



# **Beyond the Moon: A Golden Age of Planetary Exploration, 1971-1978 (Smithsonian History of Aviation and Spaceflight Series)**

*Robert S. Kraemer*

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During the 1970s, Americans launched twelve robot spacecraft on paths to the far corners of the solar system. Each mission was a resounding success, yielding detailed knowledge of Earth's neighboring planets and advancing human understanding of the solar system's origin and evolution. In 1971, Mariner 9 revealed a history of volcanic eruptions and flooding on Mars. Pioneer 10, launched in 1972, passed safely through the Asteroid Belt and accomplished the first successful flyby of Jupiter. The 1977 Voyager "grand tour" flybys of four of the outer planets revealed satellites that featured active volcanoes, fantastically tortured terrain, and ice-spewing geysers.

Providing an insider's view of what has been called a golden era in space pioneering, Robert S. Kraemer describes the financial, political, and technical hurdles facing each mission. As NASA's director of planetary programs during those years, he witnessed rivalries between scientists, worked to ensure that projects remained in NASA and federal budgets, and reshaped missions to meet changing priorities, schedules, and vehicle configurations. The book also chronicles the technical problems that sometimes jeopardized missions and describes such successes as the first landings on Mars in 1976.

Addressing many of the central themes that have affected space science during the past fifty years, *Beyond the Moon* documents the efforts of those who contributed to a burst of planetary exploration that laid the foundation for even more extraordinary voyages of discovery. Dozens of full color and black and white illustrations enhance the appeal for any space enthusiast.

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