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# The Long Space Age: An Economic History of American Space Exploration

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Tuesday, May 27th, 2014  
4:30 PM Refreshments  
5:00 PM Lecture

Lees-Kubota Lecture Hall  
Guggenheim Building  
California Institute of Technology

This lecture will examine the long-run economic history of American space exploration – the boundary expansion process that precedes economic development – in order to extract some of the underlying lessons and trends useful for engineering economic development in the solar system. The financial history of early American astronomical observatories, the conceptual development of spaceflight in 19th century American space-flight fiction, the early 20th century development of liquid-fuel rocketry technologies in the private-sector, the political history of the Cold War Space Race, and the contemporary rise of private-sector space activities through partnership with NASA, will be discussed.

The argument will be made that the origins and early growth of American space exploration were within the private-sector and that the current rise to prominence of American private-sector space efforts like SpaceX and Virgin Galactic is not a new phenomenon but is rather the re-emergence of a long-run trend.

No registration is required for this free open lecture.  
Seating is limited and is available on a first come, first served basis.