



Dr. Space: The Life of Wernher von Braun

By Bob Ward

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Written by veteran aerospace journalist Bob Ward, who spent years investigating his subject, this biography presents a revealing but even-handed portrait of the father of modern rocketry. As he chronicles Werner von Braun's life, Ward explodes many myths and misconceptions about the controversial genius who was a hero to some, a villain to others. The picture of von Braun that emerges is of a brilliant scientist with limitless curiosity and a drive to achieve his goals at almost any price?from developing the world's first ballistic missile used against the Allies in World War II to helping launch the first U.S. satellite that hurled Americans into space and the Saturn V super-booster that powered them to the moon. Along the way readers are introduced to the human side of this charismatic visionary who brought the United States into the Space Age.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This paean offers uncritical praise of every aspect of rocket scientist von Braun's life. While there's an enormous amount to celebrate about the man most responsible for the U.S. putting astronauts on the moon, von Braun (1912–1977) is a more complex figure than Ward represents. As a reporter for the *Huntsville (Ala.) Times*, Ward covered von Braun during many of his years as director of the Marshall Space Flight Center, in Huntsville. In addition to his own interactions with von Braun, Ward draws too heavily on letters written by the scientist's friends and colleagues in honor of his 60th birthday. Additionally, Ward provides a relatively superficial examination of von Braun's controversial role in Nazi Germany, where he and his team of engineers created the V-2 rocket used against the Allies (this project is better presented by Michael Neufeld in *The Rocket and the Reich*). A clear picture of von Braun's enormous charisma, intellect and personality does come through, as does a sense of how critical a political (as well as technological) role von Braun played in defining America's space program. 40 b&w photos. (June)

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About the Author

Bob Ward, a former editor-in-chief of The Huntsville Times, covered the von Braun rocket team as a reporter. This is his fifth book on space subjects. He lives in Huntsville, AL.

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