

## Re: Back to the moon? When?

---

*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.space.policy/2007-11/msg01259.html>

---

- *From:* BradGuth <[bradguth@xxxxxxxxxx](mailto:bradguth@xxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Wed, 28 Nov 2007 16:52:12 -0800 (PST)
- 

On Nov 28, 3:44 pm, [simberg.interglo...@xxxxxxxxxx](mailto:simberg.interglo...@xxxxxxxxxx) (Rand Simberg) wrote:

On Wed, 28 Nov 2007 14:56:24 -0800 (PST), in a place far, far away, Quadibloc <[jsav...@xxxxxxxxxx](mailto:jsav...@xxxxxxxxxx)> made the phosphor on my monitor glow in such a way as to indicate that:

The approach to risk in space should be one that leaves no ambiguity, but instead makes it resoundingly clear:

– the astronauts themselves are brave individuals who were willing to face the hazards of space, and

– we, on the ground, did everything we could as best we could to get them back safely.

Then space will remain forever unaffordable.

Perhaps I should have inserted the word "reasonable" in my second point, then.

As long as space is unaffordable, and astronauts are celebrities, we do want people to have confidence that should anything untowards

## Re: Back to the moon? When?

happen, it won't be because of negligence bordering on the criminal.

Actually, current astronauts aren't celebrities, until we kill them. Few people could name any, let alone most of them. They only learn the names after they die in some spectacular fashion. And then, shortly thereafter, they forget them.

I don't think that's an unreasonable thing for the general public to ask.

I do. The general public needs to be educated that this is a frontier, and that people will die on it, as they have on other frontiers. We managed to advance aviation by huge measure without making it a national trauma when we lost a test pilot (or even passenger, for that matter). Until we can do this with space, it's going to be hard to make much progress.

We have life term inmates or those of limited but quality years to live that should go first, especially if going for those moonsuit naked EVAs on our physically dark, somewhat salty and unavoidably reactive/anticathode moon.

I'm not saying not to take risks, just that risks to human life are always, even in the service of space, to be minimized (within reason), always recognized as an undesirable, although to some extent unavoidable, part of space exploration.

No one would disagree with that. The problem is defining what "within reason" means.

What are the odds of returning home and being able to survive semi-normal after getting your banked bone marrow reinstalled? 10:1 odds in your favor might be good enough for most of us, whereas 1:1 or 50/50 isn't worth the risk unless the payoff is nearly astronomical (say \$1 billion).

– Brad Guth

.