



The Keck Institute for Space Studies  
and The Planetary Society  
present :

# Presidential Leadership in Human Space Exploration - Yesterday and Today

John M. Logsdon

Professor Emeritus, George Washington University  
Board of Directors, The Planetary Society

---

Tuesday, November 10, 2020

Webinar begins at 5:00 PM

---

This talk will first review the decisions regarding human exploration of space made by Presidents John F. Kennedy, Richard Nixon, and Ronald Reagan.

Prof. Logsdon will suggest that the choices regarding whether or not to send humans away from Earth to explore distant destinations made by those three presidents have had lasting impacts, and that without sustained presidential support, U.S.-government-sponsored human exploration is not feasible. Even so, four of the five presidents since Ronald Reagan have called for resuming human space exploration, but to date no human has left low Earth orbit since 1972,

Presidential leadership seems to be a necessary but not sufficient condition for exploration to happen. Logsdon will identify the principle reasons behind this reality. The talk will conclude with his speculation, given the (hopefully definitive) result of the November 3 election, on future U.S. exploration efforts.

---