

# **Why human exploration of the outer Solar System and on to the stars?**

**By Sarah Watson**

*Why should we explore the outer Solar System and on to the stars?*

Are we not happier here on Earth with what is already ours?

To explore takes us away from safety and into the unknown,

And what if we explore and discover that we are in fact alone?

*Why should we explore beyond Earth and possibly on to Mars?*

It's so alike us, we could learn from its history and its many surface scars,

It could show us the fate of our planet if we were to destroy its protective layer,

And maybe encourage us to change our ways before we become our own planet slayer.

*Why should we explore beyond Earth and on to the Asteroid Belt?*

It could provide us with new materials or building blocks we have never before dealt,

So perfectly placed it could offer future explorers fuel stations and pit stops,

And maybe even allow for us to feed our expanding population by growing some crops.

*Why should we explore beyond Earth and on to the four outers?*

Some of their moons may show us the commonality of life for all the doubters,

With their presence in our system so significant and their gravity so strong,

We could use them as sling shots to cut down journeys which may otherwise be long.

*Why should we explore beyond Earth and on to the Kuiper belt?*

A far-reaching bundle of rock and ice guarding a system where humans have dwelt,

Their distance from us and their cold temperatures would be a test for exploration technology,

But their peculiar origins and trajectories could uncover the mysteries of our own biology.

*Why should we explore beyond Earth and on to interstellar space?*

So far from home it is an undiscovered location for the current human race,

The use of life extending technologies at these distances would surely be a must,

But this technology could allow for medical advances on Earth that we would trust.

*Why should we explore beyond Earth and on to the stars?*

It could lead us to find an orbiting world which is much like ours,  
The impact of finding other beings outside of our system could be daunting for humanity,  
But with it could come new technologies and lessons and maybe eliminate our own vanity.

*Why should we explore the outer Solar System and on to the stars?*

Are we not happier here on Earth with what is already ours?

But with the vast range of possibilities we could indeed see,

Surely the question is then just 'why **wouldn't** we?'.