



Heavenly Ambitions: America's Quest to Dominate Space

Joan Johnson-Freese

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In the popular imagination, space is the final frontier. Will that frontier be a wild west, or will it instead be treated as the oceans are: as a global commons, where commerce is allowed to flourish and no one country dominates? At this moment, nations are free to send missions to Mars or launch space stations. Space satellites are vital to many of the activities that have become part of our daily lives—from weather forecasting to GPS and satellite radio. The militaries of the United States and a host of other nations have also made space a critical arena—spy and communication satellites are essential to their operations. Beginning with the Reagan administration and its attempt to create a missile defense system to protect against attack by the Soviet Union, the U.S. military has decided that the United States should be the dominant power in space in order to protect civilian and defense assets. In *Heavenly Ambitions*, Joan Johnson-Freese draws from a myriad of sources to argue that the United States is on the wrong path: first, by politicizing the question of space threats and, second, by continuing to believe that military domination in space is the only way to protect U.S. interests in space.

Johnson-Freese, who has written and lectured extensively on space policy, lays out her vision of the future of space as a frontier where nations cooperate and military activity is circumscribed by arms control treaties that would allow no one nation to dominate—just as no one nation's military dominates the world's oceans. This is in the world's interest and, most important, in the U.S. national interest.

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