

Citizen Group Card #2

Vocabulary

colonize: (v.) to start a colony. Spain was the first nation to colonize the new world.

characteristic: (adj.) that helps make up the special character of some person or thing; distinctive; like no other

inevitable: (adj.) that must happen, unavoidable

Historians' Opinions about Proposed Space Colony

Historians have long been divided over the question of space exploration and the *colonization* of space, specifically colonization of space by the United States. Most historians agree that exploration is part of the American character. However, some historians question whether or not we should explore space and face funding problems and possible conflicts between other nations. The question then becomes, "Should we explore space when there is so much that needs to be done here in the United States?"

Many historians support the idea of space exploration and the possibility of a space colony. Historians remember that the story of America is about expanding, exploring, and movement. Most historians look at the expansion of the west and the exploration of new frontiers as *characteristics* of being American and that define us as a culture. Some historians feel that it is the responsibility of the United States to lead the way into this new frontier of space and space exploration. Many historians feel that there is a deep desire among Americans to travel into space and the future of humans in space is *inevitable*, or will happen whether we want it

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permanent: (adj.) lasting or meant to last a very long time

colony: (n.) a group of people who settle in a distant land but are still under the rule of the country from which they came.

colonize: (v.) to start a colony. Spain was the first nation to colonize the new world.

resource: (n.) a supply of something to take care of a need

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or not. Historians remind us that about 100 years separated Christopher Columbus's exploration of the Americas and the first *permanent* European *colony* in the New World. Today we have the technology and resources to explore and *colonize* space within the next few years. Therefore, some historians feel that the United States should lead the way into space exploration and colonization with continued funding so that we can begin establishing our own colonies in space and lead the way into the next Age of Exploration.

However, other historians disagree and ask the question, "Is space exploration really desirable when so much needs to be done here in the United States?" Historians remind us that exploration in search of new territories and *resources* have not always worked out favorably for early explorers. Starvation, disease and lack of funding, have all contributed to failed attempts to colonize by early explorers. Historians like to remind us that the first colony in the new world was the Lost Colony of Roanoke and to this day historians are not

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collaboration: (n.) to work together in preparing something.

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quite clear how the colony disappeared. Historians would like know if the United States is prepared to be the first colony in space. In addition to the Lost Colony of Roanoke, many accounts of early Spanish exploration of the Americas for gold resulted in much conflict between other nations. Historians warn of the possibility of conflict in space as other countries and nations begin to compete with us to discover new territories and resources in space. Historians feel that space exploration should be an international *collaboration* between all nations so that we can learn from the past and avoid future conflicts between nations and people. Although the United States would like to lead the way into this new age of exploration, many historians warn that the United States is not ready to expand its borders into space.

Sites:

http://www.nasa.gov/exploration/whyweexplore/why_we_explore_main.html

http://www.nasa.gov/missions/solarsystem/Why_We_01pt2.html

<http://www.historians.org/Perspectives/issues/2012/1209/Historical-Perspectives-on-Space-Policy.cfm>