

Bradford Smith, Who Showed Postcards From Outer Space, Dies at 86

By [Dennis Overbye](#)

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Bradford Smith, who extended humanity's vision to look boldly where no eyes had ever looked as head of the camera team for the Voyager mission, hopscotching from one weird world to the next across the solar system and discovering prospects for alien life, died on July 3 at his home in Santa Fe, N.M. He was 86.

His wife, Diane McGregor, said the cause was complications of the autoimmune disorder myasthenia gravis.

From 1979, when Voyager 1 first shot past Jupiter, to 1989, when its twin, Voyager 2, cruised past Neptune, it was Dr. Smith, an avuncular, gravelly-voiced astronomer, who stepped in front of the space press at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif., every morning, showed new postcards from outer space and confessed that he and his colleagues were baffled by what they were seeing.

Why were there dark spokes across the rings of Saturn? Why are there no craters on its moon Enceladus or the Jovian moon Europa?

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