

Re: Pluto is a planet again! (in Illinois)

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- *From:* Quadibloc <jsavard@xxxxxxxxxx>
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On Mar 8, 9:44 pm, Davoud <s...@xxxxxxxx> wrote:

- 1) There was no problem to start with. Those who voted to demote Pluto would do well to devote a little time to reading Shakespeare.
- 2) If there had been a problem it could have and should have been solved in a positive way. "The IAU voted today to add n bodies to the list of nine planets, so that from this day forward the Solar System will be considered to have (9+n) planets."

Here, I disagree.

It seems perfectly clear to me that astronomers using telescope time to search for Kuiper Belt Objects on the basis of being hailed as the next Herschel would be a skewing of research priorities, and so preventing such a "gold rush" was valid...

and in any case, as with the asteroids – Ceres, Pallas, Juno, and Vesta having been considered planets in the beginning – the public would rebel against there being a horde of bodies admitted to the status of planet... and they expect the planets to be bigger than the non-planets.

This time, they decided not to wait – not to let Eris and a few other KBOs be planets, and then change their minds later.

For reasons of sentiment, I dislike the decision emotionally. But it was a reasonable choice. However, it also was a social and political decision, orbital clearance being a scientific veneer to justify what is a reasonable social definition of a (major) planet.

John Savard

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