

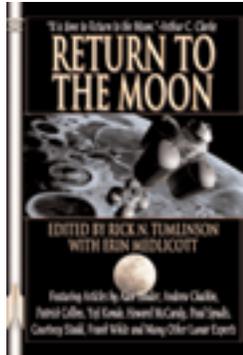
Book review in April 2006 issue of

BBC

THE WORLD'S FIRST ASTRONOMY
MAGAZINE AND CD PACKAGE

Sky at Night

Return To The Moon



Ed. Rick Tumulison and
Erin R. Medicott

Apogee Books

£15.95

208 pages ► Softback

► *A wide-ranging collection of articles
in support of future lunar exploration*

Apogee Books has made its name by reprinting NASA mission reports and press releases from the glory days of Gemini and Apollo. These uncritical clones are great for collectors but of little interest to a wider audience.

But with this book, Apogee has delivered something genuinely passionate and interesting. Two dozen space experts, drawn mainly from private rocket industries and space lobby groups, discuss how we can get back to the Moon.

NASA is definitely not the star here. A mood of frustration is reflected in several of the essays. Private companies can offer a more ambitious and cost-effective space programme than NASA's.

Return To The Moon also makes another controversial plea: international space laws dating from the Cold War era have to be rewritten. Property rights must be assigned on the Moon, and among the asteroids, so that entrepreneurs can create a thriving free market space industry. These arguments make some sense, although one plan to use the Moon as a safety zone for exceptionally dangerous industries sounds unappealing.

President Bush's *Vision For Space Exploration* calls for expensive NASA missions allowing astronauts to stay on the Moon for a week or two at a time. This book suggests that 'business as usual' is not the way forward. When we next visit the Moon, we should stay for good, and it shouldn't cost us the Earth.



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