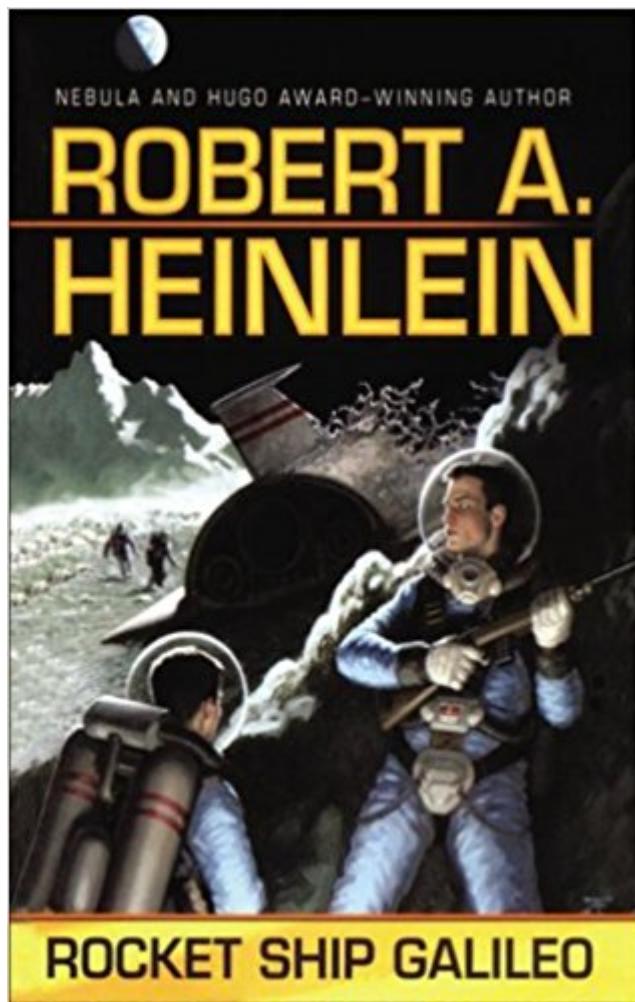


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Rocket Ship Galileo



Synopsis

From Robert A. Heinlein, the Grand Master of Science Fiction and the author of such novels as *Starship Troopers* and *Stranger in a Strange Land*, comes this classic story about pioneers at the dawn of space exploration.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Like many people, I go way, way back with Heinlein. My very favorite book (and one that stands out in my mind--and with much affection--to this day) is *Tunnel in the Sky*. I really, really wanted to go off to explore new worlds with a covered wagon and horses, like the hero does at the very end of the book. But one of the nice things about Robert Heinlein is that he's got something for everyone.

One of my best friends has a different favorite: *Podkayne of Mars*. Go

figure. --Shelly Shapiro, Executive Editor --This text refers to the CD-ROM edition.

They called themselves the Galileo Club -- not a bad name for a group of space-minded young men who had high hopes of putting one of their homemade rocket ships in orbit. But it wasn't until they teamed up with Doc Cargraves that their impossible dream became an incredible reality. Suddenly the three Earthbound youths and their mentor were hurtling through space, heading for the barren wasteland of the Moon. Or so they thought. They were totally unaware that the dark crater shadows concealed a threat beyond their wildest imaginings . . . a threat from which only a miracle could save them! --This text refers to the CD-ROM edition.

Robert Heinlein wrote "Rocket Ship Galileo" in 1947 but it remains a good fast read to this day. I liked the period slang the characters throw around to each other. Also in tune with the period are the antagonists, Nazi survivors who establish an atom bomb base on the moon! Wow! Three young fellas just out of high school spend their summer vacation re-building a transport rocket into a moon ship along with a brilliant scientist. Heinlein uses the teacher-pupil relationship to present nuggets of scientific knowledge to the reader. "Rocket Ship Galileo" stands at the head of a line of twelve books referred to as "Heinlein Juveniles" in the Heinlein archives. He wrote twelve what we would call "Young Adult" books today, each an independent work not associated with any other. In all of them he has young people standing up and growing up as strong independent young humans. The series ends with "Have Spacesuit-Will Travel" in 1958. Some folks will include "Star Ship Troopers" and "Podkayne of Mars" but they were by different publishers. As a first try the book has some flaws. The story line is laughable and the characters seem tissue thin to those familiar with Heinlein's later work. But the underlying theme of self reliance, initiative and the daring needed to accomplish great things are all there to be absorbed along the the story itself. The government is mentioned only as an impediment to the progress of the boys, a reflection of Heinlein's Libertarian streak. For that reason and the skill with which these themes are inserted into the story we give the high number of stars. Anyone of the proper age will benefit from this story. Dads' and Grand Dad's might gift their young decedents with this book.

Galileo is, I believe, the first of Heinlein's celebrated juvenile books. I know I first read it shortly after learning to read. I could not have been older than seven. Holy cow. While the idea of Nazis on the moon is ludicrous these days, the story itself continues to compellingly engage the mind. The dialogue and situations, if you are old enough to remember anything of those days, still has the ring of truth. Heinlein was just beginning to hit his stride as a full-time, for-real author when he wrote this. It is sublime to read him as he stretches his wings and finds he is very comfortable. This book is comfort food for the mind, sort of like a meatloaf dinner.

Rocketship Galileo is a fun sci fi adventure. Remember it was written in 1947, yes, 1947 so considering the date, some 20+ years before the moon landing there are many "predictions" which Heinlein made which showed vision. The story follows three young adults (18 years old) and one scientist. They take a already made ballistic rocket and transform it into atomic powered. They journey to the moon for an adventure. "SPOILER" This may be the first book where Nazis on the

moon is used. Robert A Heinlein wrote excellent books in the 1940 to the 1960s. In the later years his books tend to get long winded and not as adventure packed. The Heinlein Juveniles are where he shows his true high quality writing.

This was Heinlein's first novel published in book form, and the first in his excellent "juvenile" series which included Space Cadet, Time For The Stars, Starman Jones, The Star Beast, Tunnel In The Sky, etc., and it is still my all-time favorite. Heinlein manages to make believable the tale of a scientist (Dr. Cargraves) organizing three 18-year-old boys of a rocket club to build a nuclear powered moon rocket. If you have an interest in space travel you'll get sucked in and won't put the book down until it's over, no matter how dated and unlikely the premise at first appears. It is written with Heinlein's usual skill (that earned him four Hugo awards), and the characters are easy to identify with, especially for any young space enthusiasts. This was also the basis for the 1950 classic film Destination Moon, although about all that remains unchanged in the film is the name Dr. Cargraves. In the book there is a veiled threat from unknown enemies that turn out to be Nazis (this was the first thing Heinlein wrote after the war) - in the film there's just a veiled reference to a communist threat. I suspect the film also draws from Heinlein's more sophisticated treatment from the same period, The Man Who Sold The Moon. On 6 October 1988, after Robert Heinlein's death, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) awarded him the NASA Distinguished Public Service Medal: "In recognition of his meritorious service to the Nation and mankind in advocating and promoting the exploration of space. Through dozens of superbly written novels and essays and his epoch-making movie Destination Moon, he helped inspire the Nation to take its first step into space and onto the Moon." -- James C. Fletcher, Administrator, NASA. No true Heinlein fan should be without an original Scribner's hardcover edition of *A Rocket Ship Galileo*, with the same cover and illustrations as the first edition.

Made me want to be an astronaut way back when and I'm sorry I gave up that love - but got an even greater love of my life when I married! But, now all my grandsons have a required readin list and this one is way up at the top!! Pick it up, they will love it!

I enjoy classic sci-fi and I suspend my disbelief for the oldies like this that are pre-Space Age. The notion of a scientist and three precocious teens building a moon rocket with a nuclear propulsion system is pretty far fetched but hey, if you let it go, it's a fun read. The most notable and fun twist comes in the last part of the book. I won't be a plot spoiler, but anyone who has seen the sci-fi

movie "Iron Sky" will get a real kick out of it.

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