

ASTR 4800: Space Science - Practice & Policy

- Today's Topic: Khrushchev and USSR Space Policies
- Homework: McDougall, Chapters 15 & 18
- Exam 1 on September 19th.



Nikita Khrushchev
(1894-1971)



- A true believer in Bolshevik revolution.
- Saw himself as true successor of Lenin.
 - Opposition from officers on technology.
 - Delays in space technology irritated technologists.

What was impact of Sputnik?

- Verified Soviet claims of working ICBMs.
- Validated superiority of USSR technology & socialism.
- Khrushchev became main guide & proponent of Soviet space program.
- Led American panic of "missile gap". But, was it real?
- Crisis in USSR policy => being ahead rather than traditional game of "catch up"!



Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin
(1934-1968)



First man in space in April, 1961



Astronaut Alan Shepard
(1923-1998)



Launch of Freedom 7
on Redstone rocket
May 5, 1961

Impact of Manned Space Programs

- Further prompted US to action => "awakened a sleeping giant".
- Soviets wanted "US to treat us better" according to Khrushchev.
- Why did Soviet program ultimately fail?
 - No equivalent of NASA (mostly military).
 - Soviets were really behind in space technologies (press was a bluff!).
 - US dramatically outspent the Russians.
 - Soviets never truly committed to a Moon program.

