

SUMMARIES OF DDAS LIBRARY BOOKS NUMBERED 1 TO 6  
TOGETHER WITH A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THEIR AUTHORS

1. ***The Road to the Stars by Iain Nicholson (1978)*** is an overview of potential modes of traversing the light years between the stars. The book covers the basics of spaceflight and key considerations of interstellar voyaging that apply as much now as they did in the nineteen seventies (fuel, lifespan etc). Read it as much as a history book as science fiction

**Iain Nicolson** is a writer and lecturer on astronomy and space science. Author of more than twenty books, he has also contributed chapters and entries to a wide variety of books and encyclopaedias, and has written hundreds of magazine articles. A consultant to *Astronomy Now*, he has been associated with the magazine since its foundation in 1987 and has been chairing AstroFest since 1996. Over the years, he has been a frequent contributor to BBC television's *The Sky at Night*. He did his degree in physics at the University of St Andrews and subsequently became Principal Lecturer in Astronomy at the University of Hertfordshire. In 2011 he was awarded a Fellowship of the University for his contributions to the public understanding of astronomy.

2. ***The Intelligent Universe: A New View of Creation and Evolution by Fred Hoyle (1983)*** is a major work by one of the great figures of 20th century science and represents a fundamental challenge to established thinking on the origins and nature of the Universe. Fred Hoyle has entered the "creation and evolution" debate by assembling the current theories, examining them according to the evidence and giving judgement. His assertions include:
  - Did life start by random processes? No
  - Could chance operate of such a large scale? No
  - Is Darwin's theory of evolution still plausible? No
  - Did life originate on Earth? No

**Sir Fred Hoyle** FRS (24 June 1915 – 20 August 2001) was a famous English astronomer noted primarily for the theory of stellar nucleosynthesis and his often controversial stances on other scientific matters—in particular his rejection of the "Big Bang" theory, a term coined by him on BBC radio. While Hoyle was well-regarded for his works on nucleosynthesis and science popularization, his career was also noted for the controversial positions he held on a wide range of scientific issues, often in direct opposition to the prevailing theories supported by the majority of the scientific community.

In addition to his work as an astronomer, Hoyle was a writer of science fiction, including a number of books co-written with his son Geoffrey Hoyle. Hoyle spent most of his working life at the Institute of Astronomy at Cambridge and served as its director for a number of years.

3. ***Amateur Astronomy: A Comprehensive & Practical Survey by Colin Ronan (Consultant Editor) (1989)*** introduces optical equipment, vital statistics on the planets and stars, celestial phenomena, and methods for observing the heavens.

**Colin A. Ronan** (London, 4 June 1920 – 1 June 1995) was a British author and specialist in the history and philosophy of science. After the Second World War he obtained a BSc in Astronomy, and then took an administrative post at the secretariat of The Royal Society. After leaving the Royal Society he took up writing, and during a long career as an author produced over forty books, mainly on astronomy, and the history and philosophy of science. He was president of the British Astronomical Association from 1989 to 1991 and director of the historical section. He also wrote scientific books for children, along with books such as *The Practical Astronomer* (1981) written for beginner amateur astronomers.

During the 1980s and early 1990s he collaborated with Sir Patrick Moore in lecture tours. These lecture tours took the form of weekend residential symposia on single topics such as the return of Halley's Comet. Notable and hilarious, the interplay between Ronan's sober and intellectual analysis along with Moore's more extravagant character, led frequent disagreements that were usually solved over several bottles of red wine.

Ronan had an asteroid named in honour of his achievements: 4024 Ronan belongs to the Floras family, discovered by E. Bowell on November 24, 1981, at Anderson Mesa.

4. ***Earth: A New Perspective by Nicolas Cheetham (2006)*** travels the world in four chapters: Earth, Water, Air and Fire. Earth flies us over mountains forests deserts and tundra. Water follows rivers and coastlines explores ice fields and seas before plunging into the abyss of the deep ocean. Air examines storms hurricanes wind-sculpted patterns and atmospheric phenomena such as the aurora borealis. Finally Fire ends the book with volcanoes asteroid impacts forest fires pollution and man's impact on the environment. The book shows us our familiar planet from a new perspective. We are presented with an atlas of an invisible Earth through the satellite's all-seeing eye - an Earth that lives and breathes around us but one which paradoxically we are too close to see.

**Nicolas Cheetham** studied at the University of Edinburgh where he read Classics and Byzantine History and took a postgraduate MSc in Artificial Intelligence, before working as an editor specializing in popular science for a London publishing house. He also is the author of *Universe: A Journey From Earth to the Edge of the Cosmos* and lives in London.

5. ***Universe: A Journey from Earth to the Edge of the Cosmos by Nicolas Cheetham (2005)*** embarks on the most astounding of odysseys, a voyage into realms not only stranger than we can imagine but also far, far more beautiful. The book leads us into a celestial panorama that extends for 130 billion trillion kilometres (80 billion trillion miles) in every direction, and allows us to explore nearly 200 of the most extraordinary astronomical views ever uncovered. Complementing these up-to-date and spectacular images are enlightening descriptions of the planets, stars, nebulae, white dwarfs, supernovae, black holes and other exotica that populate our universe.

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6. ***The Pictorial Atlas of the Universe by Kevin Krisciunas and Bill Yenne (1989)*** is a beautifully illustrated atlas of the universe. This over-sized hardcover coffee table book gives us a comprehensive tour of the universe beginning with our solar system and then explores the immediate and neighbouring galaxies and the rest of the observable universe. It starts with an Introduction, providing a brief history of the universe, and moves on through a further five parts covering:

- Our solar system
- The local region of our galaxy
- The Milky Way galaxy
- Nearby galaxies
- Distant galaxies and the structure of the universe.

**Kevin Krisciunas** worked for a NASA contractor, from 1977 to 1982, and flew 160 flights aboard NASA's Kuiper Airborne Observatory, which was a four engine jet that operated a 36-inch diameter telescope at altitudes as high as 45,000 feet. From 1982 to 1996 he worked for the United Kingdom Infrared Telescope, which is situated at the 13,800 foot

summit of Mauna Kea on the Island of Hawaii. Since 1999 his research has primarily involved optical and infrared observations of Type Ia supernovae.

He is a participant in the ESSENCE project, which discovered over 200 high-redshift supernovae using the 4-meter telescope at Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory. He has worked in Chile at Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory and Las Campanas Observatory and was a postdoctoral researcher and research assistant professor at the University of Notre Dame. He is principal author or co-author of over 100 publications.

**Bill Yenne** is a graduate of the University of Montana and the Stanford University Professional Publishing Course. He is a San Francisco-based author of more than four dozen books on military and historical topics. He is also a member of the American Society of Journalists and Authors.