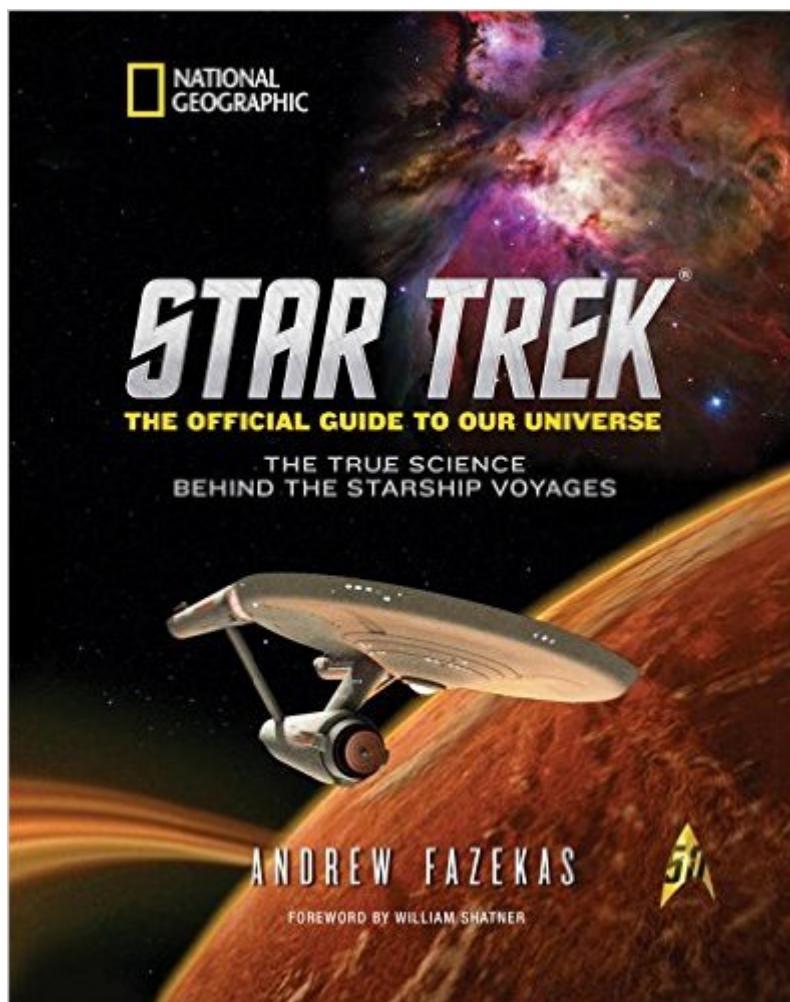


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# Star Trek The Official Guide To Our Universe: The True Science Behind The Starship Voyages



## Synopsis

As Star Trek celebrates its 50th anniversary, this book reveals the real science behind its fantastic and beloved fictions, inviting readers to step outside, gaze up at the night sky, and observe some of the destinations the Starfleet has visited. Many of the galactic destinations featured in Star Trek over the years—multiple star systems, alien worlds, supernova explosions, emission nebulae, voracious black holes—are scientifically valid, so much so that one can step out and view them in the night sky. In this book astronomy educator Andrew Fazekas, *“The Night Sky Guy”* takes you on that journey, starting with specific Star Trek voyages, explaining the science behind them, and guiding you in observing and learning more about the real-universe corollaries of planets and places in the Star Trek universe. With a foreword from William Shatner and stunningly illustrated with hundreds of full-color images—some artists’ interpretations and some real images generated by the most recent NASA missions—plus stills of favorite Star Trek scenes and characters, *Star Trek: The Official Guide to Our Universe* uses Star Trek to teach astronomy, taking every reader on a voyage of discovery. From Altair to Vega, from red giants to white dwarfs, from our solar system to exoplanets we are only beginning to imagine, the book visits dozens of celestial objects, spotlighting some 20 in careful scientific detail and offering easy-to-follow star-gazing instructions to find them in the night sky. No warp-driven starship, not even a telescope is required to go on these voyages: Most destinations are bright enough to be seen with the naked eye. For Star Trek fans and budding stargazers who are ready to launch their own space mission, this inventive book blends science and fiction, making learning fun and making Star Trek’s 50th all the more worthy of celebration.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As part of National Geographic's publicity tour, I was able to read *Star Trek The Official Guide to Our Universe* a couple of weeks before the official release date, and interview author Andrew Fazekas on the first day the book was publicly available. It's a collage of ideas with a TON of photographs, star charts and drawings. (Having National Geographic's cartographers and illustrators on your team certainly helps.) The subject matter changes every couple of pages -- vignettes, you might say -- covering celestial objects, the science of Star Trek, and the characters, episodes and movies of Star Trek. Quite a compendium. Andrew's writing makes all of this very approachable. His love of "the night sky" (one of his favorite phrases) and Star Trek is apparent without being sappy. The way he bridges the stories of Star Trek into the science and astronomy of today is quite skillful. For example, you might be reminded of one of your favorite scenes, say from *The Wrath of Khan*, where Captain Kirk moves a mounting confrontation with his greatest enemy, the vengeful Khan Noonien Singh, to the Mutara Nebula, where both ships' sensors will be hampered by the nebula's effect on their shields. The Battle of Mutara rages. Warp engines aboard the U.S.S. Enterprise reengage just in time to get it out of the nebula before the Genesis Device explodes, killing Khan. The nebula coalesces around the explosion site, creating the Genesis Planet. That is where they lay Spock to rest after he sacrifices himself to deadly levels of radiation in order to repair their warp drive. • Found under the heading "Emission Nebulae in Star Trek," • along with some great photos and supplemental information, these pages are followed by "Emission Nebulae in Our Universe," • where Andrew explains just what these objects are composed of, and why they are pink. If you're into Star Trek, astronomy or science in general, you'll find his writing both useful and intriguing. The book project actually began ten years ago when Andrew began documenting the celestial objects (or their "our universe" equivalents) that he noticed in the Star Trek movies and TV series. When National Geographic approached Mr. Fazekas to write a book based on *STARSTRUCK*, the weekly star gazing column he writes for NationalGeographic.com, a larger discussion naturally ensued, leading to the two-year work of producing *The Official Guide to Our Universe*. Dreams do come true! Interviewing Andrew was so fun. It's clear the boyhood enthusiasm he has for astronomy and Star Trek is unabated. His science journalism skills are first-rate, and the team that assembled around him -- the graphic editors, archivists, layout producers, and so on -- contributed everything needed for an

excellent outcome. For the price of a couple of movie tickets you'll have a work that, like Star Trek, will be enjoyed for generations.

Sadly, there is a major flaw with this book-- the print is way too small, and on the few pages that are white it is too light. A good bright light and perhaps even a magnifying glass are necessary to read ... what is turning out to be an excellent and really fun book. The combination of reality astronomy and the history of space exploration with things "Star Trek" is truly wonderful. I plan to read this book slowly to savor each and every page.

One can be learned by watching Star Trek! At least that's what I kid people about, sort of, (re)watch *Let that be Your Last Battlefield* from TOS: season three and you'll see what I mean. National Geographic generally puts out a classy product and this beautiful 240-page hardcover is no exception. Though the bulk of this book is grounded in the "prime" universe, it still makes an effort to assimilate the most recent films into the overall Star Trek collective. Others have aptly reviewed this before me, no need for repetition, so since there is no "Look Inside" option offered in this listing here is how the book is laid out into its table of contents:

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A lot of good things here, very interesting, but the book is very oddly organized, which is why it has 4 stars rather than 5. Even though the chapter indicates specific categories, the information within them is rather jumbled, almost to the point of stream of consciousness. lots of great photos, and bits from all of the franchises and some of the movies are presented although the relationship to the topic is not always apparent.

This book is really amazing. First off it's high quality. It feels like a textbook, but it's far prettier than my Astronomy texts were back in college. Each section is separated by the Star Trek science and then Earth science. There are comparisons of fact and science fiction, and while it's not written to be a dry (boring) text book, it is accessible to pretty much anyone. They're not writing over your head or

dumbing it down. There are also these really cool little graphics that show Star Trek tech and how close we are to having the thing in reality. Some of them have happened, which is awesome.

Well written and illustrated book on the Star Trek Universe as seen by Science today. Weaving in various Star Trek episodes and movies, although not as well done as it could have been. I found the book interesting but uneven at times. It's like a book melding current Astronomy with the Fictional Universe at times confusing.Â Star Trek The Official Guide to Our Universe: The True Science Behind the Starship Voyages

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