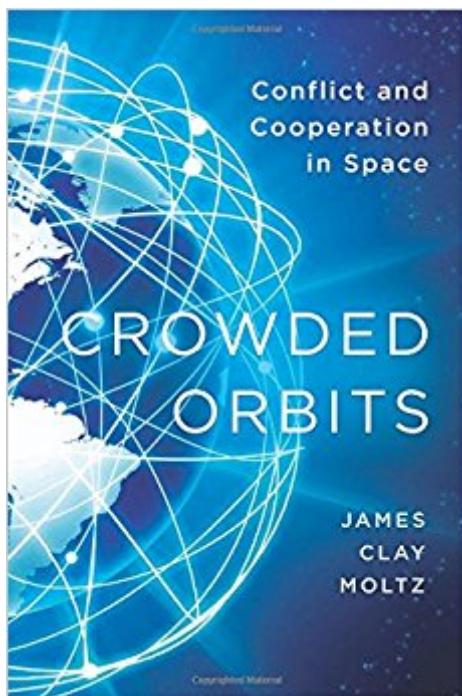


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Crowded Orbits: Conflict And Cooperation In Space



Synopsis

Space has become increasingly crowded since the end of the Cold War, with new countries, companies, and even private citizens operating satellites and becoming spacefarers. This book offers general readers a valuable primer on space policy from an international perspective. It examines the competing themes of space competition and cooperation while providing readers with an understanding of the basics of space technology, diplomacy, commerce, science, and military applications. The recent expansion of human space activity poses new challenges to existing treaties and other governance tools for space, increasing the likelihood of conflict over a diminishing pool of beneficial locations and resources close to Earth. Drawing on more than twenty years of experience in international space policy debates, James Clay Moltz examines possible avenues for cooperation among the growing pool of space actors, considering their shared interests in space traffic management, orbital debris control, division of the radio frequency spectrum, and the prevention of military conflict. Moltz concludes with policy recommendations for enhanced international collaboration in space situational awareness, scientific exploration, and restraining harmful military activities.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

James Clay Moltz set out to provide a primer for nonspecialists on the importance of developing 'a peaceful and sustainable approach to space.' He has succeeded; Moltz's book is the best available general introduction to the past, present, and alternative futures in all areas of space activity. It is

written in clear, nontechnical, and nonjargony language and sets forth in a balanced way the governance choices before us as humanity continues to develop the final frontier. (John Logsdon, Elliott School of International Affairs, The George Washington University, and founder of The George Washington University's Space Policy Institute) Moltz has written a concise, accessible, and very timely account of the history of space development, and the possible futures we could build for ourselves. (Publishers Weekly) Be sure to read *Crowded Orbits...* Fascinating... (Astroguyz)

James Clay Moltz is a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School and holds a joint appointment in the Department of National Security Affairs and the Space Systems Academic Group. He is the author of *The Politics of Space Security: Strategic Restraint and the Pursuit of National Interests* and *Asia's Space Race: National Motivations, Regional Rivalries, and International Risks*. He has appeared on National Public Radio's "Science Friday" and has written on space topics for the *Boston Globe*, *Nature*, *The New York Times*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Well researched and informative but dry. Can't blame the author though, it's hard to make policy and policy discussions interesting. Definitely worth reading if you're in the space operations world or interested in how things got to the way they are.

Excellent introduction to the issues facing us in space.

has helped to understand to future in space

This is probably one book in ten thousand: the blurbs for it accurately describe both its contents and its quality. Although the book's compact size took me aback when it first arrived, the author does an excellent job of packing in a great deal of information about commercial, military and other uses of outer space, as well as the legal and diplomatic context for them, into a small *printed* space. Among other things, the book provides an overview of the space programs of a wide range of spacefaring countries, as well as some historical insight into how each of those countries has contributed diplomatic initiatives or obstacles (and often both) to the development of international cooperation in space. A particularly intriguing topic that gets mentioned a couple of times is the coming trend toward cubesats, nanosats and picosats, small boxes filled with sophisticated electronics and weighing about as much as a couple of bags of cat litter, or even considerably less. While these are being pushed by some start-ups (e.g., Planet Labs, Skybox Imaging) as the

cutting edge of Yankee ingenuity, in fact they could make the space debris problem far more complicated, since they don't carry any fuel and aren't controllable once they're in orbit. I did find it tough to share the author's acceptance of the idea that humanity will "need" to obtain resources from the Moon and asteroids, though he may be more correct to say it's "inevitable" that we'll do so (@190). The legal context for mining and other commercial exploitation of heavenly bodies remains pretty gray, though, so it would be nice to see more discussion about that in a future update of this book. Maybe next time there could also be more discussion about intellectual property issues relating to space. One can find a good introduction to that and a few other issues in Matthew Kelman's "The Little Book of Space Law" (ABA 2013), another very nice entry-level book. Kelman speculates about a possible "flag of convenience" issue that might create obstacles to enforcing patents on spacefaring technology. But since Kelman's book tends to focus on US law more than on international policy and practice, overall it's narrower in scope than this one. In keeping with the recent unfortunate trend in academic publishing, the book has endnotes but no bibliography; the saving grace is that the endnotes only take up about 15 pages, so finding useful references is less painful than it would have been for a longer book. All in all, this is an excellent way to get up to speed about current issues in the international use and regulation of outer space, regardless of your prior background.

A great work for those new to the space environment, Moltz accurately captures many of the challenges associated. I've written a more detailed review which is available through the Air Force Research institutes at http://www.au.af.mil/au/afri/review_full.asp?id=686.

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