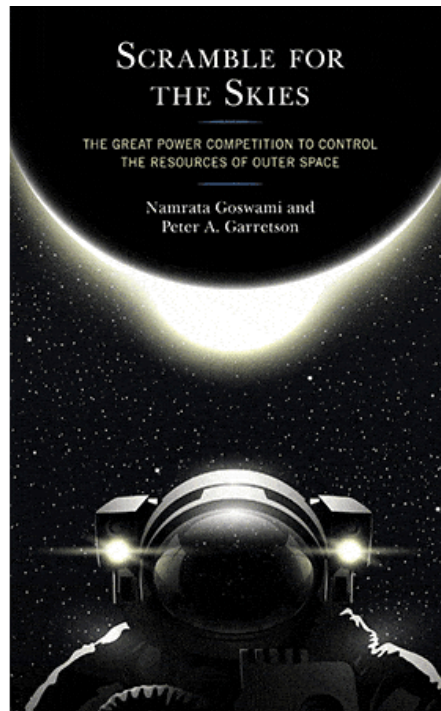




Book Review: Scramble for the Skies – The Great Power Competition to Control the Resources of Outer Space

December 24, 2020 ■ Book Reviews, Book Reviews: Non-Fiction ■ No Comments



The authors argue that the fundamental basis for international competition in space is shifting from a race for prestige to a race for the practically limitless natural resources of the solar system. Whoever controls the largest share of those resources will increase in national power relative to the nations that control less, or none.

Category: Non-Fiction

Reviewed by Clifford R. McMurray

Title: **Scramble for the Skies: The Great Power Competition to Control the Resources of Outer**



Format: Hardcover, Kindle

Pages: 464

Publisher: Lexington Books

Date: October 2020

Retail Price: \$135.00/\$128.00

ISBN: 978-1498583114

“Maybe in the next 20 years we are also looking at some kind of colonization of space. And the dawn of a new space race. A race that will advocate the most basic of human concepts, nationalism. It will be like the race for colonies. In the 17th/18th century, one that conquered the sea, conquered the world. In the next 50 years, the battle ground will be space and countries will compete.”

That statement didn't come from a policymaker in America or China or Russia; it came from a space entrepreneur in India. It's a good summary of the thesis of this book. Authors Garretson and Goswami argue that the fundamental basis for international competition in space is shifting from a race for prestige to a race for the practically limitless natural resources of the solar system. Those resources – both material and energy – will enrich and transform the global economy, and whoever controls the largest share of those resources will increase in national power relative to the nations that control less, or none.

Up to now, commercial space has been dominated by communications and information applications, but very soon entrepreneurs and state-run companies will be able to start tapping the mineral wealth of the Moon and asteroids. The first competition will be for the most basic resource of all: water. Water will be the oil of space, providing drinking water and oxygen for life support of humans and food crops, and oxygen and hydrogen for rocket fuel. Ice is available in permanently shadowed craters on the Moon, mainly located at the lunar poles, and in many near Earth asteroids. It's much cheaper to process and transport those materials in the low gravity of the Moon and microgravity of the asteroids than to haul them up from Earth's deep gravity well. Using lunar and asteroid ice drastically lowers the cost of space transportation, and opens up the inner solar system to mining of minerals for use in space construction and on Earth itself.

How much wealth would that create? A frequently cited example is the near Earth asteroid Amun 3554, whose iron, nickel and platinum are valued at \$20 trillion (more than the GDP of Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom, France and India combined). And that's just one relatively small asteroid, among tens of thousands. Mining more humble minerals like silicon and aluminum will



With those kind of stakes, human history leaves little doubt that there will be competition for them. The only question is what form that competition will take. Will it be peaceful and conducted within the bounds of international consensus and law, or will it take more, ahem, “muscular” form? Goswami and Garretson don’t set out to answer that question directly. Instead, their purpose is to analyze the developing strategic thought about space resources in the countries that they see as being the primary competitors: the three “great powers” of America, China and India, and two of the most active “middle powers” (defined as “those states in the international system whose position is below the great powers, but with enough power, capacity and influence at their disposal to shape international regimes and events”), Luxembourg and the United Arab Emirates. It’s a little surprising that they have almost nothing to say about Russia or Japan, except that they are “outside the scope” of their study. However, each of the nations they treat is subjected to a thorough analysis. From an understanding of how they’ve reacted in the past, and what their policy elites are saying today, the authors seek some insight as to how these nations are likely to behave in the scramble for space riches.

Be warned: this book is not a light afternoon read. It’s written in a dense scholarly style, and Goswami and Garretson are forthright in stating that their primary target audience is the academic and policymaking communities. To give you an example of the flavor, one chapter is titled “The Epistemic Community and the Foundations of Discourse in the United States.” That said, the text is massively footnoted and there’s a huge bibliography that more casual readers will find a gold mine for further reading. And all but the most knowledgeable readers will find their own command of the subject matter increased, if they’re willing to put in the time this book requires.

National Space Society members will be pleased to find that NSS is treated as a thought leader in the text, and NSS position papers the NSS Roadmap to Space Settlement are cited several times.

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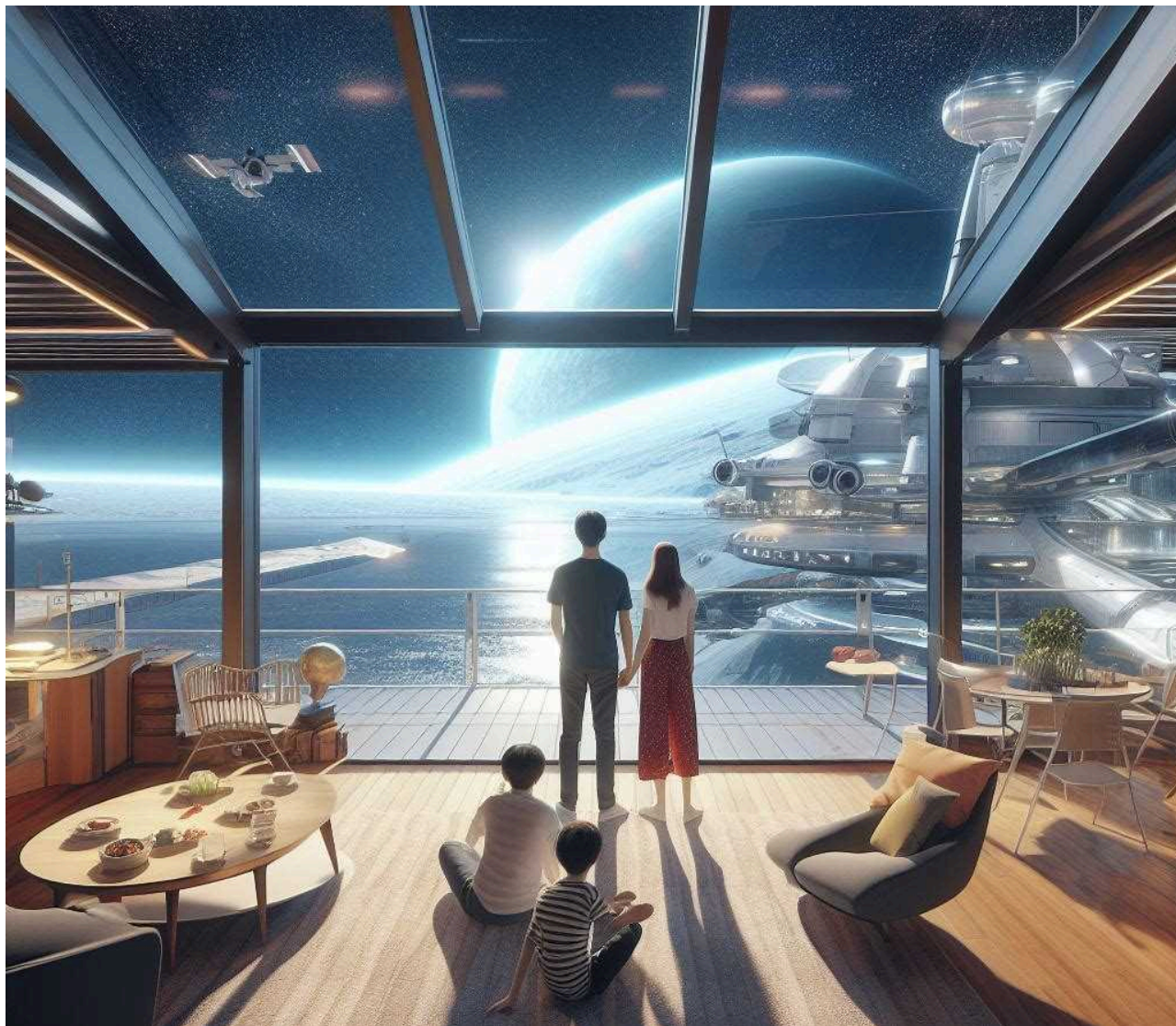
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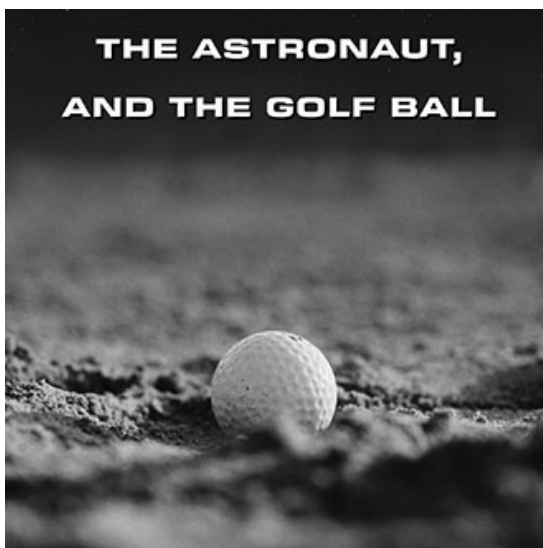


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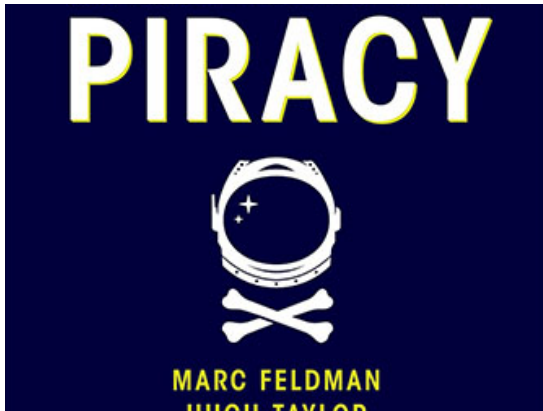
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Book Review: The Barber, the Astronaut, and the Golf Ball

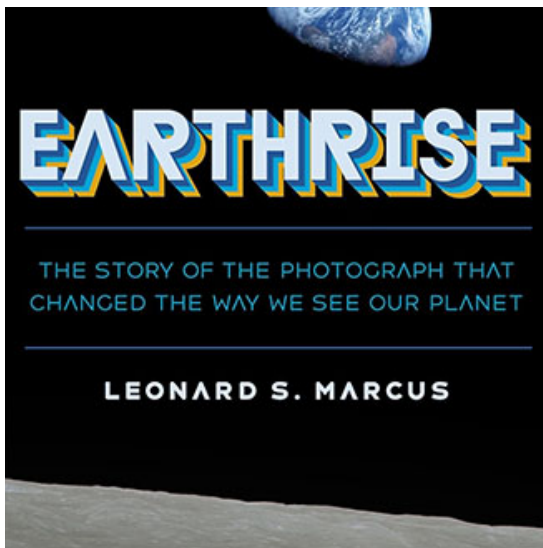
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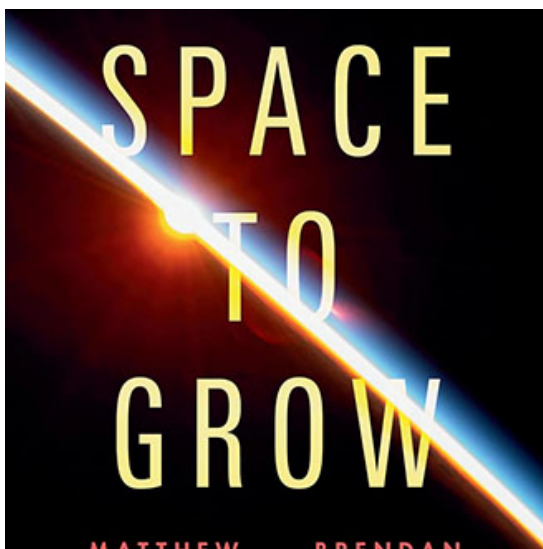
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November 28, 2023

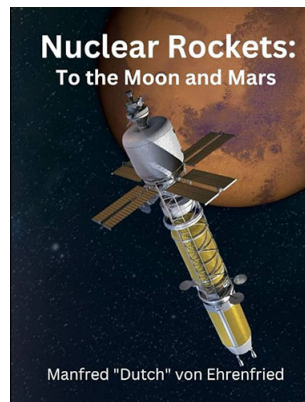


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Image of Kalpana One space settlement courtesy Bryan Versteeg, spacehabs.com \$32,000 in Cash Awards Given for Best Space-Related Business Plans — Deadline March 1, 2024



Book Review: Nuclear Rockets



November 24, 2023



No Comments



Book Reviews, Book Reviews: Non-Fiction, Featured

Category: Nonfiction Reviewed by: John J. Vester Title: Nuclear Rockets: To the Moon and Mars Author: Manfred "Dutch" von Ehrenfried Format: Paperback/Kindle Pages: 270 Publisher:

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📅 November 20, 2023 💬 No Comments 📖 Commercial Space, Featured, NSS Press Releases

Partially Successful Flight Reached Space and Demonstrated New “Hot Staging” System The National Space Society congratulates SpaceX on the second test of its Starship/Super Heavy



Ad Astra Wins MARCOM Gold Award for Creativity in Communication

📅 November 2, 2023 💬 3 Comments 📖 Featured, National Space Society

Ad Astra, the NSS quarterly print, digital, and audio magazine, has won a 2023 MARCOM Gold Award. The awards are given yearly for “Excellence in

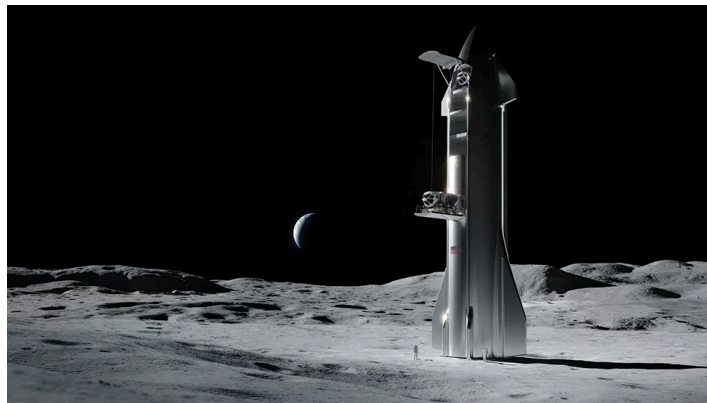
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NSS at Partnership in Education Event at Kennedy Space Center

📅 November 1, 2023 💬 No Comments 📖 Education, Event, Featured, National Space Society

By Jennifer Muntz, NSS Member Coordinator On October 10th, an inspiring breakfast event took flight at the Center for Space Education at the Kennedy Space



New NSS Paper on Sharing the Benefits of Space

📅 October 3, 2023 💬 2 Comments 📖 Featured, National Space Society, Space Law, Space Policy

By Grant Henriksen NSS Policy Committee Benefit sharing is a concept that refers to the distribution of benefits derived from the exploration and use of

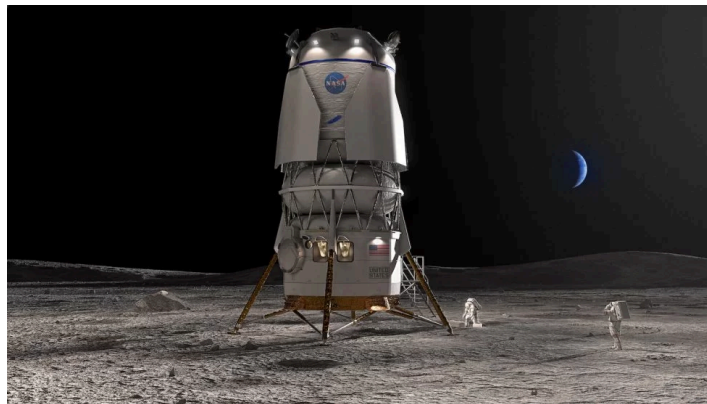
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NSS “Live in a Healthy Space” Student Design Competition

📅 September 5, 2023 💬 One Comment 📋 Event, Featured, National Space Society

People residing and working in space, space settlements, or on long-duration space flights will need to produce infrastructures and food to maintain healthy lifestyles. The

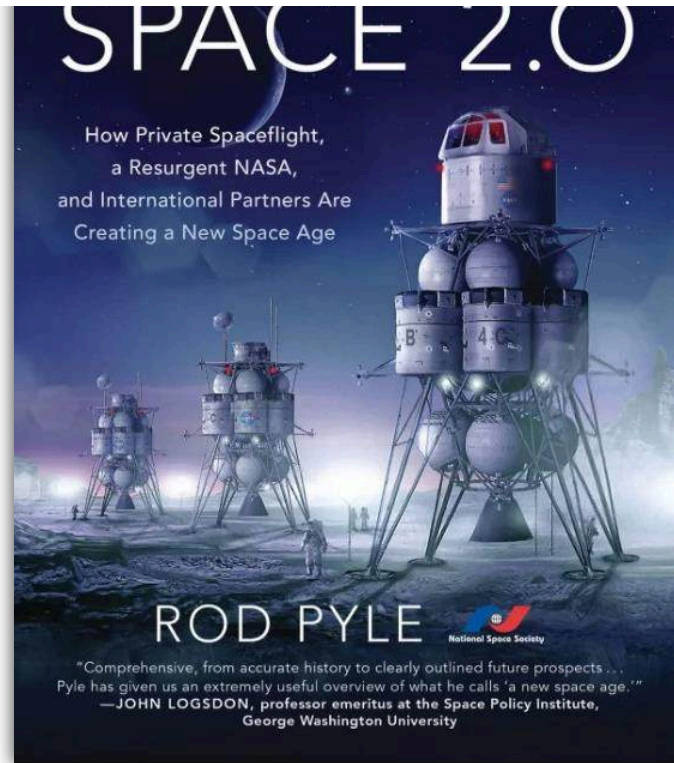


NSS Congratulates NASA and Blue Origin for Lunar Lander Selection

📅 May 21, 2023 💬 2 Comments 📋 Commercial Space, Featured, NASA, NSS Press Releases

Image: Artist’s concept of the Blue Moon lander. Credit: Blue Origin. Second Human Landing System Contract Encourages Competition and Innovation The National Space Society congratulates

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