

## Heavens Illustrated Handbook Popular Astronomy Guillemin

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Excerpt from The Heavens: An Illustrated Handbook of Popular Astronomy I AM among those who believe, that the natural and physical sciences possess in themselves attraction sufficient to render any ornament super uous. This conviction has been my only guide in the conception and writing of this book, which is not, indeed, a scientific one, but a faithful picture of the phenomena offered by the Heavens to man's intelligent admiration. About the Publisher Forgotten Books publishes hundreds of thousands of rare and classic books. Find more at [www.forgottenbooks.com](http://www.forgottenbooks.com) This book is a reproduction of an important historical work. Forgotten Books uses state-of-the-art technology to digitally reconstruct the work, preserving the original format whilst repairing imperfections present in the aged copy. In rare cases, an imperfection in the original, such as a blemish or missing page, may be replicated in our edition. We do, however, repair the vast majority of imperfections successfully; any imperfections that remain are intentionally left to preserve the state of such historical works.\*

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Tracing unexplored connections between nineteenth-century astronomy and literature, *The Starry Sky Within* offers a new understanding of literary point of view as essentially multiple, mobile, and comparative. Nineteenth-century astronomy revealed a cosmos of celestial systems in constant motion. Stars, comets, planets, and moons coursed through space in complex and changing relation. As the skies were in motion, so too was the human subject. Astronomers showed that human beings never perceive the world from a stable position. The mobility of our bodies in space and the very structure of stereoscopic vision mean that point of view is neither singular nor stable. We always see the world as an amalgam of fractured perspectives. In this innovative study, Henchman shows that the reconceptualization of the skies gave poets and novelists new spaces in which to indulge their longing to escape the limitations of individual perspective. She links astronomy and optics to the form of the multiplot novel, with its many centers of consciousness, complex systems of relation, and criss-crossing points of view. Accounts of a world and a subject both in relative motion shaped the form of grand-scale narratives such as *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *Bleak House*, and *Daniel Deronda*. De Quincey, Tennyson, and Eliot befriended leading astronomers and visited observatories, while Hardy learned about astronomy from the vast popular literature of the day. These writers use cosmic distances to dislodge their readers from the earth, setting human perception against views from high above and then telescoping back to earth again. What results is a new perception of the mobility of point of view in both literature and science.

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