceptual level. Lorenz has been involved with the Cassini–Huygens mission at various levels from its early days and his experiences are recorded in sections of the book entitled “Ralph's Log”, essentially a personal diary recording the ups and downs of involvement with a real space project. While not to the taste of all readers I suspect, these personal interjections do show that despite all the hi-tech wizardry involved, space science missions are also about people. This reviewer tried hard to find major errors, but apart from the occasional split infinitive or redundant hyphen, he could find none. Overall a good read!

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