



# Dark Side of the Moon: Wernher von Braun, the Third Reich, and the Space Race

Wayne Biddle

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### Dark Side of the Moon: Wernher von Braun, the Third Reich, and the Space Race

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A stunning investigation of the roots of the first moon landing forty years ago.

This illuminating story of the dawn of the space age reaches back to the reactionary modernism of the Third Reich, using the life of "rocket scientist" Wernher von Braun as its narrative path through the crumbling of Weimar Germany and the rise of the Nazi regime. Von Braun, a blinkered opportunist who could apply only tunnel vision to his meteoric career, stands as an archetype of myriad twentieth century technologists who thrived under regimes of military secrecy and unlimited money. His seamless transformation from developer of the deadly V-2 ballistic missile for Hitler to an American celebrity as the supposed genius behind the golden years of the U.S. space program in the 1950s and 1960s raises haunting questions about the culture of the Cold War, the shared values of technology in totalitarian and democratic societies, and the imperatives of material progress.



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