

The book nobody should read: a follow-up to Owen Gingerich's census of Copernicus' *De revolutionibus* in Rome

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In 2002, the astronomer Owen Gingerich published his Annotated census of Copernicus' *De revolutionibus*, in which he described some 600 copies of the first two editions of the heliocentric work of the Polish astronomer (Nuremberg 1543 and Basel 1566); two years later, Gingerich discussed his argument further in his best-selling *The book nobody read: chasing the revolutions of Nicolaus Copernicus*. This monumental result of a 30-year investigation was meant to prove wrong the assumption, shared by some scholars, that the *De revolutionibus* was not read by contemporaries, and should be therefore regarded as unimportant. Taking the moves from Gingerich's footsteps, this paper will look for evidence of the dissemination and reading of sixteenth-century editions of Copernicus through a survey of copies preserved in Rome, where in 1616 the Congregation of the Index suspended Copernicus' work "until corrected".

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