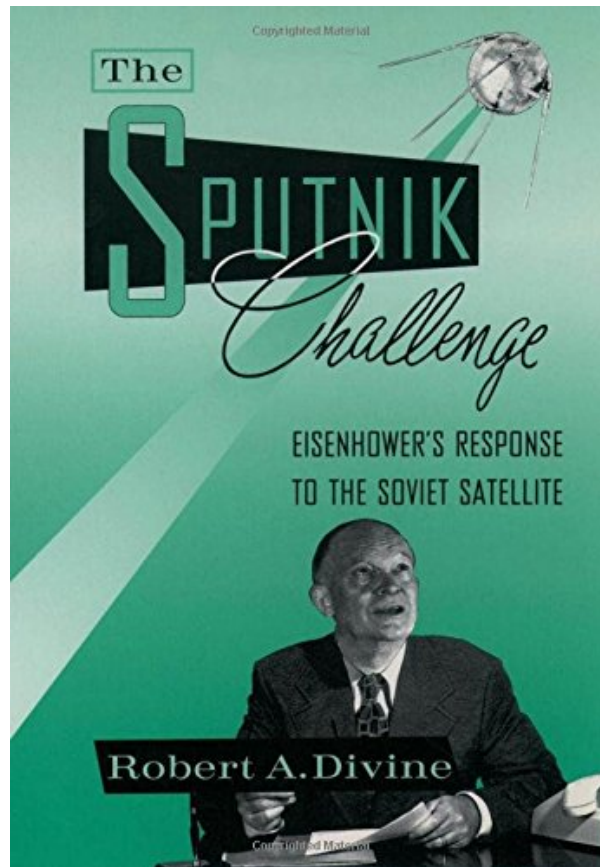
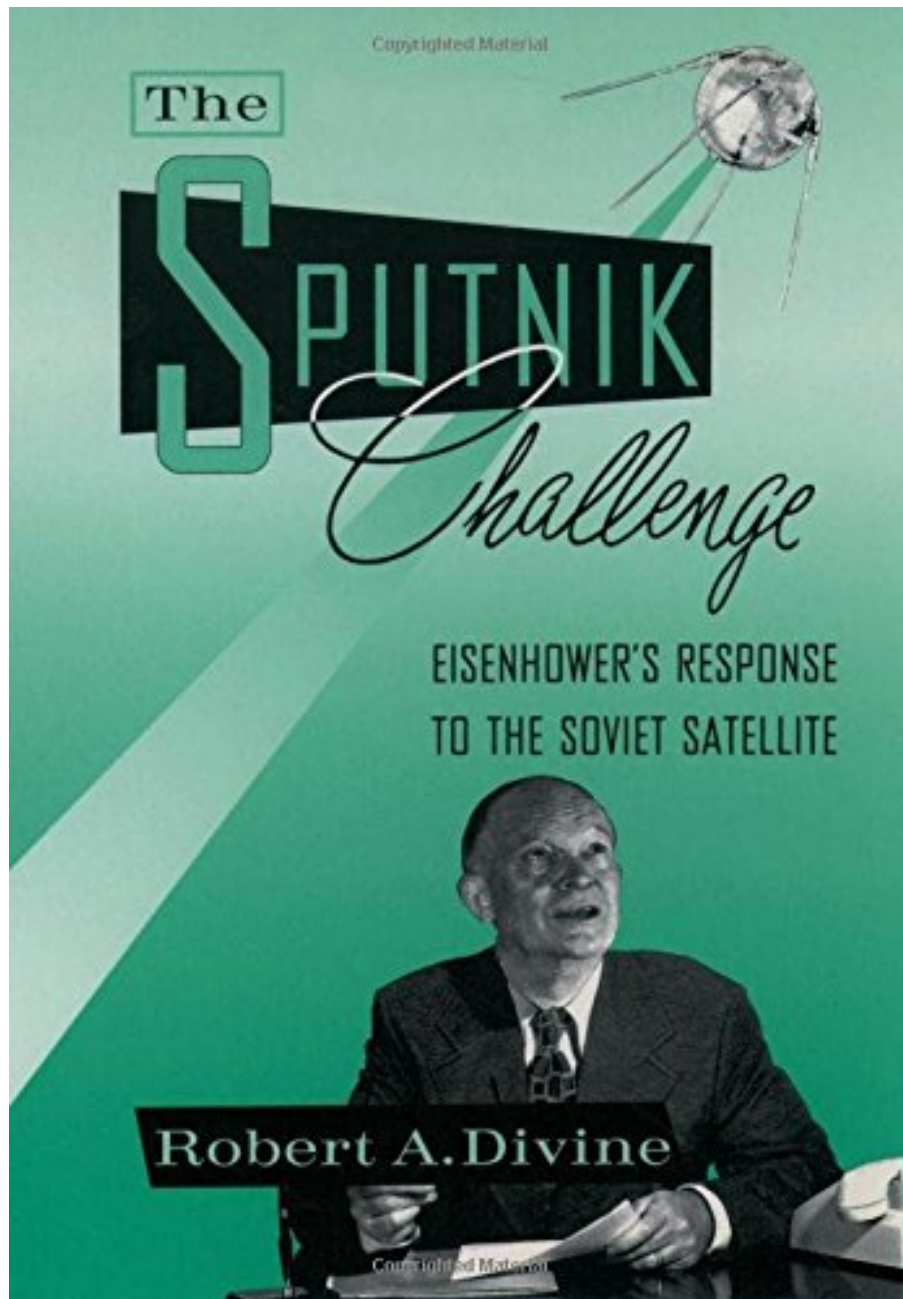


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On October 4, 1957, the Soviet Union launched a 184-pound metal ball called Sputnik into orbit around the Earth, and America plummeted into a panic. Nuclear weapon designer Edward Teller claimed that the United States had lost "a battle more important and greater than Pearl Harbor," and magazine articles appeared with such headlines as "Are We Americans Going Soft?" In the White House, President Eisenhower seemed to do nothing, leading Kennedy in 1960 to proclaim a "missile gap" in the Soviet's favor. Rarely has public perception been so dramatically at odds with reality.

In *The Sputnik Challenge*, Robert Divine provides a fascinating look at Eisenhower's handling of the early space race--a story of public uproar, secret U-2 flights, bungled missile tests, the first spy satellite, political maneuvering, and scientific triumph. He recreates the national hysteria over the first two Sputnik launches, illustrating the anxious handwringing that the Democrats (led by Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson) aggressively played for political gain. Divine takes us to private White House meetings, showing how Eisenhower worked closely with science adviser James Killian, allowing him to take the lead in creating a civilian agency--NASA--which provided intelligent and forceful leadership for American space programs. But the President also knew from priceless intelligence from U-2 flights over the U.S.S.R. that he had little to fear from the touted missile gap, and he fought to limit the growth and multiplication of military missile programs. Eisenhower's assurance, however, rested on classified information, and he did little to instill his confidence in the public. Nor could he boast of his early support for the secret spy satellite program (which quickly replaced the U-2 plane after Gary Powers was shot down in 1960). So the public continued to worry, feeding the national movement for educational reform as well as congressional maneuvering over funding for numerous strategic projects.

Eisenhower, Divine writes, possessed keen strategic vision and a sure sense of budgetary priorities, but ultimately he flunked a crucial test of leadership when he failed to reassure the frightened public that their fears were groundless. As a result, he ultimately failed in his goal to limit military spending as well--which led to a real missile gap in reverse. Incisively written and deeply researched, *The Sputnik Challenge* provides a briskly-paced history of the origins of NASA, the space race, and the age of the ICBM.

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An important Reinterpretation of the Sputnik Crisis

By Roger D. Launius

"The Sputnik Challenge" is one of several very fine works published since 1990 that have reinterpreted the history of the first years of the space age. The figure of Dwight D. Eisenhower has dominated this recent work, and does so in this important book by Robert A. Divine, and Ike has accordingly emerged as a much more effective leader than thought at the time. Rather than a smiling, do-nothing, golf-playing president,

Eisenhower's leadership in handling the Soviet Union in space now increasingly appears far-sighted and rational. To ensure against Soviet aggression, Eisenhower supported the development of ICBM deterrent capabilities and reconnaissance satellites as a means of learning about potentially aggressive actions.

Most important, Eisenhower established the right of international overflight with satellites, making possible the free use of reconnaissance spacecraft in future years. From the perspective of the Eisenhower administration, which was committed to development of an orbital reconnaissance capability as a national defense initiative, an international agreement to ban satellites from overflying national borders without the individual nation's permission was unacceptable. Eisenhower was concerned that if the United States was the first nation to orbit a satellite, the Soviet Union could invoke territorial rights in space. Soviet Sputniks 1 and 2, however, overflowed international boundaries without provoking a single diplomatic protest.

As Divine shows in this book, on October 8, 1957, Deputy Secretary of Defense Donald Quarles told the president: "the Russians have...done us a good turn, unintentionally, in establishing the concept of freedom of international space." Eisenhower immediately grasped this as a means of pressing ahead with the launching of a reconnaissance satellite. The precedent held for Explorer 1 and Vanguard 1, and by the end of 1958 the tenuous principle of "freedom of space" had been established. By allowing the Soviet Union to lead in this area, the Russian space program had established the U.S.-backed precedent for free access.

Of course, as Divine demonstrates, Eisenhower displayed a tin ear when asked to listen to the American public in the aftermath of the Sputnik launches in October and November 1957. Eisenhower tried to reassure U.S. citizens that efforts in space were on track but he was insufficiently successful. He was berated in the media and on the stump for this failure at the time, and there are some appropriate reasons to question his administration's ability to react to public unrest.

At the same time, Ike's leadership in the crisis winter of 1957-1958 yielded some of the most sweeping governmental reorganizations and new programs to be undertaken at the federal level since the New Deal. Divine suggests that overall, Ike made several important changes to react to the Sputnik crisis, taking these decisive actions:

1. Established a Science Advisor, and the President's Science Advisory Committee, to coordinate basic research in the Federal government.
2. Approved additional space research activities.
3. Backed up IGY satellite program with Explorer 1, launched January 31, 1958, "to make sure we fire a satellite at an early date."
4. Established the Advanced Research Projects Agency within the Department of Defense.
5. Sponsored the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, creating a single Federal organization--NASA--to manage space exploration activities.
6. Sponsored the National Defense Education Act of 1958 to stimulate the education, training, and research for science and technology.

These efforts have now been effectively analyzed in Robert Divine's, "The Sputnik Challenge." Most people only remember NASA's creation from this period, but the response was much more sweeping and significant.

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

inaccuracies in the first few pages ...

By Yaj973

1. Sputnik was not painted black. Rather, it was polished silver to reflect as much light as possible - so it could be seen readily.
2. It wasn't broadcasting on an odd frequency ; rather, the Soviets had chosen short wave bands so all the world could hear it.
3. Vanguard wasn't a 20 pound nose cone; it was a sphere.
4. The Viking rocket was not a direct descendant of the V-2

I put the book down at that point ... True, it's a political and not technical book. But check your facts, man ...



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Based on some encounters of many individuals, it is in fact that reading this **The Sputnik Challenge By Robert A. Divine** can help them to make much better option and offer even more experience. If you want to be one of them, allow's acquisition this book *The Sputnik Challenge By Robert A. Divine* by downloading the book on link download in this site. You could obtain the soft file of this book *The Sputnik Challenge By Robert A. Divine* to download and put aside in your available electronic devices. What are you waiting for? Allow get this book *The Sputnik Challenge By Robert A. Divine* online and also review them in any time as well as any sort of place you will certainly review. It will not encumber you to bring heavy publication *The Sputnik Challenge By Robert A. Divine* within your bag.

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