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Apollo in the Age of Aquarius by Neil Maher (review)

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philosopher pointed to the neo-Humboldtian need for fields to associate together and form a cultural amalgam that would reflect a positive scientific culture rather than an individual “tools” approach to solving world problems. As Buss suggests, Ley espoused this neo-Humboldtian outlook despite the fact that fields necessarily specialize. The hope that the space age would succeed in blending ideals of the enlightenment with a kind of romanticism has led some cultural historians to cast space exploration as part of the “age of Aquarius.” Buss more aptly echoes Dewitt Douglas Kilgore’s analysis that Ley fits into the astrofuturist tradition, but not in a cultist sense.

Regretfully, Ley did not live to see humans walk on the moon; he passed away a few weeks before the success of Apollo 11 in summer 1969. Summarizing his legacy, Buss compares Ley to astronaut explorers. There is some value to the conclusion, for the enthusiasm of the likes of Ley was essential to convincing the American public and its representatives to support a space program. Buss, however, goes so far as to suggest selflessness drove such explorers and that such a trait is missing from science and academe nowadays. Neither claim is easily supported, but it is true that few have followed in Ley’s path as science publicists. The likes of Carl Sagan had to contend with increased public doubting of science, and even such popular figures as Bill Nye must deal with the fragmentation of media information. Jared Buss’s fine biography shows Ley as a pioneer whose path should inspire, yet cannot be replicated.

GUILLAUME DE SYON

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Apollo in the Age of Aquarius.

By Neil Maher. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.
Pp. 368. Hardcover \$29.95.

Reflecting on the 1960s, author Joan Didion wondered whether a new historical condition had emerged in which connections among events were proliferating, binding the large-scale to the small, the central to peripheral, the meaningful to the nonsensical. In short, the very notion of agency, of what related to what, with what consequence, loomed as ever more challenging to trace or assess.

Neil Maher enters onto this terrain with his critically thoughtful, exhaustively researched *Apollo in the Age of Aquarius*. Apollo here references the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s (NASA) signature spaceflight program of the 1960s and early 1970s to land a “man” on the Moon and return him safely. Age of Aquarius points to the period’s key and overlapping activist grassroots social and political movements: civil

rights, women's rights, the environment, and the opposing politics of the New Left and the New Right.

Maher's main objective is to analyze and detail the consequential interplay between these two domains, between the "squares" and those who saw the square outlook, embodied by NASA, as blinkered to everyday realities of racial and gender discrimination, capitalism, and human impact on the environment. The key flashpoint in this interplay was the Moon mission: its vast expense, its masculine and rationalist bravado, its embodiment of traditional social hierarchies, its integration into the priorities of the Cold War state made it an outsize foil for the new activism. National priorities, allocation of resources, dominant structures of value, and the entire social fabric were at stake. By the early 1970s such confrontation, Maher argues, reshaped NASA's sense of mission and, in turn, recast the discourse and actions of these various movements. Indeed, the relationship to NASA, in different ways and degrees for each movement, became symbiotic.

The historiographic rationale for this framing is that NASA-centric scholarship has tended to give inadequate attention to that institution's broader impact on American cultural life (a claim less true in recent years) and, inversely, that the histories of 1960s social movements have missed the importance of NASA and spaceflight to those movements' development and agendas. This is, then, a story about historical agency in the 1960s, seeking to complicate our understanding of the circuits of power and change—and to query scholarly interpretations on the broader meaning and impact of the period. It is toward this end that Maher characterizes his effort not as cultural or social history but political history (p. 9).

With this positioning, Maher provides chapter treatments of the movements for civil rights, the environment, women, and the New Right (juxtaposed with the New Left), exploring for each their interactions with NASA, spaceflight, and the larger frame of Cold War science and technology. In the main, these chapters are tours de force. The narrative is lively and often elegant, richly detailed, and draws on research from a wide range of archives and media (cartoons, ephemera, songs, alternative newspapers, and more). Familiar events and actors abound (The Poor People's Campaign, Woodstock, Stewart Brand), enriched with new insight and interpretation; as do a host of less well-known events and actors.

For example, in the chapter "Spaceship Earth: Civil Rights and NASA's War on Poverty", Maher deftly unpacks the relationship between Southern Christian Leadership Conference's president Reverend Ralph Abernathy and NASA. It arced from a dramatic confrontation with NASA Administrator Thomas Paine at the Apollo 11 launch over the moral fecklessness of funding trips to the Moon as the basic needs of African Americans became more urgent (a pre-echo of Gil Scott Heron's 1970 song "Whitey on the Moon") to NASA applying "high-tech" to urban problems such as the need for energy efficient buildings. Such telling vignettes are multiplied through-

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out the book. Perhaps the strongest material is that on the NASA/environmental movement relationship (not surprising given Maher's prior well-regarded work on the history of environmentalism), in which NASA's post-Apollo commitment to earth sciences research became a defining element of its mission, inseparable from ongoing engagement with the environmental community. Perhaps least strong is his chapter "The New Right Stuff: The Hippie Counterculture and the Rise of the Conservative Crescent," in which the rise of neoliberal ideology and its impacts are largely absent.

This is an empirically driven work, wide in scope, expertly integrating its material into a range of literatures, provocative to scholars and accessible to general readers. Oddly, perhaps, Maher's argument about historical agency in the 1960s and early 1970s, a critical organizing assumption of the book, is never explicitly stated, but left implicit. À la Didion, this rich issue will provide fodder for graduate seminars for years to come.

MARTIN J. COLLINS

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The American Way of Bombing: Changing Ethical and Legal Norms, From Flying Fortresses to Drones.

Edited by Matthew Evangelista and Henry Shue. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014. Pp. 328. Paperback \$24.95.

"Why did the United States conduct the bombing of Iraq in 1991 . . . so differently from the bombing of North Korea in the 1950s? Have developments in international law . . . made a difference for U.S. practice? Or should one argue the United States at the turn of the millennium has simply been fighting different wars rather than fighting wars differently?" (p. 4) These are the questions posed by co-editor Matthew Evangelista and tackled by the twelve authors featured in this book, which grew out of a multidisciplinary workshop hosted by Cornell University in 2011.

Part I, "Historical and Theoretical Perspectives," opens with Tami Davis Biddle concisely tracing the ideological, technological, and legal origins of U.S. strategic bombing theory and practice up through the end of WWII. Sahr Conway-Lanz and Neta C. Crawford contribute essays exploring how U.S. officials deliberately rationalized when aerial bombardment could—and could not—target civilians in Korea and Vietnam, respectively, while Charles Garraway provides a historical overview of the development and application of both international law and human rights law as they relate to bombing.

Part II, "Interpreting, Criticizing, and Creating Legal Restrictions," delivers as promised. Janina Dill explains the logic of sufficiency versus the logic of efficiency as competing approaches to determine a target's legitimacy. Charles J. Dunlap Jr. demonstrates the efficiency argument when he con-