



1978  
Carl Sagan y Viking I



Um foto dool pãlido

# TWELVE THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CARL SAGAN

*"We are stardust thinking about stars"*

Adapted by Ingenio

Carl Sagan

He is an American astronomer and pioneer of exobiology or search for extraterrestrial life. In the 50's he participated as an advisor and consultant to NASA. He worked on the Mariner, Viking, Voyager and Galileo space programs. He was an instructor at the Apollo program; played a decisive role in planetary research: he helped decipher the high temperatures on Venus by using the theory of massive global greenhouse, seasonal changes on Mars and Titan reddish cloudiness.

- 1 In a neighborhood known as the little Italy, Bensonhurst, Brooklyn in New York, where people from different ethnic groups and cultures of the world live, Carl Sagan was born in November 9<sup>th</sup> 1934.
- 2 He grew in an Ucrainian Jewish family. His dad Sam, worked in textile industry and his mom Rachel, a housewife, named Carl in honor of his grandmother Clara, *"the mother that she never knew"* in words of Sagan.
- 3 Sagan had a sister, Carol. The family lived in a modest apartment near the beach. The brother and sister when talking about his father used to say that he was not religious, but his mother believed in God, and she was involved in the church activities. *"My parents were not Scientifics. They knew little about science"*, he said, but added that they thought him to analyzed everything that happened around him and also to be very curious.



**4** Little Carl, since childhood, was fascinated by the stars and he cultivated it during his childhood by reading contemporary science fiction. At age 7 he visited in company with a friend the American Museum of Natural History of New York and the Hayden Planetarium, which increased his curiosity and attraction for science and nature.

**5** After he graduated from Rahway high school in 1951, he studied in Chicago University in which he obtained his PHD in astronomy and astrophysics in 1960, after that Sagan was a professor from Berkeley University, and also, lecturer and researcher of Harvard University until 1968. Then he transferred to Cornell University in Ithaca where he was initially a professor in 1971 and later the director of the laboratory in planetary studies until 1981.

**6** Carl was a regular contributor to NASA; he devised the radiotelegraph messages sent by the Pioneer 10 and 11; sent into outer space to contact potential extraterrestrial civilizations. He was always against the proliferation of nuclear weapons and warned of its dangers.

**7** He was a prolific writer of science fiction, and in 1978 he was awarded with the Pulitzer Prize for his book *The Dragons of Eden: speculations on the evolution of human intelligence*. He also obtained fame for his book *Cosmos*, which in 1980 was brought to television and became a worldwide success.

**8** In 1980, his series in 13 chapters for tele-spread public "Cosmos" became one of the most popular in the history of American public television series.

**9** **Contact** his only novel was brought into a film in 1997 directed by Robert Zemeckis and starring Jodie Foster. All the rest of his work that has been ample is considered popular science divulgation.

**10** He received the NASA Exceptional Scientific Achievement Medal, Apollo Achievement Program and Distinguished Public Service (twice). The international prize of Astronautics: the Prix Galbert. The Joseph Priestley Award "for distinguished contributions to the welfare of mankind". The Masursky American Astronomical Society Award and in 1994, the Public Welfare Medal, the highest honor of the National Academy of Sciences.

Ilustraciones: María Toro Quijano

**11** During his life, Carl Sagan was married to the biologist Lynn Margulis, with whom had 2 children: Dorion and Jeremy Sagan; with the artist Linda Salzman, he had one son, the writer Nick Sagan, and with the writer Ann Druyan, with whom also had 2 children, Alexandra Sagan and Samuel Democritus Sagan (yes, in honor to Democritus of Abdera, that he mentioned particularly in one chapter of *Cosmos*).

**12** Carl Sagan died on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1996 in Seattle.

*"...Even if our behavior is still significantly controlled by our genetic inheritance, we have, through our brains, a much richer opportunity to create new cultural paths and short-term behavior. We have made some kind of agreement with nature: our children will be difficult to raise, but his capacity for new knowledge will greatly increase the survivability of the human species..."*

\*This twelve ideas about Carl Sagan's life, were the result of an exhaustive seek from different references of public knowledge. The text was elaborated, proved and approved by the Editorial Committee of the **Ingenio** Magazine.



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