Homework 8: What happened to Pluto?

due Monday October 7

Read the text attached, or visit the following website, and answer the accompanying questions.


1. Which of the solar system’s planets (besides the Earth) can be seen with the naked eye (in other words, without a telescope)?

2. Which two planets were discovered in the 1700’s and 1800’s with the aid of telescopes?

3. How did Clyde Tombaugh (the discoverer of Pluto) know he was looking at a planetary object and not a star?

4. What are two properties of Pluto that make it unusual compared to other planets in the solar system?

5. What is the Kuiper Belt?
6. Why did the discovery of Xena (now officially called Eris) put into question the planet status of Pluto?

7. Is Pluto considered a planet now?

8. How many planets does the solar system have now?

9. Is Pluto still the same size that it was 10 years ago?

10. If you had to make a t-shirt about the Pluto “controversy”, what would it say?