



Manifold: Space

Stephen Baxter

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Manifold: Space

Stephen Baxter

Manifold: Space Stephen Baxter

The year is 2020. Fueled by an insatiable curiosity, Reid Malenfant ventures to the far edge of the solar system, where he discovers a strange artifact left behind by an alien civilization: A gateway that functions as a kind of quantum transporter, allowing virtually instantaneous travel over the vast distances of interstellar space. What lies on the other side of the gateway? Malenfant decides to find out. Yet he will soon be faced with an impossible choice that will push him beyond terror, beyond sanity, beyond humanity itself. Meanwhile on Earth the Japanese scientist Nemoto fears her worst nightmares are coming true. Startling discoveries reveal that the Moon, Venus, even Mars once thrived with life?life that was snuffed out not just once but many times, in cycles of birth and destruction. And the next chilling cycle is set to begin again . . .

Manifold: Space Details

Date : Published January 2nd 2002 by Random House Inc (first published August 2000)

ISBN : 9780345430786

Author : Stephen Baxter

Format : Mass Market Paperback 512 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction

 [Download Manifold: Space ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Manifold: Space ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Manifold: Space Stephen Baxter

From Reader Review Manifold: Space for online ebook

Noah M. says

I'm not going to give this a rating because I didn't finish it.

After 100 pages of uninteresting crap I decided to just call it quits. It starts in almost the exact same way as Manifold: Time did, but then it rapidly proceeds down hill...in an orderly fashion.

The main character is the same as Manifold: Time. Here he is in one of the alternate time-lines that the first book spawned. Except he doesn't do anything in this one. It takes him about half a page to go from Earth to HALF WAY TO ALPHA-FUCKING-CENTAURI. I was more than a little curious how that trip went, especially since the level of technology they were dealing with was not significantly beyond modern. But no. Half a paragraph, then on to less interesting shit.

There were intriguing little bits, such as Reid (main character) having to spend hours each day swabbing down his habitat so that microscopic organisms wouldn't take hold. They apparently love the tiny droplets of moisture that float and thrive in null-gravity. But it was never expanded on. The most interesting parts of the story were the parts Stephen Baxter decided not to bother with. Manifold: Time confronted all the interesting issues at hand instead of hand-waving them aside and proceeding with a crazy journey of cosmic discovery.

Cosmic discovery is good. I want that. But take your goddamn time.

Anyway, if a book can't grab me in the first 100 pages I see little reason to continue. Life is short, read good books.

Philip says

Not a light read. This book gains mega-points for having a coherent (although complex) storyline which, for the most part, is believable. Someone I know said to me that the difference between sci-fi and fantasy is that sci-fi tries to convincingly justify the new technology, something Baxter does extremely well.

This is a long read, and it does drag in places. But if you're interested in the Fermi Paradox and vaguely believable sci-fi, then this is right up your street.

John Park says

Two and a half stars.

There seem to be several traditional pitfalls in writing cosmic-scale SF. One is picking your audience, so you don't explain too much or assume too much of the technical background. Another is how to explain without introducing lectures and pulling your reader out of the story. A third is characters: to give your story meaning and impact you have to populate it with characters the reader can follow and care about; but how do you establish interesting characters without taking the focus away from the larger story? And finally, for any

story involving first contact, how do you do an interesting job of crossing territory that has been familiar since the time of H. G. Wells?

Baxter doesn't do particularly well in skirting any of these pitfalls, but his overall concept does provide some moments of vision and even pathos. The start, though, is not very promising. We get a rehearsal of the arguments behind the Fermi Paradox, and some evidence that We Are Not Alone in the solar system. Here I had a real sense of going-through-the-motions-again (or perhaps I was the wrong audience). Baxter does a fair job of exposition, but there's no sense of mystery or excitement or fear. (In fact throughout the book his writing rarely aspires to be anything more than prosaic and functional. The striking phrase, the sharp image, the poignant memory or expression of real passion are notably rare among Baxter's clear grey sentences.)

So we complete the process of finding and meeting the visitors, who are in fact reasonably original, if not especially interesting. (To be fair, some aspects of these aliens anticipate Peter Watts' *Blindsight*—in the same sort of way a new-born cub anticipates a prowling tiger.) Gradually a newer and darker vision emerges, maybe a bit too gradually. I was reminded of the fact that parts of the book had been published as separate shorter works. Much of the middle felt choppy and not fully integrated. (A world is being poisoned by chlorine-releasing microbes—which for some reason Baxter calls chlorine fixers—as though it is the victim of a surreptitious planetary ecocide. This suggestion of secret malice is never developed and runs counter to what we learn later. A more serious inconsistency concerns Madeleine, who after centuries spent travelling through interstellar portals, suffers from Dislocation. Her pain responses have become disconnected from her awareness: she cuts herself without knowing, and dares not take a hot drink for fear of scalding her mouth. She reluctantly agrees to undertake another portal-trip on the understanding that it could now be used to reverse her Dislocation. So we await her reaction—anger at betrayal, relief at a cure, delight, the freedom to cast off her protective exoskeleton, the taste of hot coffee . . . ? No. Her Dislocation is never mentioned again, as though we were expected to forget it had ever appeared—or as though the author himself had done just that. And as a different kind of glitch, colonists on Mercury retreat into an underground chamber to wait out a threat. The walls of this chamber are glowing red hot. Some readers might recognise such a chamber as a black-body cavity; others as a roasting oven; still others as hell.)

Some of these sections do develop a genuine science-fictional power: I found the account of neandertals living a nomadic existence on the ravaged surface of Io vivid and memorable. And there are real sense-of-wonder moments in visions of the scale of the Galaxy. (Too often, though, Baxter will break the spell of a character's point-of-view description to tell us how many kilometres in size or how many light-years away some phenomenon is.)

One of the things that suffer as the middle section proceeds through scenes widely disconnected in time and space is the characterisation. Baxter has established a small cast who by various means span centuries and light years. But we meet them usually singly and infrequently and in disparate settings, so that it is difficult to maintain a feeling of connection. Most of them die, essentially unmourned. None seem calculated to make strong initial impressions. Admittedly, they have to survive cosmic changes while remaining sane, or at least largely unchanged, and not shifting focus from the main plot, which doesn't permit much in the way of emotional depth, but towards the end their limitations do weaken the book.

There is an ingenious attack on some invaders of the solar system (if one accepts the plausibility of a remarkable lifeform). Then Baxter widens his vision, shows us the true scale of what is happening—has always been happening—in the Galaxy. This is darkly impressive, and the provisional solution he offers is an ingenious piece of Big Technology. But it comes with a human cost, and here the writing and the characterisation prove inadequate. After consistent displays of competence and resilience Madeleine briefly and without clear justification turns into a weepy female stereotype. Malenfant, the male lead, pushed into

the role of epic tragic hero, is revealed as lacking the gravitas for the job. Large emotional and philosophical questions are skirted or minimised. The book ends as it started, both promising and frustrating.

Jack Pramitte says

Peut-être mon livre de science-fiction préféré. Rempli d'idées fascinantes. Une incroyable et émouvante histoire du futur.

Ninke Hermsen says

I found the story interesting. It has the same characters, but they live totally different lives from the first time you met them. It really does read like an exploration of the theme (Space). Sometimes so, that you lose the storyline a bit: the vast expanses of relapsed time alienate you from the people on the planets, just like it does the main characters.

I found the theories on the development/ exploitation of planets fascinating to read. All in all an entertaining story.

Travis Weir says

Absolutely magnificent, both in its scope, and in the strength of its overall message about a possible future of humanity, and other life forms, in this universe. Baxter's descriptions of planets never before seen by human eyes, such as Venus and Mercury, were truly wonderful and left me almost feeling like I was standing on the planet's surface.

I especially enjoy the fact that each of the books in the Manifold series are in essence a parallel universe. It fits in with what happened at the conclusion of the first book. Huzzah, Mr. Baxter !

Georg says

Great visions, a bit too much love for detail

This book is truly science fiction. It keeps the promise to give us a scientific vision of the future. It takes the currently known physical limits within the cosmos seriously and sticks to them - the limitations are in fact the raw-material for the story, they drive the story further. Why do we not hear from other alien species? What if the emergence of life is a natural constant of the universe?

There are great ideas in this book, which I never have seen worked out anywhere else. A lot of things get explained in a beautiful, thrilling and scientific way.

Still, there are some things I disliked. Baxter gets constantly lost in describing details after details - you have

the feeling, you walked around the Moon several times after reading the three or four chapters that play out on the Moon. It's all described to the last color and rock formation. But then sometimes things are just cut short - for example the gravitational lensing effect, which is central for the whole story, is not explained at all in greater detail, although this would have been easy (this effect really exists).

The ending still confuses me. Looking at it from the stories point of view it is great - I loved it, it is perfect. But the way how it is described is close to ridiculous. Suddenly a concept like anti-matter propulsion is introduced, without even mentioning how complicated it is to keep anti-matter from immediate reaction and annihilation. The way how Malenfant transforms (I don't want to spoil too much here) is just laughable - he practically is already a pure data representation of himself and then gets eaten up and physically destroyed. But worst of all is that the wonderful Madeleine Meacher, the action heroine of the book, gets reduced to a prompter for Malenfant's explanations. This all was really unnecessary.

But still: an exceptional hard-scifi book, definitely worth reading.

Metodi Markov says

??? ?????? ??? ?? ?????????? ?? ?????????????, ?????? ?????????? ?????? ?????? ?????????? ? ??????.

????? ?????? /??? ?????????? ?????? ?? ?????????????, ?? ?????? ?????? ?? ?? ?????? ?? ?????????? ?????????? ?????? ?????????????? ?????????????? ? ????

????? ? ?????????? ? ?????, ?? ?????? ?? ?? ?????? ?? ??? ??????

????????????????? ?? ?????, ??? ? ?????????? ?? ?????? ?????? ?? ?????????? ?????????? ?? ?????? ? ?????? ??????????, ??????????, ?????? ?????????????????? ?????????, ??? ?????????? ?? ?????????? ?????????????????? ?????????? ? ???, ?????????????? ??? ?????????? ? ?????????????????, ?? ?????????? ?? ?????????? ?????? - ?????????? ?? ? ? ???!

? ??? ?????????? ? ?????? ?? ?????, ?????????? ??????-????? ?????, ?????????? ?????????? ?????? ?????????? .:)

?????, ?????????????? ?? ?????????? ??????. ?????? ?????????? "?????????????????" ?? ???, ?? ?????? ?????:

Andreas says

Manifold is not a series per se, but rather different explorations of the theme "Are we alone in the universe?". In "Time", a portal is discovered in the solar system, and some fascinating stuff happens related to preserving life and intelligence in the long term. In "Space", The Fermi Paradox is suddenly reversed, with aliens appearing everywhere and the whole universe is just one big fight for resources, to the point of utter barbarism.

I had some nasty nightmares after these, which is why I will probably never read the third book, "Manifold: Origin". On a certain level, this is very stuff, but not like a horror movie. It scares me on a very deep level

that I can't rationalize away. The same level that knows that the goody two-shoes future of Star Trek simply is not a realistic vision. Still, I would rather watch Star Trek since I don't want to wake up screaming in the middle of the night, however good Baxter is. Read the books if you feel you can take it. They are very good and the themes and subjects are both engrossing and fascinating.

<http://www.books.rosboch.net/?p=433>

Joseph Delaney says

This is a great science fiction novel full of interesting ideas. It answers the questions we often ask such as: Are there aliens out there amongst the stars?

If so why can't we detect them and why aren't they already here talking to us?

The answer is chilling!

We do eventually encounter aliens and pass through centuries which bring great changes to the earth. This book is an excellent read.

Stephen Baxter, in collaboration with Terry Pratchett, also wrote the first three books in the 'Long Earth Series'. Imagine that you could take a step sideways into an alternative earth where things are slightly different. An infinite number of other worlds await exploration and the further you step the stranger it gets. Those books are well worth reading and I am now waiting for the fourth book in the series to be published.

Joseph Delaney

Velma says

Despite a few minor quibbles (difficult to keep track of characters, some stretching of credulity concerning the lifespan of equipment and technology, some science fatigue), I enjoyed *Manifold: Space* almost as much as its predecessor. I particularly appreciate that Baxter writes convincing, complex female characters that are central to the action. I will probably seek out the final title in the 'series', *Manifold: Origin*.

S says

Borges pointed out Chesterton attempted to preserve the Epic Mode in "The Ballad of the White Horse," but could not overcome the sweeping majesty of American Western pictures. To me, even though I really enjoyed "Once Upon a Time in the West," it was somewhat deflationary thing to read, especially from my hero. He mentions in the same essay that no great Epics emerged after the two World Wars. I believe that the reason for this is that an Epic, for it to reach the level of the sublime, it must overwhelm our imaginations. I have no doubt this is what Homer's language did to the Ancients, or what Western movies did to Borges. But this won't do after American school children had been told about the real threat of planetary destruction. How does one think beyond that? How does a person step beyond the grandeur of Einstein's cosmology?

This is one of the books that first introduced me to the Epic Mode that began with scrupulously thought out Hard SF ideas, and proceeded from there. Blew my mind. Loved it.

Jesse says

This book has not only made me a huge fan of Stephen Baxter's work, but has also earned him my respect and admiration.

This is a book that makes you *think*. Think beyond the story, and the characters, to the message it gives us, and to the questions it makes us ask ourselves.

What is the value of a life? Of a single life? Of *all* life?

What could really be out there, beyond our planet, elsewhere in our own solar system? Elsewhere in the galaxy? Elsewhere in the *universe*? What is the meaning behind it all?

Yes, this is a work of fiction. Highly speculative fiction, at that, but nonetheless, it drives home how little we know, scientifically speaking, about what lies beyond our own planet...and even about what lies *on* our own planet. Wild ideas are described in a way that makes them seem not only possible, but real.

What if we're not the only beings out there?

What if, though, instead of starfleets of incomprehensibly-technologically-advanced beings coming to either teach us the secrets of the universe or obliterate us...what if those other beings came to *us* because *they* were looking for the same answers from the universe that we are? What if their technology was only a little bit better than ours...enough to make interstellar space travel possible, but not enough to fix the world (galaxy) of the problems plaguing it?

Space is the second book in Stephen Baxter's *Manifold* trilogy, and for me it was much, much better than the first book. We start out *Space* with many of the same characters we already know very well from *Time*...adventurer Reid Malenfant, his sensible yet also adventurous wife Emma Stoney, the hard-working, decent congresswoman Maura Della. They are something of the same characters...yet each profoundly different, as well. I won't consider it a spoiler since we read it in the first one or two pages, but Reid has lost Emma again this time around, this time in a much different (and final) way...yet the loss of Emma is much more powerful for those of us who read *Time*, because unlike meeting a character for the first time and reading right off the bat that this beloved wife has passed away, this time it's different because we *know* her. We know Emma. So the loss feels more personal.

I am reminded of a video game that you play to the end, with a fixed set of characters in the beginning, and then you hit reset and start the game over. Same basic elements the second time around...yet different things happen to the characters in a different order, different people stay healthy, different people die.

I found myself liking Reid Malenfant a lot more this time around. In *Time*, he was just a little too driven, to ruthless in his pursuit of a goal, too damned cocky, for me to really like him. This time, though, Reid is more mature, even at the outset of the story, more humble, more questioning, more fragile. And it really made me connect with him a lot more.

Beyond Reid, though, the supporting cast--nearly all of them female, by the way, and all decent, very strong roles that would do the female gender proud--just shines. Once again, I am surprised by Stephen Baxter's use

of such great, (and to use the same word again because no other fits as well) *strong* female characters. Male authors in the Hard SF (science fiction) genre usually aren't as fair and decent in their treatment of female characters. The buxom amazon warrior woman commanding spaceships and firing deadly laser rayguns are a dime a dozen...but real, complex, tough, decent women like the ones Stephen Baxter creates are a rarity in the genre. My hat is off to him for that.

Xenia Makarova, Madeleine Meacher, Dorothy Chaum, and last but *definitely* not least, the amazing Nemoto. Because the book is Hard SF and focuses, unsurprisingly, on *science* and the discoveries of these characters and how their lives are affected by science, over the course of centuries, perhaps we don't get as deep into the minds of every character and achieve total emotional depth and empathy (how can you, in a book that covers *so* much ground, literally and figuratively, and spans--literally--millenia? But when taken in the context of the genre itself and its norms for good characterization, I'll say this: Baxter did a damned good job. With every leap forward into an increasingly alien future, I always looked for Nemoto, to see what she was doing, knowing that she'd always be there.

Anyone who has ever looked up at the starry sky and asked herself "What's really up there? Are we alone?" or any other similar question, will get a kick out of this story. It was *so* much fun to go along for the ride, to imagine would it would be like to see other star systems and to realize how much we, as a species, really *don't* know.

(view spoiler)

Tomislav says

It is the second in the Manifold series -

- 1) Manifold: Time
- 2) Manifold: Space
- 3) Manifold: Origin

Even though this book starts in 2020, 10 years after the start of Manifold:Time, and features the same Reid Malenfant character, it is definitely not a sequel. The future history of Earth and humanity diverge almost immediately. In this future history, we meet our first contact aliens as they enter the solar system. Through the use of saddle point gateways, individuals are able to translate themselves across space and forward through time, returning to Earth infrequently. So the story of humanity is told in episodes experienced by those few travellers, sprinkled forward through the next thousand years of resource depletion. Baxter's future is original, complex, and insightful, seen through the eyes of humans from our own time as they are propelled forward into an increasingly alien Earth, and Solar System.

I think I enjoyed this book more than the first, and am wondering what in the world Baxter is going to do with Reid Malenfant in Manifold:Origin, which apparently starts half-way between the 2010 and 2020 of the first two books.

Greg Knight says

This is a depressing, but more realistic than most, take on what space travel would be like, assuming teleportation did exist. Travelers live through generations while being teleported between planetary systems (at light speed) - and come home to an earth they don't recognize.

Aliens take a **very** inhuman shape this time around.

Baxter poses an interesting potential solution to Fermi's Paradox.

Worthwhile though make sure you're not depressed already when you start it.
