

Dylan Clay

Department: Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering

Major: Aerospace Engineering

Research Advisor: Dr. Diana Ahmad

Advisor Department: Humanities and Social Sciences

Funding Source: Dr. Diana Ahmad

Fear to Cooperation: A Brief History of the Space Race

In 1957, the United States and the Soviet Union engaged in a space race that, ironically, resulted in joint United States-Soviet Union missions with the 1975 Apollo-Soyuz program. Starting in the 1950s, the Cold War between the two nations led to a feeling of unease from the world populace, especially with uncertainty surrounding the superpowers' capabilities. In the late 1950s, the United States feared that they would lose the race to space because of Sputnik's success, but American efforts led to far greater success with American Astronauts landing on the moon, effectively ending the race to space. With both nations successful, a decision was made to work together in the Apollo-Soyuz program. This unprecedented collaboration will be shown by reconstructing a brief timeline of events that preceded the launch of Sputnik and show the fallout of this aerospace achievement on the psyche of the American populace. Using archives newspapers and primary sources, I will describe how Americans originally believed they were falling behind, yet came to win the race.

Dylan Clay is a senior in aerospace engineering specializing in orbital mechanics. He is from the Springfield, Missouri area and grew up in the rural parts of the metropolitan area. He is passionate about his field from a combination of childhood interest and excitement about the field as it develops. He enjoys working in the satellite lab on S&T's campus and learning about the applications of engineering in space. He is excited to continue his development with the astronautics sector of aerospace and how to continue to push the community to success.