Visions of the Future for "Third Century America" at the 1976 Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology

Senior Capstone Experience

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Submitted April 18, 2021
To Prof. Janet Sorrentino
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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to my mentors, colleagues, and family members who supported me throughout this senior capstone experience. Dr. Janet Sorrentino supported my endeavors by being a responsive and superbly helpful thesis advisor. Dr. Patrick Nugent offered invaluable insight into framing this research project as both a Bicentennial and a 1970s moment and graciously gave his time to read, edit, and provide suggestions to help me refine my argument. Dr. Ken Miller's seminar courses helped me understand the importance of historiography and research methods, which prepared me to confidently undertake a paper of historical breadth and substance. Overall, I would like to thank the Washington College History Department for their patience as I changed my topic multiple times before settling on the subject of this paper.

Additionally, I am indebted to the following individuals for their willingness to communicate with me remotely and respond to my research requests: NASA Contract Archivist Sarah K. LeClaire at NASA's History Program Office, James Draper, curator at the Air Force Space and Missile Museum, and both Stephen Smith and Roger McCormick, volunteers at the AFSMM who searched through their personal belongings to find items related to "Third Century America" and share them with me.

Finally, I express my sincere thanks to my parents and Willie, who patiently listened to me muse out loud about this topic at length for the last eight months, and always assured me I was making sense (even when I may not have been).

Table of Abbreviations

Organizations and Agencies

ARBA	American Revolution Bicentennial Administration
ARBC	American Revolution Bicentennial Commission
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERDA	Energy Research and Development Agency
KSC	Kennedy Space Center
NASA	National Air and Space Museum
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
VAB	Vehicle Assembly Building
VIC	Visitors Information Center

Bibliographic Sources

BEST-PP (1)	Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology, Proposal to the President (1)
BEST-PP (2)	Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology, Proposal to the President (2)
BEST-PC (1)	Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology, Planning and Construction (1)
BEST-PC (2)	Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology, Planning and Construction (2)
BEST-DAP (1)	Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology, Department and Agency Participation (1)
BEST-DAP (2)	Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology, Department and Agency Participation (2)
BEST-D	Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology, Dedication
BEST-BP	Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology, Brochures and Photographs

Images

"Prophecies of the future, if they are to be intelligent, not merely fantastic, must be based on a study of the present: for the future is the present projected." – Aldous Huxley [1]

Introduction: Past, Present, and Future in 1976

In 1976, the United States commemorated its 200th birthday following a previous decade of social upheaval, riding the coattails of disaster in Vietnam, the political scandal of Watergate, and an energy crisis that gripped the nation in a lingering economic slump. One *Washington Post* article noted that the Bicentennial found America as "a nation in transition, sobered by new limits of abundance, concerned about its future role in the world, uncertain of its social health and political vitality."[2] It was a challenging time to encourage Americans to take pride in the vitality and vibrance of their young nation's institutions, especially the host of the party: the federal government.[3] Whereas America celebrated its 1876 Centennial with an international exposition and vast showcase of material progress in the Industrial Age, the Bicentennial was a decentralized, hometown affair that reflected new engagements with the past instead of directing an agenda for the future. History permeated the Bicentennial—and American popular culture in the 1970s—through television programs, museum exhibits, living history, and reenactments that brought the past to life and inspired the public with the stories, songs, and triumphs of their patriotic past.[4]

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[1] Aldous Huxley, "The Outlook for American Culture: Some Reflections on a Machine Age," August 1927, in *Aldous Huxley Complete Essays: Volume III, 1930-1935*, edited by Robert S. Baker and James Sexton (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001), 185.
[2] Op-Ed, "The Glorious Anniversary," *The Washington Post*, July 3, 1976.
[3] Natasha Zaretsky, "The Spirit of '76: The Bicentennial and Cold War Revivalism," in *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline 1968-1980* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 146; Thomas Borstelmann, *The New 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 21-22, 55-61.
[4] Walter Nugent, "The American People and the Centennial of 1876," *Indiana Magazine of History* 75 no. 1 (March 1979), 54-55; M.J. Rymsza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive: Public History and Popular Culture in the 1970s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 1-2; John Bodnar, "Celebrating the Nation, 1961-1976," in *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 206; David Ryan, "Re-enacting Independence through Nostalgia: The 1976 U.S. Bicentennial after the Vietnam War," FIAR: Forum for Inter-American Research 5, issue 3 (December 2012), 3-5.

Historians of the Bicentennial have debated the extent to which this new infusion of the past in popular culture reflected an authentic search for meaning or a nostalgic longing for an imagined past to compensate for a dissatisfactory present.[5] For the commemoration to linger so lovingly on the past, however, suggests that collective agreement about the nation's forward progress could no longer be taken for granted or naively put on display.[6] In other words, as Americans faced their birthday year with skepticism regarding the exceptionalism the celebration intended to commemorate, history found its foothold in the Bicentennial.

If 1976 was a difficult time for federal planners to assure national unity and elicit patriotic pride due to present conditions, it was an even more challenging time to craft a hopeful vision for the future; the evolution of Bicentennial planning is testament to this particular predicament. Furthermore, contemporary journalists and historians warned of the dangers of a "nostalgia wave" that lured Americans into looking back through a pair of rose-colored glasses to conjure a time of previous harmony and stability.[7] Critics charged nostalgia as the antithesis of progress, for in escaping to an imagined past, the country would never be able to confront present dissatisfaction or move toward a promising future.[8] Amidst nostalgia culture and the

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[5] Michael Kammen in *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture,* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1991) surmises that nostalgia is driven by lack of continuity and cultural anxiety and involves selective memory: recalling the good and repressing the unpleasant (626). David Lowenthal in "The Bicentennial Landscape: A Mirror Held Up to the Past," *Geographical Review* 67, no. 3 (July 1977) laments that "the republic's birthday party has been a protracted exercise in nostalgia" (255). Both are dismissive of many popular presentations of the past as mere "heritage tourism." Rymsza-Pawlowska in *History Comes Alive* argues that public encounters with the past, especially throughout Bicentennial, were not merely a product of nostalgic sentiment. Instead, new public engagement with historic preservation, heritage tourism, "living history," and television programming reflected an authentic search for meaning through connecting to the past. See also Rymsza-Pawlowska, "Broadcasting the Past: History Television, 'Nostalgia Culture,' and the Emergence of the Miniseries in the 1970s United States," *Journal of Popular Film and Television* (June 2014), 81-90.

[6] Rymsza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive,* 40, 47, 65.

[7] Tobias Becker, "The Meanings of Nostalgia: Genealogy and Critique," *History and Theory* 57 no. 2 (June 2018): 243-245. Futurist Alvin Toffler in *Future Shock* (Random House Publishing, Inc., 1970) was the first to speak of a "wave of nostalgia," where he described how present conditions of the '70s provided the breeding ground for nostalgic sentiment: the "fast pace of change" in the previous decade resulted in a break that separated the past from the present.

[8] Discussion and criticism of nostalgia proliferated in mass media: John Culhane, "Nostalgia," *Newsweek*, December 28, 1970; "Everybody's Just Wild About Nostalgia," *Life Magazine*, February 19, 1971; Gerald Clarke, "The Meaning of Nostalgia," *Time Magazine*, May 3, 1971.; For a discussion of nostalgia as the antithesis of progress, see Michael Pickering and Emily Keightley, "The Modalities of Nostalgia," *Current Sociology* 54 no. 6 (November 2006), 919-914.

newfound preeminence of the past in popular culture, the future was not, however, entirely neglected in the Bicentennial year. While public history scholars have clearly demonstrated how strategic representations of the past in the Bicentennial were revealing of present-day concerns, this paper will focus on how Americans used the commemoration as an opportunity to imagine and shape the future.[9] These future visions are equally—and perhaps uniquely— fingers on the pulse of 1976 America.[10]

In the spring of 1975, in an off-handed comment printed by a *New York Times* reporter, President Ford and top members of his cabinet initiated a last-ditch attempt to bring the future to the forefront of the Bicentennial through a science and technology show at Cape Canaveral, Florida [Fig. 1].[11] "Third Century America: The U.S. Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology" attempted to remind the nation they should expect the next 100 years to be at least as grand as the previous 200: their federal government, alongside leading private industries, would harness cutting-edge science to solve pressing problems and innovate with new technologies to secure comfort, convenience, and overall "quality of life" for the coming century.

The particulars of this Expo and its future vision operate as a looking glass onto the preoccupations of its planners. On the one hand, the Expo was an opportunity to draw attention to the future by using science and technology as a lens through which to present America to the nation and the world, as a country emerging successfully from Vietnam and Watergate poised to

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[9] Zaretsky has explored how the Bicentennial addressed anxieties about American identity in the 1970s through representations of the colonial household, the Smithsonian's "Nation of Nations" exhibit, and at the Festival of American Folklife. *No Direction Home*, 180, 161-163, 167. See also Rymsza-Pawlowska, Bodnar, and Ryan.

[10] This Exposition is certainly not unique in this regard. An American Historical Association panel called "History of the Future" studied instances of past future projections that were all similarly connected to and revealing of their respective presents. David C. Engerman, "Introduction: Histories of the Future and the Futures of History," *The American Historical Review* 117 no. 5 (December 2012): 1402-1410. Nugent, commenting on the Bicentennial: "It may well be that a historian of the Tricentennial in 2076 would be able to tell us a lot of unpleasant things about ourselves of which we are blissfully unaware," "The American People and the Centennial of 1876," 68.

[11] John Hersey, "Wednesday: Politics, That's How It Works," *The New York Times*, April 20, 1975. Though published in April, Hersey's article was a transcript of their conversation in January 1975. As a general note, "Cape Canaveral" was used indiscriminately to describe the location of the Exposition, but it actually took place at the John F. Kennedy Space Center (KSC) adjacent to the Visitor Information Center (VIC) and in the shadow of the Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB).

reassert technological superiority, military dominance, and further foray into the final frontier of space. On the other, the Expo had to convince a public skeptical or even apathetic toward science and technology that not only would these forces assure personal "quality of life" in the future, but that federal government agencies, especially the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), would use their tax dollars to secure solutions to press earthly, environmental, and social problems. These future priorities present at three tiers—the broader Expo, the federal government's participation, and NASA's role as host agency—coexisted and competed as "Third Century America" attempted to envision a future whose agenda was up for debate.[12] How would "progress" be defined and realized? Would it bring a nation who reclaimed its Cold War power as a global leader and colonized the moon, or who turned inward to solve food shortages, end dependency on oil, whose space program produced communication satellites instead of lunar landers?

Although these visions conflated in the Expo, one message was overwhelmingly clear. By drawing an explicit trajectory from the American Revolution, to the moon landing, to "Third Century America," the Expo projected the future as a direct extension of the values and American character that the Bicentennial itself sought to commemorate. No matter what the future would bring, it would surely find Americans more comfortable, assured, and forward focused than in the present day.

Looking Back...Moving Forward? Sidelining the Future

The *News-Press* of Fort Meyers, Florida introduced "Third Century America" to its readers by dramatically asserting: "The federal government's biggest collective effort to

[12] This is characteristic of many expositions whose present tensions and debates competed for priority in future agendas. See Arthur P. Molella and Scott Gabriel Knowles, eds., *World's Fairs in the Cold War: Science, Technology, and the Culture of Progress,* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburg Press, 2019).

celebrate the Bicentennial is not planned for either Philadelphia or Washington and it doesn't have anything to do with 1776." This effort would feature a giant exposition on science and technology to focus on the future, not the past. "The reason for that," explained Ed Simmons, the Department of Commerce project coordinator, "is the President's interest. He felt strongly that the Bicentennial should address itself to the nation's third century."[13] It is true that the Expo was the most prominent (and federally-sponsored) future-oriented Bicentennial program to address science and technology that took place outside of a museum, a fitting observation for understanding the Expo in relation to the larger Bicentennial.[14] A brief summary of the evolution of Bicentennial planning will illustrate why the future became relegated to a trade-fair in Cape Canaveral, Florida, but also why the President and his cabinet became so concerned with giving the future a fighting chance in the commemoration in the first place.

Although the official government report celebrated the Bicentennial as a successful "hometown event," it was not originally planned as one.[15] When President Johnson signed a bill creating the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission (ARBC) in 1966, earliest programming plans discussed portraying the US as an international leader fighting communism abroad and tackling domestic problems through Johnson's Great Society policies.[16] The country and the world would witness these current accomplishments and the promise of future growth at an International Exhibition in Philadelphia, echoing the 1876 Centennial. As President Nixon assumed leadership of the ARBC following his election in 1968, plans for the Exhibition began

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[13] Charles Overby, "Birthday Event Keys On Science," *News-Press,* Fort Meyers, Florida, January 11, 1976.
[14] Constance Holden, a disgruntled *Science* writer lamenting the lack of science programming in the Bicentennial, listed the Franklin Institute, the opening of the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum, and the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry's exhibit on "America's inventive genius." Holden, "The Bicentennial: Science Loses Out," *Science* 189 no. 4201 (August 8, 1975): 439.
[15] American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, *American Revolution Bicentennial: A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 1, United States Government Printing Office, 1977, 9. For succinct descriptions of the evolution of the Bicentennial under Johnson, Nixon, and Ford, see Rymsza-Pawlowska 's chapter in *History Comes Alive*, "The Commemoration Revolution: Planning the Federal Bicentennial" and Zaretsky, *No Direction Home,* 147-150.
[16] Rymsza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive,* 41-43

to attract bad press. Not only would a fair be incredibly expensive, but the overwhelming optimism and festivity necessary to execute a successful world's fair were not in abundant supply in this "post-traumatic" decade.[17] Plans adjusted accordingly, and a report to Nixon in 1970 substituted an exhibition for three overarching Bicentennial "categories" that would be used to classify nationwide activities. "Heritage '76," "Festival USA," and "Horizons '76," were designed to commemorate the past, celebrate the present, and plan for the future.[18]

While the federal government might have been able to salvage full authority over the 200th birthday celebration even without orchestrating an international show, Nixon's "imperial presidency" and politically motivated appointments to the ARBC tainted the Commission. These actions drew complaints from Jeremy Rifkin and the "People's Bicentennial Commission," a citizen group troubled by the partisanship and overt commercialization of the Bicentennial.[19] Subsequent federal investigations of the ARBC by the General Accounting Office and the House Judiciary Committee ensured the demise of the Commission. These proceedings accompanied a shift toward allowing individual states—many who were eager to move forward with plans despite the quagmire in Washington—more autonomy over the Bicentennial. By the time the ARBC was officially replaced by the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration (ARBA) in 1973, the federal government's role in the commemoration had become one of oversight, coordination, and management of state, local, and community programming.[20]

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[17] Wolf Von Eckard, "After 200 Years, Is There a Spirit of '76?" *The Washington Post,* June 14, 1970; Barbara Keys, Jack Davies, and Elliot Bannan, "The Post-Traumatic Decade: New Histories of the 1970s," *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 33 no. 1 (July 2014): 4-5, 10; Zaretsky, *No Direction Home,* 148, 179.
[18] Rymsza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive*, 45-48.
[19] Tammy Gordon's *The Spirit of '76: Commerce, Community, and the Politics of Celebration* (Amherst, University of Massachusetts Press, 2013) charts the how the historical context of "Me Culture" and consumerism encouraged individual celebration as opposed to collective commemoration.
[20] Rymsza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive*, 49-60. John Warner, as head Bicentennial administrator, oversaw the ARBA.

Due to Nixon's resignation, President Ford now presided over a Bicentennial that looked very different from its inception almost ten years earlier. Ford assumed the task of realigning the values of Revolutionary America with a turbulent present by drawing upon a mythic, hegemonic, and patriotic reading of the past to bring some continuity to a highly decentralized celebration. Programming which encompassed everything from coordinated events like Freedom Train and Operation Sail to a menagerie of activities such as painted fire hydrant plugs, a Superbowl halftime show, a Junior Committee of Correspondence pen-pal program, and J.C. Penney's "strike up the band" kit.[21] Ultimately, the Bicentennial's final form responded to both a widespread interest to engage with the historical and a skepticism surrounding the federal government's ability to competently engineer a celebration representing the interests of a diverse ethnic, racial, and geographically disparate nation.[22] Consequentially, as "a progress-based Cold War consensus fractured in the face of political, social, and economic turmoil throughout the decade," the past replaced the future as the locus of celebration. Neither Bicentennial planners nor the public could confidently center their national commemoration around the progressive promise of tomorrow.[23]

The *Times* article that unwittingly made first mention of the Expo captured the following conversation between President Ford and his Counsellor John Marsh:

> Ford: "Jack Stiles was talking to me about the idea of getting an American electronics and aviation and space industry show set up at Cape Canaveral."
> Marsh: "A sophisticated Disneyland—that's a good idea."
> Ford: "I think it's meritorious idea."[24]

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[21] Bodnar, *Remaking America,* 228; David Ryan, "Re-enacting Independence through Nostalgia," 8-9; Rymsza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive*, 64; Examples taken from ARBA, *A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 1, 196, 162, 203, 150.
[22] Zaretsky, *No Direction Home,* 148.
[23] Rymsza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive*, direct quote from p. 9; 2, 5, 65.
[24] Hersey, "Wednesday: Politics, That's How It Works," *The New York Times*, April 20, 1975.

Jack, or John, Stiles, was a longtime friend of the President who worked part-time at the White House and produced an ambitious concept plan for the aforementioned "show" at Cape Canaveral.[25] Stiles explicitly stated the impetus for "The U.S. Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology": "There is one major gap in the Bicentennial preparation. All the focus has been on the distant past. There is almost no focus on the future."[26] A subsequent memo to the President conveyed a similar concern, advocating that "a display of this nature would give Bicentennial focus to the present and future in contrast to the general run of 200th anniversary activities which are concentrating on the past two centuries."[27] Ford enthusiastically endorsed a Bicentennial event of significant proportions that would provide a "forward looking" element to the Bicentennial as a counterweight to programming overwhelmingly focused on the nation's history and past accomplishments.[28]

Now, more than ever, it was crucial that Americans look fondly toward the future, visually evident in the Expo's official logo [Fig. 2]. Expectations for "Third Century America" to deliver on this front were high. "This should be the outstanding Bicentennial event," boasted Stiles. Ed Storey, who replaced Simmons as manager in early 1976, predicted that the Expo would be "the most memorable event of the nation's Bicentennial."[29] Precisely which future developments would generate this enthusiasm for the next 100 years were not carefully selected

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[25] "Introduction," Collection Finding Aid: John R. Stiles and Merrill Mueller Files, 1974-75, Gerald R. Ford Library.
[26] "Preliminary Exposition Concept prepared by the office of John R. Stiles, July 10, 1975*," John Marsh Files 1974-1977*, Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology-Proposal to the President (2), Box 65, Gerald R. Ford Library.
[27] Ted Marrs, "Memorandum for the President, July 24, 1975," BEST-PP (2).
[28] "Minutes of Cabinet Meeting with the President, September 17, 1975," *John Marsh Files 1974-1977*, Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology-Planning and Construction (1), Box 65, Gerald R. Ford Library: "The President is placing high priority on it [Exposition] and wants it to be successful. Jack Marsh has the lead...to ensure there is an energy and technology exposition which will look to the future.; John Marsh, "Draft Letter to Chairmen and Senators, October 16, 1975," *John Marsh Files 1974-1977,* Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology-Department and Agency Participation (1), Box 64, Gerald R. Ford Library: "The President reached the conclusion that attention was largely focused to historical events and that insufficient attention was directed toward the future." Pete Crow, "Discussion Resume for Cape Canaveral Technological Fair, July 1975," *John Marsh Files 1974-1977*, Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology-Proposal to the President (1), Box 65, Gerald R. Ford Library.
[29] John Stiles, "Memorandum to the President, September 2, 1975," BEST-PC (1); Harry Wessel, "Cape Exposition Gets Chief to Finish Job," *Sentinel Star*, Orlando, Florida, January 16, 1976.

so much as indiscriminately solicited from any federal agency nominally involved in "science and technology." This generated a diverse array of Expo experiences ranging from gazing at moon rocks to touring a national wildlife refuge, witnessing developments in electronic banking to a participating in a simulated Apollo launch.[30]

Two undercurrents emerge in this hodge-podge of displays, centered around the definition of "progress" illustrated by science and technology in this moment, and regarding the national priorities of the United States for the remainder of the 20th century and into the 21st. Awe and wonder, or practical application? International or domestic? Space or earth? Often the answer was both, but these questions of which future vision(s) would best accommodate current attitudes toward science, technology, and progress, and would successfully ensure a hopeful future, echoed concerns particular to 1976. The projection of these concerns onto a future landscape through "Third Century America: The Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology" poignantly illustrates Huxley's point.

Anxiety, Optimism, and Progress on Display

The decision to exhibit America's third century through the lens of science and technology places this Expo in a history of world's fairs and international exhibitions that drew upon these same themes to highlight national achievements. Such displays historically convey a narrative of linear progress and continued growth, often by comparing past and present to future to underscore improvements.[31] Officially sanctioned world expos of the late 20th century enjoyed

[30] Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Press Conference, February 9, 1976," *White House Press Releases*, Box 21, Gerald R. Ford Library; Overby, "Birthday Event Keys On Science," *News-Press*, January 11, 1976; Jim Ball, "Construction on Track For Science Exposition" *Sentinel Star*, May 2, 1976.
[31] Robert Rydell, *All the World's A Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 1-8.

great success—Brussels 1958, Montreal 1967, Osaka 1970—by visualizing a technological future full of modern marvels and conveniences.[32]

Frequently, however, these dazzling displays were borne not of optimism, but of anxiety surrounding present conditions and the role science and technology would play in their respective futures. The 1939 New York World's Fair occurred at the tail end of the Great Depression and the onset of the second World War, with the theme of "Building the World of Tomorrow with the Tools of Today." Visitors witnessed the optimistic and powerful ability of science to craft a thriving 1960s metropolis through rational choice and design.[33] Almost 25 years later in 1964, Robert Moses' New York fair responded to fears about the dangers of unrestrained technology, from robots to the atomic bomb. General Electric's pavilion "Progressland" focused on the peaceful use of atomic energy, while the ride "Futurama II" underscored the power of technology to mine foreign landscapes like oceans, jungles, and deep space to fuel the world market economy. Technology was to be embraced, not feared, and desired, not dismissed.[34]

If the 1939 fair responded to the Great Depression, and 1964 the Atomic Age, this 1976 Exposition tackled a crisis of "reproduction," of failing to continually replicate post-war affluence, national authority, and collective patriotism. The generative and perhaps even "thaumaturgical" powers of fairs arise not just from their ability to build a new and brighter future, but because of the presents they leave behind.[35] "Third Century America" attempted to

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[32] Luca Massidda, "The Cold War, a Cool Medium, and the Postmodern Death of World Expos" in *World's Fairs in the Cold War*, 184.
[33] Robert H. Kargon, "'The Future Isn't What it Used to Be': Optimism and Anxiety, 1939-1964" in *World's Fairs in the Cold War,* 66-69.
[34] Michelle Demeter, "Advancing an Optimistic Technological Narrative in an Age of Skepticism: General Electric and Walt Disney's Progressland at the 1964-1965 World's Fair" in *World's Fairs in the Cold War,* 89-91.
[35] Zaretsky describes the '70s as a crisis of "reproducing" positive characteristics of the previous decades. *No Direction Home*, 145. Massidda evidences how this was true for numerous fairs by examining their historical contexts: Chicago in 1893 emerged from the Great Fire, Chicago in 1933 and New York in 1939 tried to forget the Great Depression, Brussels left behind World War

counter a diminishing faith in progress in the 1970s by following in the example of past fairs. Like the Expo, these exhibitions envisioned and took pride in future progress by generating awe and wonder through displays of innovative technology.

"Expo '76"

To plan a world's fair three years after a similar plan was rejected for the larger Bicentennial was bold, but it is what planners of "Third Century America" originally set out to accomplish. Stiles' preliminary concept closely resembled one of the most popular attractions at New York's 1964 fair, Walt Disney's "Carousel of Progress." In the carousel, audio animatronic figures acted out four scenes, set in 1900, 1920, 1940, and 1964, displaying the evolution of home appliances whose increasing convenience left more time for free time and family.[36] Stiles likewise planned an Expo revolving around nine sectors of American life, each filled with examples of how American achievements in technology had made lives "easier and richer."[37] Exhibit script and design would be solicited from the Smithsonian, who would provide anachronistic artifacts of technology past for visitors to compare to their present and future counterparts. Futuristic aspects of the exhibits would be provided by industrial firms, who would present dioramas offering scientific solutions to present-day problems. In conjunction with the exposition, Stiles further proposed a colloquium of scientists and economic historians who would "predict" the dates of third-century scientific breakthroughs, a series of television specials, and coverage by major scientific periodicals. Like the Carousel, the Expo would cement the

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II and atomic fears with a "Balance for a More Humane World" in 1958, and Osaka '70 and Montreal '67 had other similar backdrops. Massidda, "The Cold War, a Cool Medium, and the Postmodern Death of World Expos," 185.

[36] Demeter, "Advancing an Optimistic Technological Narrative in an Age of Skepticism," 87, 90, 92. Orlando's Disney World opened in 1971, and the Carousel was moved there to Magic Kingdom's Tomorrowland, just 100 miles from Cape Canaveral, in 1975.

[37] "Preliminary Exposition Concept prepared by the office of John R. Stiles, July 10, 1975*,"* BEST-PP (2).

consistent progression of technological ingenuity, ensuring faith in "a great big beautiful tomorrow."[38]

There is other evidence to suggest that a world's fair style event was highly desirable. Simmons, the Expo's first general manager, had served as a deputy commissioner at the Spokane World's Fair in 1974 and directed the entire U.S. pavilion. Expo planners coordinated with Disney World officials to plan the construction of an elevated boardwalk and other theme towers to enhance the showmanship of the Expo and emulate a "real entertainment park" [Fig. 3]. Exhibitors were further encouraged to use dioramas to emulate and create a trade-fair atmosphere.[39] Finally, a proposed layout of the Expo from November 1975, shows the Vehicle Assembly Building painted with the huge logo, "Expo '76" [Fig. 4].[40]

An especially enviable past fair to imitate was the country's last benchmark birthday, the 1876 Centennial, which took the form of international exhibition. A world's fair had been the original plan for the Bicentennial with the intent to commemorate and display the nation's successful progress, and planners of "Expo '76" sought to revive this vision.[41] For Expo planners, the success of the Centennial lay in its ability to harness the wonders of scientific innovation to inspire faith in the future, and they hoped "Third Century America" would achieve the same.[42]

In the announcement of the Expo in August 1975, ARBA administrator John Warner's first draft of the official press release waxed nostalgic about the Centennial.

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[38] Demeter, "Advancing an Optimistic Technological Narrative in an Age of Skepticism," 94.
[39] Saul Daniels, "In Third Century America: A Look at the Conquest of Space," *Washington Post*, July 25, 1976.
[40] Herbert J. Rowe, "Letter to Exposition Exhibitors, May 25, 1976," *John Marsh Files 1974-1977,* Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology-Brochures and Photographs, Box 64, Gerald R. Ford Library; Gordon Harris, "Expo at Cape May be in Trouble," *Sentinel Star*, November 9, 1975.
[41] Rymsza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive*, 44.
[42] Historians and contemporaries noted other comparisons between the U.S. at 100 and 200 years of age, especially the economic turmoil, leadership scandals, and general upheaval of both periods. Both commemorations did also offer opportunities to combat decline and evoke national pride. Zaretsky, *No Direction Home,* 144; Lowenthal, "The Bicentennial Landscape: A Mirror Held Up to the Past," 264; Nugent, "The American People and the Centennial of 1876," 67.

> "I am reminded that the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876 inspired an explosion of progress which added greatly to the richness and quality of life in the past 100 years. New consumer goods gave thousands more fruitful employment. The technical inspiration led to a huge forward leap in medicine, health, housing, and communications. No one could foresee where we would be in 1976 but the strides in a hundred years were colossal. Who can see where we will be in the year 2076? It is well that we peer into the third century of our precious freedom."[43]

The parallel was clear: Americans left the Centennial inspired to improve the future, and 1976 America needed a good jolt of inspiration. Congressman Louis Frey (R-FL) put it more succinctly when he said the Canaveral Expo would "give the theme of progress for humanity a shot in the arm." Both statements were nixed from the final release, but the press picked up on the general sentiment, with the *Florida Today* noting that the Expo would echo the Centennial as "the only one of the nation's Bicentennial projects looking toward the future."[44] The secret to the Centennial's success, as planners imagined it in 1976, were the gadgets and machines that gave testament to the young nation's progress and reflected optimism and national pride.[45] NASA Administrator James Fletcher lauded the debut of the telephone, typewriter, and electric light; at the Expo dedication, Counsel to the President Philip Buchen listed similar inventions and declared the Corliss steam engine the enduring symbol for the entire Centennial celebration.[46] Marsh credited the Centennial with ushering in a great outward burst in technology, and thought a similar technological theme would benefit the Bicentennial planning.[47]

Thus, the Expo in Florida would show a similar array of present developments in science and technology, exhibiting progress since the Centennial to revitalize a sense of American

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[43] Louis Frey, "Proposed press release, August 1975," BEST-PC (1).
[44] John Warner, "Dictated Quote for Press Release, August 14, 1975," BEST-PC (1); Mike Lewis, "Ford Okays KSC Bicentennial Exposition," *Florida Today*, Cocoa, Florida, August 15, 1975. Frey also managed to note it would be "the first of its kind since the Philadelphia exposition of 1876." Editorial, "Third Century America," *Florida Today*, May 30, 1976.
[45] ARBA, *A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 1, 170-171.
[46] "Ford Lauds Cape Canaveral Expo," *News-Press*, Fort Meyers, Florida, February 10, 1976; Philip Buchen, "Remarks at Expo Dedication, June 14, 1976," *John Marsh Files 1974-1977,* Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology-Dedication, Box 64, Gerald R. Ford Library. Buchen said the Philadelphia fair allowed Americans to view the "artifacts of our first 100 years of progress."
[47] Hersey, "Wednesday: Politics, That's How It Works," *The New York Times*, April 20, 1975.

achievement. It would be a display of ever exponentializing forward motion, pointing the way to a third century that would "exceed by far even the momentous progress made in the first two hundred years of our history."[48] Planners envisioned another tribute to technology through a full timeline of past achievements, current capabilities, and future projections. In press releases and dedication speeches, they demonstrated and cemented comparisons to the Centennial and previous international fairs because they provided useful instruction for crafting content and shaping design, but also to signal to the public the form and purpose of this Bicentennial Exposition. Awe, wonder, and marvel would work their magic yet again to assure audiences that progress had not derailed despite the perceived decline of the present day.

A Scaled-Down Operation

Ultimately, a number of practical exigencies prevented "Expo '76" from fully coming to fruition. In a June 1975 report that preceded the presentation of Stiles' plan, Secretary of Commerce Rodgers Morton ruled out an international style exhibition for a number of logistical reasons. Expo '74 in Spokane had been officially sanctioned by the Bureau of International Expositions just two years earlier, which would prevent "Third Century America" from receiving this designation. Any kind of county fair would require a volume of construction that neither time nor monetary constraints could accommodate. Finally, Cape Canaveral was not ideal for an industrial trade-fair that would draw in customers for new technology or attract foreign attention. Morton determined that a broad scale, government and industry fair similar to a world's fair was simply infeasible. As the White House transferred formal operations to NASA, Lt. Gen. Durward (Pete) Crow, NASA's Bicentennial Project Manager, reiterated that only a scaled-down

[48] Buchen, "Remarks at Expo Dedication, June 14, 1976," BEST-D; Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Press Conference, February 9, 1976," *White House Press Releases*; Marrs, "Memorandum for the President, July 24, 1975," BEST-PP (2).

operation involving enlargement of NASA's current tourist facilities at the Kennedy Space Center's Visitors Information Center would be possible.[49]

Budgetary constraints remained an enduring difficulty. President Ford approved a memorandum that granted NASA $3 million up-front to fund immediate project activity, with the expectation that the remaining expenditures would be paid through admission ticket fees.[50] The funds themselves came from the Department of Commerce's Emergency Job Opportunities Program under the justification that the Cape was an economically depressed region.[51] Although the $3 million in startup had been approved, it had yet to be transferred by mid-September, leaving top NASA officials scrambling to clarify the ground rules surrounding the funds while the local press picked up on the delay.[52] Initial attendance projections ran as high as 2.6 million persons, but crowds didn't turn out as expected.[53] One month before the Expo's finale on Labor Day, officials had already prepared to settle for a total attendance of just over 600,000 visitors and a strictly break-even operation.[54] World's fairs were riskier and costlier enterprises than in the past, forcing planners to make difficult trade-offs between the a highly-desirable world's fair type of attraction and a fixed budget.[55]

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[49] Rogers Morton, "Report for John Marsh, June 6, 1975," BEST-PP (1); Pete Crow, "Discussion Resume for Cape Canaveral Technological Fair, July 1975," BEST-PP (1); Marrs, "Memorandum for the President, July 24, 1975," BEST-PP (2).
[50] Marrs, "Memorandum to Russ Rourke, July 24, 1975," BEST-PP (2); James Connor, "Memorandum to John Marsh and Ted Marrs, August 6, 1975," BEST-PP (2).
[51] Memphis Norman, "OMB Report on Exposition Status and Funding, September 15, 1975," BEST-PC (1); Milton Mitler, "Memorandum to Russ Rourke, September 23, 1975," BEST-PC (1).
[52] James Fletcher, "Letter to John Marsh, August 29, 1975," BEST-PC (1); Harris, "Expo at Cape May be in Trouble," *Sentinel Star*, November 9, 1975.
[53] "Ford Lauds Cape Canaveral Expo," *News-Press*, February 10, 1976; Gerald Ford, "Remarks for Briefing on U.S. Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology, February 9, 1976," *President's Speeches and Statements*, Box 23, Gerald R. Ford Library.
[54] Officials cited lack of national press, declined visits by prominent figures (including President Ford, the Queen of England, and the Pope) and families staying home for the Bicentennial as reasons contributing to lower-than-expected turnout. Glenn Singer, "First, Final Expo Run Ends in Two Weeks," *Florida Today*, August 25, 1976; "Space Center Tours Decline," *Sentinel Star*, August 10, 1976; Editorial, "Missing in Action," *Florida Today*, June 15, 1976; Ball, "Third Century America Hopes to 'Break Even,'" *Sentinel Star*, July 14, 1976.
[55] Zaretsky, *No Direction Home,* 184; Herbert J. Rowe, "Letter to Exposition Exhibitors, May 25, 1976," BEST-BP.

One trade off was that the past and present comparison disappeared from exhibit plans. Humanities agencies who would have provided this historical element were too preoccupied with existing Bicentennial commitments to loan artifacts or transfer exhibits, so planners realized early on they would have to make do with NASA's existing tourist facilities at the KSC and exhibits solicited from available federal agencies.[56] If they couldn't fully feature the past, however, what they could do successfully was exhibit the soon-to-be future. Marsh pitched the Expo to federal agencies as "a project that will focus less on our past and present technological achievements than on the promises and prospects for the next 100 years." Marsh also privately suggested to Fletcher that it could be appropriate to focus on a post-2,000's era that would highlight not just the Third Century, but the entire next millennia. The Expo would present where the country was headed through a distinct, sole focus on the future. "We are enthusiastic to show what this Nation may become in the next 100 years through science and technology," Fletcher proclaimed.[57]

Whether due to a lack of time and money, another reaction to the over-exposure of history in the Bicentennial, a perceived break from the past that made continuity too tenuous to be confidently placed on display, or a combination of all the above, the Expo did not become a world's fair. It did, however, strive to respond to the present in the ways other exhibitions had done by adopting, as much as possible, the underlying themes of progress, technology, and

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[56] Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Press Conference, February 9, 1976," *White House Press Releases*; Elizabeth Kegan, Librarian of Congress, "Letter to John Marsh, August 18, 1975," BEST-DAP (1); Robert Kingston, Deputy Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, "Letter to John Marsh, August 26, 1975," BEST-DAP (1). The Smithsonian sent a representative to an early meeting but was not featured in any final exhibits. S. Dillon Ripley, Secretary of the Smithsonian, "Letter to John Marsh, October 21, 1975," *John Marsh Files 1974-1977,* Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology-Department and Agency Participation (2), Box 64, Gerald R. Ford Library. The Air and Space Museum—the Smithsonian institution most likely to have relevant artifacts—was busy preparing for its reopening on the Mall on July 1, 1976. E. H. Ritchie, *Astronautics and Aeronautics, 1976: A Chronology*, National Aeronautics and Space Administration Headquarters, Washington DC, January 1, 1984, 137.

[57] The Expo was not pioneering in this regard; the New York fair in 1939, as described previously, had a distinct focus in on the future. Marsh, "Letters to Federal Agencies, August 14, 1975," BEST-DAP (1); Marsh, "Letter to James Fletcher, August 15, 1975," BEST-PC (1).

futurity. That planners would have difficulty executing a fair of massive proportions in 1976 is revealing in and of itself, as are the ways in which future uses of science and technology were presented in "Third Century America." Such displays are in some measure unique to their presents, and this Expo was no exception.

"Quality of Life": Technology Redirected

The ARBA's Final Report to the People openly acknowledged that Bicentennial America was "a different time," where it proved difficult to offer a rosy narrative of technological advancements and industrial growth without also acknowledging the consequences of these forces. This idea of progress—celebrated at world's fairs since London's Crystal Palace in 1851—had lost its power to inspire.

> "Bicentennial planners were faced with the task of designing a national observance for a nation in which natural resources were no longer deemed infinite and industrial expansion was no longer viewed as an unmixed blessing. The technology which had brought unprecedented material prosperity had also contributed heavily to the destruction of the environment and unleashed weapons capable of devastation previously unimaginable. Progress was now being measured by the quality of life."[58]

Nixon articulated this sentiment in a 1970 speech before Congress, where he expressed that "improving quality of life" could provide a fundamental theme for the anniversary of America's continuing revolution. Though it shared and perhaps relinquished a greater share of the stage to "Heritage '76" and "Festival USA," the category "Horizons '76" was meant to encourage these projects that focused on the future. "Horizons '76" harnessed civic duty and optimism by providing Americans with tangible activities they could participate in to address current concerns. By planting trees, constructing hospitals, and removing trash from their neighborhood streets, citizens could contribute to solving their community's urgent problems and "express their

[58] ARBA, *A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 1, 171. See also Alfred Heller, *World's Fairs and the End of* Progress, (Corte Madera, California: World's Fair, Inc., 1999), 17.

belief in the future in a concrete way."[59] Consistent with the anniversary occasion, the future was framed in terms of looking to the "Tricentennial" with a desire to tackle questions about the future of war, work, energy consumption, and overpopulation, among other issues.[60]

Any presentation of the future would need to answer such questions and address these problems. J.E. Vacha of the Cleveland's *The Plain Dealer* referenced Marsh's idea for a "sophisticated Disneyland" but dismissed it as out of touch and irrelevant. Instead, he asked readers to visualize President Ford using the Bicentennial to dedicate America to the following projects, naming inexpensive solar energy, a nonpolluting alternative to the internal combustion engine, and an "ethic" which would demonstrate that "a return to simpler pleasures is not incompatible with the American standard of living."[61] Improvements in quality of life would demonstrate progress, not awe and wonder for industrial growth; perhaps this was a time not for an explosion of modern conveniences, but instead the use of science to address environmental and energy-related problems.[62]

The Expo primarily reflected this definition of progress. Its final thematic organization was "A Better Life in Third Century America," where "a quality of life for all Americans in the future will be realized in part by the *application* of scientific discovery and invention."[63] It would be a focal point, a cornerstone to point toward the coming century by unveiling scientific

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[59] These problems included "citizen involvement, communications, community development, economic development, the environment, health, human values and understanding, learning, leisure, and transportation." American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, *Horizons '76 Ideabook,* United States Government Printing Office, 1976; ARBA, *A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 1, 172, 180-181, 187. The number of Bicentennial events and projects broken down by theme reflected this focus: Heritage '76, (12,808), Festival USA, (4,595), and Horizons '76 (7,940). ARBA, *A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 2, 260.
[60] Robert Hartje, "A Bicentennial Just Passed By," *History News* 31 no. 12 (December 1976), 249. Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 230.
[61] J.E. Vacha, "Sure Enough, Birthday Year is Here in *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*, December 20, 1975*," John Marsh Files 1974-1977*, Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology-Planning and Construction (2), Box 65, Gerald R. Ford Library.
[62] Expo '74 in Spokane, Washington (technically a Special Exposition, not a world's fair) was the first Expo with a distinct environmental theme and was also tied to an urban redevelopment project for Spokane's riverfront. "Expo '74—A World's Fair on the Environment," *The Science Teacher, National Science Teachers Association* 41 no. 5 (May 1974), 63; Jeremy Bryson, "Greening Urban Renewal: Expo '74, Urban Environmentalism and Green Space on the Spokane Riverfront, 1965-1974," *Journal of Urban History* 39 no. 3 (2012), 495-512.
[63] "Interagency Meeting Minutes, December 18, 1975," BEST-PC (2). Emphasis added.

developments that would change everyday life on earth and represent America's unique contributions to the progress of mankind.[64] In his official announcement of the Expo in February, 1976, President Ford called on Americans to develop a new outlook toward science and technology, powerful and ever-present forces constantly changing the course of individual lives. Visitors would leave the Expo with answers to vital questions such as how to meet future energy needs, how to develop new natural resources, where to find new frontiers in food production, how to benefit from space exploration, and how to improve health and environmental quality. The message of optimism was that science and technology were working today to improve quality of life in the future, especially if that meant solving some of the problems created by wielding these very forces.[65] This would be the role of technology in the Expo's third century America and how to ensure faith in a coming century of progress, and this framing was a direct response to the problems and tensions of the 1970s.

A Crisis of Authority

The federal government's retreat from the Bicentennial spotlight was a response to initial criticisms of a highly centralized commemoration, but the White House's announcement of an interagency science exposition in 1975 reasserted their role in the celebration. "Third Century America" was an opportunity for President Ford and his cabinet to legitimize their office and reinforce a prominent and enduring presence for government in the future. Government agency exhibits comprised the lion's share of the Expo, with NASA taking an obvious prominence through exhibits in the massive Vertical Assembly Building and at the KSC's visitors center in

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[64] Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Press Conference, February 9, 1976," *White House Press Releases*. At the press release, Warner cited a "restlessness" among the American people, who were searching for a permanent edifice to point to the third century: "I think this exhibit will be that focal point."

[65] Ford, "Remarks for Briefing on U.S. Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology, February 9, 1976," *President's Speeches and Statements*. Ford's speech at the Air and Space Museum dedication on July 1, 1976, also echoed turning technology toward environmental, health, and communications research and applications. Ritchie, *Astronautics and Aeronautics, 1976: A Chronology*, 137.

addition to the main fifteen geodesic domes that served as exhibit halls.[66] Planners, especially John Warner, saw "Third Century America" as the federal government's enduring stamp on the commemoration, being the only government-wide Bicentennial event.[67]

Defeat in Vietnam and the Watergate scandal triggered a crisis of morale, or at least a loss of confidence in American leadership and U.S. domination on the world stage. As public trust in the federal government waned, the Bicentennial forced a reckoning with this general self-perception of decline.[68] The Fall 1975 issue of *Foreign Policy* admitted that "our Bicentennial coincides with a by-now nearly universal awareness that our role in the world has changed."[69] A growing neoconservative coalition with strong beliefs in anti-communism, American intellectualism, and military culture lamented the "Vietnam Syndrome" that triggered weakness and uncertainty in the nation's self-confidence as a world leader.[70] One way to counter the period of post-Vietnam confusion and national self-doubt was to revive a resurgent strain of American exceptionalism and re-commit to fighting Communism through mobilizing the nation's economic, technological, and military engines.[71]

With a focus on science, space, and technology, the Expo was well-equipped to accommodate a display of military superiority and technological capacity that would work to

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[66] Exhibits contributed by 17 federal agencies, 10 industrial companies, and six colleges and universities were housed in geodesic domes adjacent to the VAB. ARBA, *A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 1, 272-273; Marrs, "Briefing on Status of Science and Technology Exhibition, February 9, 1976," BEST-PC (2).
[67] John Warner, "Dictated Quote for Press Release, August 14, 1975," BEST-PC (1); Overby, "Birthday Event Keys On Science," *News-Press*, January 11, 1976.
[68] ARBA, *A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 1, 4-7; Zaretsky, *No Direction Home,* 144, 172; Borstelmann, *The New 1970s*, 201-203.
[69] "Introduction to 'The Third Century,'" *Foreign Policy* no. 20 (Autumn 1975), 97.
[70] Borstelmann, *The New 1970s*, 27, 203. Zaretsky calls this strain of thought "Cold War nationalism" in opposition to the "diversity nationalism" which was reflected in the Bicentennial celebration. *No Direction Home,* 175-179. Cold War nationalists included Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld, the latter who was cc'd on multiple memos about the planning of the Expo in early April-August 1975. Marsh's office sent letters requesting assistance and support from multiple space-friendly and conservative lawmakers. Notable were Rep. Charles Mosher, Rep. Elford Cederberg, and Senator Barry Goldwater. Planners and members of Ford's cabinet Milton Mitler and Russell Rourke also had military and Department of Defense connections. Marsh, "Invitations to Presentation at Cape Canaveral, October 16, 1975," BEST-DAP (1); Marsh, "Letter to Chairmen and Senators, November 5, 1975," BEST-DAP (2).
[71] Zaretsky, *No Direction Home,* 177-179. Borstelmann, *The New 1970s*, 176-177, 193, 203.

reassert the nation as a Cold War power, regain national self-confidence, and recover global prestige. “Amidst all the bad news and bad press this nation has received in recent years, it deserves a pat on the back for all the extra-ordinary work it has done,” Stiles wrote in his original proposal. “A focus on America’s creativity in science and technology can provide a needed psychological lift at home and a needed better image abroad.”[72] This expression of confidence in the nation also reflected and responded to self-doubt and shaken confidence. Fitting with the mood of the times, the Expo would be at once rehabilitative and self-assuring.

As an expression of Cold War cultural and scientific victories, the Expo fit comfortably alongside U.S. international exhibitions (not just expositions) throughout the Cold War period that represented U.S. interests to the world and emphasized American ingenuity and technological progress.[73] The US Information Agency (USIA), the body in charge of US pavilions at international fairs, had similar exhibitions on display in various countries while the Expo happened at home, including “Technology for the American Home” in the Soviet Union, “Satellite Servants from the Sky” in Belgrade, and an oceanography exhibit at “Expo ‘75” in Okinawa. Though assistant director Harold Schneidman suggested these exhibits would fit the theme of the Expo, the USIA was barred by law from participating in domestic projects.[74] Like these other exhibits, however, “Third Century America” hoped to present itself and these themes to an international audience.[75]

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[72] “Preliminary Exposition Concept prepared by the office of John R. Stiles, July 10, 1975*,”* BEST-PP (2).
[73] Expo ’58 in Brussels showcased themes of economic recovery and cooperation, and the Kitchen Debate in 1959 famously displayed innovation and accessibility through domestic appliances. Demeter, “Advancing an Optimistic Technological Narrative in an Age of Skepticism,” 88-89.
[74] Harold Schneidman, “Letter to John Marsh, August 20, 1975,” BEST-DAP (1).
[75] “Draft Letter to Chairmen and Senators, October 1975,” BEST-DAP (1). The two million expected visitors would visit from “every state in the Union and most foreign countries.” Frey announced the Exposition early in August to allow the event to be included in the European Travel Packagers Convention, so clearly foreign tourists were a target audience. “Preliminary Exposition Concept prepared by the office of John R. Stiles, July 10, 1975*,”* BEST-PP (2).

Most tangibly tailored to the Cold War, the Department of Defense exhibit dome highlighted the many peacetime activities of the U.S. military, but also those designed for defense, featuring the Army's military satellite communications and new optical and electrical systems.[76] Many industrial exhibits showcased how private companies were employing "foresight and planning to keep pace with mankind's needs and desires for the future" through the latest defense-related technological developments.[77] General Dynamics Corporation showcased the F-16 fighter plane, a Trident submarine, and cruise missiles, while Lockheed and Grumman projected the future of aerospace technology.[78] The ten industries who exhibited at the Expo included burgeoning big businesses and military contractors like IBM, Lockheed, General Dynamics, and Thiokol.

While a scientific focus served to renew confidence in the U.S. government more broadly, the Expo was also framed as a joint project between federal agencies and private industry to allow "Third Century America" to embrace the growing private sector. At the Exposition dedication, Buchen described how all exhibits would "demonstrate how the tremendous capabilities of both government agencies and private companies point to the future."[79] Placing federal government agency exhibits adjacent to their industrial counterparts in exhibit domes legitimized the federal government as an important source of publicly funded science. Inviting industry to participate in this narrative of future advancement, however, also reflected the growing prominence of private enterprise and a military-industrial complex that

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[76] "Exposition Fact Sheet, Department of Defense, n.d.," BEST-BP.
[77] "Third Century America Official Souvenir Brochure, May 1976," BEST-BP; Dick Young, "Bicentennial Exposition Given Distinctive Symbol," *NASA News*, *Kennedy Space Center Press Release*, March 9, 1976, RG 7: NASA Administration and Organization; NASA Centers, NASA HQ Archives.
[78] Jeff Kunerth, "Six Firms Air Plans for Expo Exhibits," *Sentinel Star*, March 24, 1976.
[79] Buchen, "Remarks at Expo Dedication, June 14, 1976," BEST-D; Marrs and Mitler, "Draft Schedule Proposal for the President, May 25, 1976," BEST-D. The Third Century America Official Souvenir Brochure quoted Ford as saying exhibits would "show America what we have done and what we're going to do with our funds, the ingenuity of our scientists, and the drive and foresight of our private sector." (May 1976, BEST-BP)

outsourced technological research and development to the free market. Together, these exhibits conveyed U.S. strength, superiority, military, and technological dominance.

To some degree, the Expo used applications of science and technology to advance the narrative that the US economy, military, and technological industries were intact and poised to rebound in the very near future. Freedom and the free market would prevail, dispelling fears that the country was taking a step back from an ongoing cultural battle in the Cold War. The official theme, after all, was "The Third Century of Human Progress and Free Government."[80]

"What Will it Do for Me?"

Although these Cold War-centered future priorities are discernable, the Expo gave vision to a future that more clearly reflected the federal government's commitment to realizing progress not through displaying America as a global power, but through quality of life at home.[81] While political leaders may have been anxious to revive pride in the nation through a show of international superiority, "Third Century America" appealed to a broad public interest in realizing and using science and technology for their tangible improvements and problem-solving capacities.

To achieve this goal, the Expo first had to re-commit the federal government to advocating for publicly funded science initiatives. Congressman Frey expressed a concern that a focus on science and technology had been diminishing since President Johnson took control of the White House. He proudly proclaimed that Ford had promised to re-establish the office of Science and Technology, and that one of the Expo's purposes would be to "preach the value of

[80] ARBA, *A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 2, 272.
[81] McQuaid summarizes it nicely: "In the 1960s the US had looked outwards towards global leadership, Apollo was the high technology symbol of that primacy. In the 1970s, however, the nation was looking inwards, to issues like the environment, education and the quality of life at home. Space and national defense now had little appeal." Kim McQuaid, "Selling the Space Age: NASA and Earth's Environment, 1958-1990," *Environment and History* 12 no. 2 (May 2006): 137-138.

science and technology and its importance to the American people."[82] Lack of scientifically oriented programming for the upcoming Bicentennial seemed to demonstrate this decrease in public commitment to scientific projects. One *Science* contributor lamented that "for a nation built on science and technology. . . it is ironic that most Americans will see out 1976 knowing little more about American science than the usual lore about Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson." The response went on to criticize science-based federal agencies for lack of participation, suggesting that high-technology corporations were more likely to subsidize historical projects than demonstrate how technological innovations were shaping the future.[83]

As a U.S. government-sponsored-and-hosted exposition on government property, and under government management, The Expo was careful to distinguish between legitimate science and science-fiction.[84] Officials distanced their presentation of "real honest technology that is expected to be used" from Walt Disney World's new "fanciful" exhibits, even though for marketing purposes, Orlando was only a short 1-hour drive away. "It's not a fantasyland. It is a very practical look at what life is going to be like tomorrow, as opposed to a Buck Rogers' 'Here's what it could be like,'" clarified the deputy director of the KSC.[85] The American public would be inspired by their government's commitment to a realistic future that would bring tangible improvements in quality of life.

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[82] Ball, "Frey Says Exposition Puts KSC in Limelight," *Sentinel Star*, January 9, 1976. NASA's budget was cut in the 1970s along with all major science-based agencies. Many professional groups faced decline in popular confidence, including scientists and engineers. McQuaid "Selling the Space Age," 136.

[83] Holden, "The Bicentennial: Science Loses Out," 438-440. The critique also cited the "Nixon blight" and an overall climate of anti-intellectualism that hindered scientific Bicentennial programming. Total breakdown of projects and events in the Bicentennial by category reflected this as well. The final tally of 64,338 projects and events included only 792 categorized as "Science and Technology" compared to "History, General:" 17, 797. ARBA, *A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 2, 261.

[84] "Brochure for Industry Exhibitors, n.d.," uncatalogued items, United States Air Force Space and Missile Museum, Cape Canaveral, Florida. This pamphlet featured the Great Seal, with text that reads: "Sponsored by the United States Government."

[85] Douglas Monroe, "3rd Century Exhibit Featured at Space Center," *The News*, Paterson, New Jersey, June 30, 1976. Stiles also contrasted the Expo to Buck Rodgers' "glass and steel" future. "Preliminary Exposition Concept prepared by the office of John R. Stiles, July 10, 1975*,"* BEST-PP (2). Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Press Conference, February 9, 1976," *White House Press Releases*. The reporter was most likely referring to Disney World's Tomorrowland, where The Carousel of Progress, the Space Mountain roller coaster, and the WEDway PeopleMover were all added in 1975. "Walt Disney Productions Annual Report 1973, Part 1," Walt Disney Productions, 7.

Referencing the technology on display at the Centennial, Franklin Institute curator Joel Bloom said that, "In 1876, the public gawked at such wonders. Now they are more skeptical, and the attitude is, 'what will it do for me?'"[86] Attitudes toward science and technology appeared to be shifting, with a desire for understanding and explanation, going beyond mere astonishment to solving critical issues. The ARBA exhibit at "Third Century America," called "USA '76: The First 200 Years" captured this sentiment. "Technology has also given us something new, and something that did not exist in 1776: pollution of the air and the waters, the extinction of wildlife and the destruction of our natural environment. But attitudes change...technology is not being rolled back but redirected."[87] If technology had created many of mankind's problems, the federal government could mobilize its agencies—and public tax dollars—to employ them to fix the future.[88]

There was no shortage of problems to address, as agencies representing fields such as health, education, industry, communication, housing, and agriculture all participated in the Expo.[89] Environmental concerns took center stage: resource depletion and consumption, pollution, global warming, and dependence. One such pressing concern was food production, as the U.S. and world populations increased while available resources decreased.[90] The Department of Agriculture dedicated itself to making American agriculture the most efficient in the world by tackling problems of limited land area through plant genetics, land management, and food

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[86] Quoted in Holden, "The Bicentennial: Science Loses Out," 439.
[87] American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, *USA '76: The First Two Hundred Years: A Bicentennial Exhibit,* Indiana University Library, 1976, Google Books.
[88] As Ken Cady, one Titusville resident, succinctly expressed, "I'm glad they're doing it. I'm glad they're letting people out here to see what the taxpayers have been paying for." From Daniels, "In Third Century America," *Washington Post*, July 25, 1976: "The message from NASA, 16 other federal agencies and a conglomeration of defense contractors, is that America has spent her tax dollars well." Dee Gibson, "Officials Elated: 30,000 See Expo Opener," *Florida Today*, May 31, 1976.
[89] ARBA, *A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 2, 273; "Preview Third Century America Brochure, May 1976," BEST-BP.
[90] Paul R. Erlich, *The Population Bomb* (Ballantine Books: New York, 1968).

inspection.[91] Predictably, the Environmental Protection Agency, Energy Research and Development Agency, National Science Foundation, and Department of the Interior all addressed environmental and energy-related problems, comprehensively emphasizing mankind's better understanding and more efficient use of earth's resources.

Many of these programs relied on energy conservation, efficiency, and alternative energy sources to combat resource depletion.[92] The EPA exhibited under the theme of "Making it Better," or "how environmental errors of the past can be corrected and prevented from occurring in the future" through "sophisticated research equipment and technological innovation."[93] The ERDA prioritized energy conservation and nuclear reactor reliability, with continuing research into recovering oil from shale and research into solar, wind, and geothermal energy sources [Fig. 5]. The agency also featured applications and appliances like an electric car, a solar powered TV-set, and a solar-assisted air conditioning unit. The Department of the Interior similarly displayed under the theme of "Development, Utilization, and Conservation of our Natural Resources" on the current and future problems in the use of public lands [Fig. 6]. [94] Exploitation of the environment posed a direct threat to human survival, but innovation, foresight, and America's federal resources were mobilized to modernize human-ecological interactions and ensure immediate improvements.

Even Department of Defense military branch exhibits focused on civilian applications of research and development. A recurring theme across all branches was improvements in military satellite communications and their implications for broader communications technology.

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[91] "Exposition Fact Sheet, Department of Agriculture, n.d.," BEST-BP; "Exposition Fact Sheet, Department of Defense, n.d.," BEST-BP.
[92] Richard Atkinson, "Preliminary Plans for the National Science Foundation, November 18, 1975," BEST-DAP (2); Borstelmann, *The New 1970s,* 229-231, 237-238; "Bicentennial Exhibit," *Sentinel Star*, May 30, 1976.
[93] "Exposition Fact Sheet, Environmental Protection Agency, n.d.," BEST-BP.
[94] "Exposition Fact Sheet, Energy Research and Development Agency, n.d.," BEST-BP.

The Army exhibit presented the latest developments in food technology, including preservation, preparation, and food life extension. Their display also included applications of optical and electrical systems to everyday items like more accurate fire detectors, designed to keep Americans safe in their homes and offices. The Air Force complimented these efforts by pinpointing research into energy and materials conservation and techniques to reduce engine emissions, including a new, more efficient way of burning coal called "magno-hydro dynamics."[95] Finally, the Navy offered updates on the discovery of ocean resources and the development of safe, economical routings for air and sea transportation.[96]

Other peripheral social concerns such as urban sprawl, human health, and crime were approached from a similar scientific, rational perspective. Quality of life extended beyond resource abundance and fuel-efficient airplanes. Social and environmental concerns conflated in the Housing and Urban Development's exhibit, "America's New Neighborhoods," which envisioned how community planning, management information systems, and the "efficient use of scarce natural resources in crowded metropolitan settings" would revolutionize neighborhood life in urban areas. Wellness and well-being were addressed by the Department of Health, who showcased how technological advances in preventative medicine, diagnosis, and treatment would "enable the individual to enjoy better health and a longer life, more free from disabling illness and injury than ever before."[97] Exhibits like these assured Americans living in crowded cities or suffering from chronic health issues they would soon enjoy the privileges and applications of modern science in their daily lives. Science was also instrumental in law enforcement, as the

[95] BEST-BP; "Exposition Fact Sheet, Department of Defense, n.d.," BEST-BP.
[96] "Expo Spotlight on Department of Defense Dome," *Spaceport News*, Official Newspaper at the John F. Kennedy Space Center, vol 15, no. 12, June 11, 1976, *Spaceport News* Index, Kennedy Space Center Library.
[97] "Exposition Fact Sheet, Department of Housing and Urban Development, n.d.," BEST-BP; "Exposition Fact Sheet, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, n.d.," BEST-BP.

Treasury Department displayed new crime-fighting technologies like atomic absorption analysis, sensors, night vision/infrared radar, and gas chromatography to counter fraud.[98]

These exhibits combined forces to generate optimism for a future that would find Americans using cleaner energy sources, utilizing resources more efficiently, healthier, well-fed, and safer compared to the present day. Furthermore, the federal government could be trusted to employ science and technology to secure these improvements in their cities, neighborhoods, communities, and homes. The solution to human's problems lay in technological ingenuity and innovation, and the Expo went to great lengths to convince its audience that these developments were well under way or could be readily developed well in advance of the country's 300th birthday.

NASA's Identity Crisis

NASA's role in the Expo was split between committing use of science and technology to a celebration, reaffirmation, and anticipated continuation of space-age successes and prioritizing earthly quality of life, two agenda items in direct tension with one another for the young space agency. NASA was both better equipped and more motivated to demonstrate investment in a future that ensured the continuation of space missions than other federal agencies on display at the Expo.[99] A recent history of dazzling space endeavors gave NASA the ability to represent U.S. science and technology to the world through the lens of spaceflight and other extraterrestrial projects. The U.S. had not been shy at other international Cold War era world's fairs to draw upon artifacts and symbols like the Apollo 11 capsule, lunar landscapes, moon rocks, and heroic astronauts to claim superiority over the Soviet Union.[100] Senator Lori Wilson from Cocoa Beach,

[98] "Exposition Fact Sheet, Treasury Department, n.d.," BEST-BP.
[99] McQuaid, "Selling the Space Age: NASA and Earth's Environment," 130.
[100] The Russians showcased Sputnik at Brussels in '58, Expo '67 featured the US Pavilion Space Exhibit's "destination moon," and at Expo '70 in Osaka, the most visited attraction was the moon rock in the US Pavilion. Massidda, "The Cold War, a Cool Medium, and the Postmodern Death of World Expos," 187-189. Daniela Sheinin, "Kookie Thoughts: Imagining the United States

Florida wrote to John Marsh advocating for the space age to serve as the theme for the entire Bicentennial. In a visit to the KSC in January 1976, Rogers Morton likewise told a reporter that "The space program is a great national achievement and our Bicentennial is an opportunity to bring it to the American people."[101]

Hosting the Bicentennial Exposition at Cape Canaveral's Kennedy Space Center both relied upon and reaffirmed NASA as a prominent symbol of Cold War power and prestige. Since the first Apollo missions, NASA had provided the American public with a source of pride as a visibly funded national effort. At the forefront of scientific research and development, NASA served as a benchmark for national progress and economic vitality.[102] The symbolic power of Cape Canaveral's landscape was consistently invoked by officials, exposition planners, and proponents of "Third Century America." The Cape's major advantage was that it served as the site and birthplace of America's world-renowned space flight program, the country's "most dramatic scientific achievement."[103] The visual appeal of the mammoth Vertical Assembly Building, the "eighth wonder of the world" where the Apollo and Saturn V spacecraft were assembled for fifteen successful manned spaceflights—including six manned landings on the moon—poignantly captured the symbolism of NASA and spaceflight itself.[104] "Where better to

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Pavilion at Expo '76 (or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bubble)," *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 5 no. 1 (2013), 4-5.

[101] Lori Wilson, "Letter to John Marsh, April 28, 1975," *John Marsh Files 1974-1977*, BEST-PP (1); Jeff Kunerth, "Morton Takes Side Trip to Visit at KSC," *Sentinel Star*, January 8, 1976.

[102] Mark E. Byrnes, *Politics and Space Image Making by NASA* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 1994), 8-13; McQuaid, "Selling the Space Age," 135.

[103] "Preliminary Exposition Concept prepared by the office of John R. Stiles, July 10, 1975," BEST-PP (2); Marrs, "Memorandum for the President, July 24, 1975," BEST-PP (2); Marsh, "Letter to Chairmen and Senators, November 5, 1975," BEST-DAP (2).

[104] "Third Century America Official Souvenir Brochure, May 1976," BEST-PB; Eric Harris, "Vehicle Assembly Building Offers Impressive Sight," *Sentinel Star*, May 9, 1976.

launch the scientific and technical genius of America—the finest in the world—into the third century than at Cape Canaveral" remarked Warner.[105]

If enthusiasm for space was indicative of faith in a third century of progress, the Expo could claim undoubted success. Numerous exhibits and displays recreated the excitement and thrill of spaceflight, exploration, and discovery. Notable was a simulation of the Apollo 11 launch via liftoff of the Saturn V rocket viewable from the launch control room on four rear-projection screens [Fig. 7]. When the countdown reached ignition, visitors could "hear and feel the roar of the rocket engines." Morton surmised this would be the high point of the whole Expo.[106] The massive 365-foot Saturn V rocket would have been impossible for visitors to miss in real life as well, for it lay horizontally just south of the VAB, visible from both the west and main entrances, its engines dwarfing gawking onlookers [Fig. 8]. The Expo produced further evidence of America's crowning space achievement. "The thing that has impressed most of the countries of the world is the fact that we walked on the moon and what happened to all the moon rocks?" a reporter asked Fletcher in February, and the director was able to deliver with an actual moon rock to admire. National coverage of the Expo in the *Washington Post* under the headline, "Third Century America: A Look at the Conquest of Space," declared that while the Expo may have been a joint undertaking, the Space Center itself was the star of the show.[107]

Furthermore, NASA and the Kennedy Space Center took this opportunity to enshrine the nation's recent past in a new, 10,000 square-foot "Hall of History" exhibit added to the KSC's

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[105] Interestingly, this quote replaced his earlier remarks about the Centennial in the official press release alongside a similar sentiment from Frey about the remarkable scientific feats performed at Cape Canaveral. John Warner, "Dictated Quote for Press Release, August 14, 1975," BEST-PC (1); "Proposed press release, August 1975," BEST-PC (1).
[106] Ball, "Construction on Track For Science Exposition," *Sentinel Star,* May 2, 1976; Ball, "Bicentennial Expo on Schedule for May 30 Opening," *Sentinel Star*, May 23, 1976; Kunerth, "Morton Takes Side Trip to Visit at KSC," *Sentinel Star*, January 8, 1976.
[107] Daniels, "In Third Century America," *Washington Post*, July 25, 1976; Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Press Conference, February 9, 1976," *White House Press Releases*.

Visitors Information Center in honor of the Exposition. The Hall of History displayed replicas of the U.S. liquid fueled rocket, Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo spacecraft, and other memorabilia illustrating the nation's space history. On July 16, 1976 the Expo made sure to commemorate the 7th anniversary of the Apollo with a special ceremony.[108] Cementing these achievements as benchmarks in American history solidified the importance of a robust space program for continued national success and forward technological progress. Practically, space provided an exciting and thrilling medium through which to envision the future, appealing to tourists and local families on summer vacations. Local headlines like "Look into Tomorrow Today" and "Look into Your Future" lingered on NASA's space displays and activities because they were fun for children and adults alike, but also to recall the pride and sense of American achievement brought about through the history and symbolism of the space program. [109]

It was in NASA's best interest for this enthusiasm to translate into support for current and future space programs. Framing space as a new frontier expressed NASA's need and desire for space exploration to remain a national—and tax-funded—priority. Officials hoped visitors would see NASA as a working, thriving agency and witness the daily work taking place at the "vital Center of America's space age activities" with programs for the future well underway.[110] This included various satellite launches and shuttle modifications on older spacecraft, but especially the Viking Lander, set to reach Mars on July 4, 1976 as a nod to the Bicentennial. A full-scale operational model of the lander was on display in the VAB in a simulated landscape, showing visitors the rover's process of soil collection [Fig. 9]. As Viking I transmitted photos back to

[108] "200 Attend Unveiling of Information Center Plans," *Sentinel Star*, April 22, 1976; Singer, "3rd Century Under Way," *Florida Today*, May 30, 1976; Michael Moore, "Expo Preview Crowd Loves That Science," *Florida Today*, May 30, 1976.
[109] Ball, "Look Into Tomorrow Today," *Sentinel Star*, May 30, 1976; "Look Into Your Future," *News-Press*, June 4, 1976. There was a NASA "activity" room, the Spaceport of Fun, where visitors could try on astronaut helmets and sit on a lunar rover.
[110] Buchen, "Remarks at Expo Dedication, June 14, 1976," BEST-D; Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Press Conference, February 9, 1976," *White House Press Releases*.

earth, these were available for visitors to view, a visible presentation of the promise and possibility of Mars missions.[111]

NASA also used the Expo as an opportunity to promote the upcoming space shuttle missions, planned to begin scheduled launches in 1980. Models of the European Space Agency's Spacelab and the manned space shuttle promoted a future of reusable orbiters and conducting scientific procedures in space, drawing upon the enduring appeal of sending humans into space to explore the unknown.[112] Visitors could even catch a glimpse of preparations underway for the shuttle program in real time, including the 15,000-foot reentry runway near the VAB. Although President Ford never visited the Expo in person, NASA launch coordinator and Expo project manager Paul Donnelly hoped that if he came, he would dedicate this space shuttle runway.[113] The prominence and preeminence of space on display in "Third Century America" sent the message that for America, space and the future were inextricably linked.

Back Down to Earth

In the 1970s, however, NASA's future in space was less than certain. "What do you do with a space port when your space program nears a dormant stage for a while? You can bet the federal government pondered the same question before it came up with the current Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology," quipped the *News-Press*.[114] At the time of the Expo, NASA was suffering from a public affairs crisis in a lull of post-moon landing success. Not all Americans or their representatives believed the Cold War could be used to justify NASA's

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[111] Though planned to coincide with July 4, 1976, NASA's timing wasn't perfect: Viking I and Viking II actually touched down on Mars on July 20 and September 3, respectively. ARBA, *A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 2, 282; Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Press Conference, February 9, 1976," *White House Press Releases*; Ball, "Construction on Track For Science Exposition," *Sentinel Star*, May 2, 1976.
[112] Ball, "Bicentennial Expo on Schedule for May 30 Opening," *Sentinel Star*, May 23, 1976.
[113] Singer, "NASA Gearing Up for Manned Space Shuttle," *Florida Today*, October 31, 1975; Ball, "Crowds Still Flock to Space Center," *Sentinel Star*, April 25, 1976; "Expo Backers Hope for Ford," *Florida Today*, February 5, 1976.
[114] "Look Into Your Future," *News-Press*, June 4, 1976.

billion-dollar space budget while an energy crisis and inflation gripped the nation at home. A public opinion poll showed that between 1970 and 1975, a majority of respondents favored cutting funding for space exploration; NASA's astronaut corps were halved, and the aerospace industry as a whole experienced a 20% unemployment in the early '70's.[115] NASA's FY '77 budget request to Congress reflected an increased emphasis on aeronautics but a substantial reduction in jobs due to budget constraints.[116]

The Cocoa Beach region of Florida was also suffering from economic decline in 1975, and the city of Cape Canaveral had been cutting employee jobs while struggling to operate on a three-year budget deficit.[117] Spending $3 million government dollars on a space show required serious justification, and Warner was the first to suggest that tying the Exposition to economic recovery under the Commerce Department would provide a stream of revenue. Stiles reaffirmed that "Florida certainly needs the stimulus."[118] In September, an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) status report laid out a number of options for obtaining the $3 million but recommended that funding from the Department of Commerce's Emergency Job Opportunities Program would be most viable. The OMB noted a focus on "worthwhile projects," and with a 15.4% unemployment rate, Cape Canaveral was clearly qualified.[119] Economic recovery funding

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[115] McQuaid, "Selling the Space Age," 134-138; Cyrus C. M. Mody, "'A Competence Which Should be Used': NASA, Social Movements, and Social Problems in the 1970s" in *NASA and the Long Civil Rights Movement,* ed. Brian C. Odom and Stephen P. Waring (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2019), 183-188. President Johnson capped NASA's budget as early as 1964, and President Nixon adopted a largely instrumental view of the agency, choosing to assess it in terms of its diplomatic and domestic applications.

[116] The OMB reductions were expected to cause delayed orbiter missions, 500 personnel layoffs from NASA's civil service corps and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and the loss of 3-4,000 contractor jobs. F. E. Jarrett, *Chronology of KSC and KSC Related Events for 1976*, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA History Program Office, November 1, 1977, NASA Technical Reports Server. In *The New York Times* article, Ford himself commented that "They've [Cape Canaveral] got a lot of unused space down there since the cutbacks." Hersey, "Wednesday: Politics, That's How It Works," *The New York Times*, April 20, 1975.

[117] Harris, "Cape Canaveral Meets Tonight on $ Squeeze," *Sentinel Star*, May 4, 1976; Borstelmann, *The New 1970s,* 123, 135-137.

[118] Stiles, "Memorandum to President Ford, April 28, 1975," BEST-PP (1).

[119] This was advantageous for a number of other reasons: the money was already appropriated, so there would be no need to seek approval from Congress (who would likely delay or veto the request) and it would allow NASA to avoid reprogramming their own budget. NASA applied for the funds later that month. Norman, "OMB Report on Exposition Status and Funding, September 15, 1975," BEST-PC (1); Mitler, "Memorandum to Russ Rourke, September 23, 1975," BEST-PC (1).

also served to legitimize the Exposition, especially in inducing lawmakers to support its operation.[120]

Although planners were content to discuss the Expo without elaborating on its expenditures or the details of economic recovery, their decision was thoroughly scrutinized at the White House press conference in February 1976. When NASA Director Fletcher mentioned the cost and source of the $3 million, reporters challenged him to articulate exactly how the Exposition would help solve the area's long-term problems. Under a line of tough questioning, Fletcher revealed that Cocoa Beach was a "depressed area", and although the total cost of the Expo would be $7 to $8 million, the $3 million would be almost completely dedicated to initial construction and assembly of the temporary exhibits. Reporters weren't placated. "Are you telling us you applied for economic development funds on the grounds of Cocoa Beach being a high unemployment area and are using this money to build a park, a fair, is that what you're telling us? It is a three-month shot in the arm, is basically what it is." Fletcher could only respond that about 500 people would be employed throughout the three-month exposition period. Officials would later claim they never planned to recover the initial $3 million.[121]

Planners may have possessed a high-minded vision for an exposition that would elicit pride in the future, but Brevard County locals who called the region home quickly seized upon the Expo for these immediate economic advantages, namely jobs and an influx of tourism.[122] NASA's own TWA Services Inc., designated with management of KSC tourist operations, was awarded a one-million-dollar contract from the KSC—part of NASA's federal funds—to oversee

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[120] Marsh, "Letter to Chairmen and Senators, November 5, 1975," BEST-DAP (2).
[121] Legitimately, Marsh's office had clarified that the $3 million did not need to be recovered, but initial visitor projections would have allowed NASA to pay it back in full. Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Press Conference, February 9, 1976," *White House Press Releases*. KSC Director Lee Scherer and John Warner were also present at the press conference, although Fletcher responded to most questions. Ball, "Expo Visitors Total 500,000," *Sentinel Star*, August 24, 1976.
[122] Editorial, "Morton's Criticisms Odd," *Florida Today*, January 11, 1976; Editorial, "Third Century America," *Florida Today*, May 30, 1976; "Ford Lauds Cape Canaveral Expo," *News-Press*, February 10, 1976.

the Center's construction programs in preparation for the Expo and award sub-contracts to local firms.[123] Officials pitched Florida as a "mecca for millions" to industrial exhibitors and locals, confident that the KSC's track record of success and proximity to other central Florida attractions would lead families to spend at least one night in a local hotel or campsite.[124] Above all, the Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology would generate activity at the space center and remind the nation that it remained the locus of America's scientific and technological minds. National pride, local pride, and a need for this recognition conflated in this local editorial: "Let's help show the rest of the nation that interest in and appreciation of our nation's technological genius did not come to an abrupt halt with the last manned moon mission. Attend the bicentennial exposition—it's YOUR show."[125]

Even once national focus and attention turned to Cape Canaveral, NASA had to move beyond a showcase of space to stay relevant to 1976 America. The June issue of the KSC publication *Spaceport News* featured a two-page spread on the Expo's opening, though an unabashed endorsement of the program's future in space, also demonstrated NASA branching in different directions. The article "KSC Hosts Conference," described a two-day conference on technology utilization attended by NASA and contractor representatives "directing their efforts toward putting space-developed technology to work in everyday life." A "Spinoffs from Space" column outlined how NASA technology designed to detect micro-organisms on manned

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[123] A. H. Lavender, "TWA Services Awarded Bicentennial Exposition Contract," *NASA News*, *Kennedy Space Center Press Release*, March 25, 1976; Lavender, "TWA Services Contract Modified for Exposition Operation," *NASA News*, May 12, 1976; "Brevard Firm Gets Pact," *Sentinel Star*, November 18, 1975; "Titusville Firm Gets KSC Contract," *Sentinel Star*, January 13, 1976; "Local Firms Receive Space Center Pacts," *Sentinel Star*, January 23, 1976; "Whitey's Cools Domes," *Florida Today*, January 30, 1976; "3 Expo Site Contracts Awarded," *Sentinel Star*, March 18, 1976.

[124] "Brochure for Industry Exhibitors, n.d.," uncatalogued items, United States Air Force Space and Missile Museum; Blanton McBride, "Ford Taps Cape as Exposition Center Site," *Brevard Sentinel*, August 15, 1975; Lewis, "Ford Okays KSC Bicentennial Exposition," *Florida Today*, August 15, 1975; Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Press Conference, February 9, 1976," *White House Press Releases*; Ball, "Third Century America Hopes to 'Break Even,'" *Sentinel Star*, July 14, 1976; Marrs, "Memorandum for the President, July 24, 1975," BEST-PP (2); "Exposition Fact Sheet, n.d.," BEST-BP.

[125] Singer, "KSC's Display to Aid Tourism," *Florida Today*, October 29, 1975; "Displays Highlight Symposium," *Sentinel Star*, April 11, 1976; Singer, "From Dirt and Trenches, KSC Expo Shaping Up," *Florida Today*, April 21, 1976; Editorial, "Expo Deserves County Support," *Sentinel Star*, May 2, 1976.

spacecraft could be used to identify bacteria in treated city water, while "Power From Space Discussed" detailed the promise of the Satellite Power System under study by the ERDA and NASA's Office of Energy Programs: Energy Technology Applications Division.[126] Set on securing their future existence, NASA's program goals necessitated reevaluation and realignment toward earthly concerns and quality of life.

These concessions, in agreement with "Third Century America's" theme and similar to exhibits from federal agencies, were visible throughout the Expo. While visitors gravitated towards re-enacted rocket launches and moon rock displays, NASA's leading role in the Expo also legitimized the agency's existence by showcasing civilian applications of aerospace technology that responded to public concern about these earthly issues.[127] Even Frey, a vocal proponent of space programs, expressed, "I get tired of hearing that the only thing that has come out of the program have been lunar rocks."[128] Though a powerful symbol of human technological ingenuity, America faced more pressing earthly problems like clean water, food production, poverty, and environmental pollution.[129] New support for the EPA and the ERDA created competition for NASA's allocated funds, as the need for NASA's deep space exploration missions came under increased scrutiny. After all, part of NASA's mission was not just to create

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[126] *Spaceport News*, vol 15, no. 12, June 11, 1976. NASA's *Spinoff 1976: A Bicentennial Report,* described the numerous transfers of aerospace technology to non-aerospace use and the success of NASA's technology utilization program. N. P. Ruzic, National Aeronautics and Space Administration Headquarters, Washington DC, January 1, 1976, NASA Technical Reports Server. Deputy Administrator Low gave a speech at the Utah Air Force's Bicentennial program where he emphasized similar "third century breakthroughs" like the Satellite Power System, the cleanup of earth's environment, and "communications applications of all kinds." Ritchie, *Astronautics and Aeronautics, 1976: A Chronology*, 80.
[127] Borstelmann, *The New 1970s*, 231-238.
[128] Ball, "Frey Says Exposition Puts KSC in Limelight," *Sentinel Star*, January 9, 1976. Even the *Apollo 8* lunar mission in 1968 captured the famous "Earthrise" photo, which underscored the vulnerability and fragility of man's only home: Earth. Ibid., 239.
[129] The "big issues" of the 70's revolved around earth and the environment, not outer space. During the decade, unemployment reached 12%, the price of gasoline quadrupled, and inflation peaked at 20% per year. McQuaid, "Selling the Space Age," 152. Critiques of focusing on space at the expense of domestic issues, however, been building since the 1960s. See James Reston, "When Carpenter Got Back He Asked for Water," May 27, 1962 and "Something to Muse About on a Summer's Day," August 12, 1962 in *The New York Times.*

space vehicles or bolster military and defense-related projects, but to maximize use of space projects for peaceful and scientific purposes.[130]

The Exposition therefore presented NASA as an active research and development agency deserving of public dollars and committed to solving worldly problems of the 1970s, and the opening of the Expo set the stage for this representation. Instead of a normal ribbon-cutting ceremony with scissors, several ultrasonic transmitters were used to detonate small explosives attached to the ribbon. Called SCAN (Silent Communications Alarm Network), this spinoff from aerospace ultrasound research was used in hospitals, schools, and correctional facilities to activate emergency alarm systems.[131] NASA opened the Expo with an example of their commitment to technology utilization at home on earth. Director Fletcher put this into words at the August announcement of "Third Century America:"

> "We are not interested in science and technology purely as a material force. We are interested in science and technology as a spiritual inspiration to the improved quality of life on Earth. NASA came into being as an answer to the challenge of space. We now move forward to the application of what we have learned to the enrichment of life on Earth. In this exposition it is hoped to give the American public a vision of a wholesome and happy future."[132]

Earthly applications of space technology were featured in multiple exhibits. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's dome—under the theme "Freedom from Dependence"—promoted NASA's contributions to the bio-medical field, including research into cancer treatment, hypertension, and the role of communication satellites in medicine and health care. NASA's own exhibit featured communication satellites capable of transmitting Earth resources

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[130] The Department of Energy was created in 1976, and as other agencies responded to the energy crisis, NASA only looked more out of touch and lost the opportunity to snag federal dollars. Ford said that the ERDA would even consider Cape Canaveral as a site for their new solar research facility. McQuaid, "Selling the Space Age,"129, 134-138, 143, 152; Mody, "'A Competence Which Should be Used,'" 185-188; Helen Thomas, "It Helps to Be Incumbent," *Fort Lauderdale News*, March 8, 1976.
[131] "Exposition Opens With A Bang," *Spaceport News*, vol 15, no. 12, June 11, 1976. The Air and Space Museum opened with similar showmanship, though this time with a focus on space, a telling distinction between these two space-oriented and future focused Bicentennial events. On cue from a signal transmitted from the Viking I spacecraft orbiting Mars, a metal arm was activated to cut a ribbon to open the building. Ritchie, *Astronautics and Aeronautics, 1976: A Chronology*, 137.
[132] Louis Frey, "Proposed press release, August 1975," BEST-PC (1).

data, like in their landmark LANDSAT program, through photographs and trans-oceanic television signals. Even more tangibly, research programs like hypersonic design and airplane fuel conservation were touted for their contributions to creating safer and more economical commercial air flights.[133] As demonstrated by numerous other agencies' exhibits, the Expo encouraged Americans to think about environmental problems, which included NASA's responsibility for the earth. While space missions deserved to be celebrated, littering at the Expo itself was a reminder that though man had landed on the moon, he had yet to create a disposable can.[134] Concern for the environment called for scientific and technological innovation to focus on the next 100 years of life on earth, not extraterrestrial adventures and deep-space exploration.

In a similar vein, even while portraying Cape Canaveral as a testament to the might of man-made inventions, machines, and aerospace technologies, officials also emphasized its relationship to the natural environment. In his original proposal, Stiles thought the Cape could provide a special vision for the future, specifically a "human-scale back-to-nature vision...technology amidst trees and wildlife, American technology facilitating a return to nature" [Fig. 10].[135] In 1968, this landscape was formally established as the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. The Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service created a six-mile auto tour as their contribution to the Expo, officially named Black Point Wildlife Drive.[136] A display of scientific and technological endeavors in the surrounding natural environment of a wildlife refuge conveyed the message that humans could successfully coexist

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[133] "Exposition Fact Sheet, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, n.d.," BEST-BP; "Exposition Fact Sheet, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, n.d.," BEST-BP; McQuaid, "Selling the Space Age," 143.
[134] Gordon Williamson, Photograph: "No Respect," *Sentinel Star*, July 13, 1976. Another Williamson photo "Closeup Look" described the EPA's "Futurespect" project that focused on calling attention to pollution: *Sentinel Star*, July 31, 1976.
[135] "Preliminary Exposition Concept prepared by the office of John R. Stiles, July 10, 1975," BEST-PP (2); Marsh, "Letter to Chairmen and Senators, November 5, 1975," BEST-DAP (2).
[136] Ball, "Crowds Still Flock to Space Center," *Sentinel Star*, April 25, 1976; Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Press Conference, February 9, 1976," *White House Press Releases*; *Spaceport News*, vol 15, no. 12, June 11, 1976.

with the environment; embracing technology and preserving nature need not be mutually exclusive. Innovative scientific and technological developments could prevent the abuse and extraction of earth's environment by regulating consumption, identifying new resources, and potentially restoring a level of pristine wilderness to the wild.

Also integral to this design were the fifteen dome structures that housed the Expo's technological displays. "The use of geodesic domes as exhibit halls can provide not only speed and economy," Stiles suggested, "but a vivid symbol of the unique utility and ingenuity of American technology" [Fig. 11]. This particular structure was vaulted to global visibility when Buckminster Fuller's giant geodesic dome— "Bucky's Bubble"—shone as the centerpiece and shape of the U.S. Pavilion at Expo '67 in Montreal. The dome represented both the modern artistic aesthetic of the entire pavilion and offered an example of, as Stiles articulated, a move toward simplicity and efficiency in architectural design.[137] Beyond architectural marvel, Fuller's design was originally tapped as a blueprint for cheap, easy-install single-family homes and structures so lightweight they could be delivered by air. The physics of the dome allow it to do "more with less," a model for efficient use of resources and energy.[138] Stiles' decision to enclose exhibits within these modern, futuristic geodesic domes, which symbolized a future of conservation and efficiency, further underscored the advantageous relationship between technology and the natural environment, science and earth.

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[137] "Preliminary Exposition Concept prepared by the office of John R. Stiles, July 10, 1975*,"* BEST-PP (2). The novel design caught on and proliferated at Expo '70 in Osaka; both the French and Japanese pavilions incorporated geodesic domes in their pavilions. Sheinin, "Kookie Thoughts: Imagining the United States Pavilion at Expo '76," 2; Massidda, "The Cold War, a Cool Medium, and the Postmodern Death of World Expos," 186.

[138] "Geodesic Domes," About Fuller: Buckminster Fuller Institute, https://www.bfi.org/about-fuller/big-ideas/geodesic-domes. Another famous geodesic dome was constructed in Orlando's Disney World in 1982. "Spaceship Earth," the name of this Epcot centerpiece, was also a phrase popularized by Fuller in his book "Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth," reflecting the view that Earth is like a spaceship with limited resources that must be rationed and shared. "We can make all of humanity successful through science's world-engulfing industrial evolution provided that we are not so foolish to exhaust...the orderly energy savings of billions of years' energy conservation aboard our Spaceship Earth." Fuller, R. Buckminster. *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969.

NASA leadership was not entirely on board with compromising future moon landings, Mars missions, and space colonies to accommodate greater demands for earthly applications of space technology, even as the Viking and subsequent Voyager ventures to Jupiter failed to generate public excitement as expected.[139] Nevertheless, NASA's 1976 satellite launch schedule of twenty satellites included only one voyaging into deep space, while the remainder had weather-watching and communications purposes—evidencing a necessary if unwanted compromise between esoteric space exploration and a more civilian-application-friendly agenda.[140] Although plans never came to fruition, members of Ford's cabinet who planned the Expo suggested one of the communications or earth sensing satellites launched in 1976 be dedicated as a "Bicentennial satellite." Launched in conjunction with the Canaveral exhibit, the satellite's blinking would be known as "Freedom's Light," a fitting way to transfer NASA's symbolic space power over from manned spaceflights to the ultimate utility: an earth-serving satellite.[141]

Conclusion: The Bicentennial and the Tricentennial

The broader Bicentennial celebration and the Exposition on Science and Technology took opposite strategies to tackle the same central challenge: to encourage the public to take pride in their American identity at a time where the nation's exceptionalism seemed particularly uncertain. While the rest of Bicentennial aimed to evoke this national pride through employing

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[139] McQuaid surmises that NASA's leadership only ever entertained environmentalism as a fad, and that the '70s was the closest the agency came to embracing the environmental movement. In '73, Fletcher and deputy administrator George Low showed a willingness to advocate for earthly programs applications and considered a proposal for a NASA program called "the Study of Earth and it's Environment." After Low's departure in mid-1976, however, environmentalism fell off of the agenda. "Selling the Space Age," 128-129, 151-152.

[140] McQuaid, "Selling the Space Age," 146-152; Jonathan Eberhart, "A New Year in Space," *Science News* 109 no. 1 (Jan. 3, 1976): 7. In a speech before the Conference on Satellite Communication and Public Service, Fletcher said that America's Bicentennial year might be called the "Year of the Communications Satellites." Ritchie, *Astronautics and Aeronautics, 1976: A Chronology*, 292.

[141] Marsh, "Memorandum to Ted Marrs, August 19, 1975," BEST-PC (1); Marrs, "Note to John Marsh, August 26, 1975," BEST-PC (1); Marsh, "Memorandum to Ted Marrs, September 9, 1975," BEST-PC (1).

national heritage and a portraying a patriotic past, "Third Century America" used the promise of the future, but the end goal for both was to inspire. Both strategies are in some measure escapist, overcompensating for dissatisfaction with a less-than-hopeful present. To remedy this, the Bicentennial sought to reestablish continuity between past, present and future.[142]

Regardless of what precise purposes science and technology would be employed for in the future, the Expo—simply by featuring the future in the first place—reassured visitors that the coming century would be an extension of past, if not present, progress. The founding values of freedom and democracy had ensured past successes and would provide the cornerstone for the future. In 1963, in a speech before Congress, John Marsh called upon the Bicentennial to be a "renaissance of the concepts and ideas of the American Revolution and the application of the same to the problems of a changing world." President Ford's speeches at the Freedom Train certification and other patriotic landmarks expressed a similar confidence that through championing cherished values, Americans would rise to meet the challenges of the future despite current fears about national decline.[143] At the Expo, scientific and technological endeavors symbolically embodied other values and traits central to the American character, namely ingenuity, resourcefulness, creativity, and frontier expansionism.

Multiple individuals echoed these themes in their speech for "Third Century America's" dedication ceremony on Flag Day, June 14, 1976, against the backdrop of the 500-foot VAB emblazoned with the Bicentennial symbol and the largest American flag ever painted.[144] Philip Buchen and NASA Director Fletcher both made direct connections to the Revolutionary past.

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[142] Bodnar, *Remaking America,* 230; Rymsza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive*, 40; Ryan, "Re-enacting Independence through Nostalgia," 10. For an exploration of "nostalgia for the future," see Janelle Lynn Wilson, "Here and Now, There and Then: Nostalgia as a Time and Space Phenomenon," *Symbolic Interaction* 38 no. 4 (November 2015), 489-490.
[143] This excerpt from Marsh's speech is quoted in Rymsza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive*, 41. The theme for Ford's speeches at the Air and Space Museum, the National Archives, Independence Hall, and Monticello was "American Achievements, American Tasks." Ryan, "Re-enacting Independence through Nostalgia," 8-10.
[144] "Biggest Ever," *Sentinel Star*, April 23, 1976.

Buchen promised the Expo would renew the intent and spirit of the nation in 1776—especially a commitment to scientific and technological progress—with greater fulfillment than ever before. Fletcher compared the success of the Expo on a fixed timetable and limited budget to the resourcefulness and tenacity of a group of "ragtag soldiers" who challenged the Crown: "The success of our country 200 years ago, as well as the one that we are here to dedicate today, are examples of what has made America great."[145]

President Ford, in his speech via telephone, declared Kennedy Space Center as historic ground and a part of America's national heritage, drawing a similar connection between past and future. "This massive combined effort...represents the same spirit of cooperation and mutual support that enabled Americans to venture from Cape Canaveral to the moon and back." The story of space exploration, one of courage, faith, and imagination, was "another chapter in America's history of reaching out to the unknown" that began with the colonists and would continue to be written through future voyages.[146] Finally, Chief of the Astronaut Office John Young expressed amazement at the speed and promise of science and technology that had transformed the nation and the Florida countryside. In his own lifetime, Cape Canaveral had gone from "all palmettos and mosquitos" to the place where Americans traveled to the moon and flew spacecraft with human beings, so who could begin to predict what marvels US science and technology would bring in the future? [147] The Expo and its many exhibits were a demonstration

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[145] Buchen, "Remarks at Expo Dedication, June 14, 1976," BEST-D; Fletcher, *Draft Remarks for Fletcher for the Formal Dedication of Third Century America, the Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology at Kennedy Space Center*, June 14, 1976, RG 7: NASA Administration and Organization; James C. Fletcher Collection, NASA HQ Archives.
[146] Gerald Ford, "Speech at Third Century America Dedication, June 14, 1976," BEST-D. Despite appearing on Ford's schedule, and a special request from Fletcher, Ford never visited the Expo. Instead, he phoned in to the dedication ceremony to give his opening remarks. Fletcher, "Letter to President Ford, June 1, 1976," BEST-D.
[147] Singer "President Calls KSC Exposition Massive Effort," *Florida Today*, June 15, 1976.

of the American spirit, of future improvements, and forward progress, and—being a Bicentennial event—depicted this future as an extension of an inspiring past [Fig. 12]. [148]

The closing ceremonies of "Third Century America" included the dedication of a time capsule containing items representing current lifestyles and examples of 1976 technology [Fig. 13]. The 102-pound, stainless steel capsule was not buried, but instead sealed in a glass case on permanent display in the KSC VIC, with instructions to be opened on July 4, 2076. An exhibit in the Brevard Museum of History and Natural Science displays ephemera from the Expo and other items reflective of those in the time capsule, including remarks from President Ford and letters from Brevard County school children to third century Americans.[149] One letter on display from Joel Bloom, penned on June 11, 1976, encapsulates the two strains of future priorities this paper has attempted to tease out of the Expo.

"Dear America,

> "Our country is one of the major powers of the world, hopefully it will continue to grow. I see a bright spot in the future for the space industry. Maybe we might have landed people on different planets! This country should improve from the state it is in right now. I expect some of the prices of food and other objects will go down. I think the 21st century will be a very good one."[150]

Young Mr. Bloom's ideal future was the wonder of space, the global strength of America, and lower food prices all at once, a reminder that while the Expo was in the business of projecting present priories onto the future, it had to contend with the uncertainty inherent in future imaginings by covering all bases. "Third Century America" aimed to counter present doubts and future questions with a message of optimism and the assurance that the nation was actively engaged in shaping its future course. "A commemoration usually reveals as much about the

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[148] "Bicentennial Exhibit," *Sentinel Star*, May 30, 1976.
[149] Exhibit Label, '*3rd Century America' Time Capsule Exhibit*, Brevard Museum of History and Natural Science, Cocoa, Florida.
[150] Joel Bloom, Letter dated June 11, 1976, '*3rd Century America' Time Capsule Exhibit*, Brevard Museum of History and Natural Science, Cocoa, Florida.

present as it does about the past. The American Revolution Bicentennial was no exception," the ARBA final report noted self-consciously. "America took a good look at itself and saw a nation old enough to have a past to remember, but young enough to have a future to mold."[151]

If "Third Century America" does indeed serve as a looking glass, what can be discerned about Bicentennial America? What does this demonstration of the uses and purposes of science and technology reveal about national priorities and the prospect of progress in 1976? We can see a nation skeptical of forward progress, relying on scientific innovation to signify progress even as attitudes toward these forces were undergoing redefinition. The science and technology that previously launched lunar missions and secured global prestige was now directed toward improving "quality of life" at home, and in the Expo's displays, White House leadership and federal government agencies weighed these future priorities. Defense and industry exhibits reasserted the US as a technological powerhouse fueled by the military-industrial complex, while numerous other agencies demonstrated the government's ability to solve earthly, material problems. A microcosm of these broader tensions, NASA walked a similar tightrope at the Expo, reveling in the glory of its Cold War popularity, even as that prominence waned, while attempting also to accommodate a concern for the Earth that loomed larger in American consciousness. For a nation in flux, the Expo offered a bridge to the future by encouraging Americans to have faith in the soon-to-come, where they would be free from dependency, enjoy guaranteed prosperity, and revel in cultural and technological superiority.

[151] ARBA, *A Final Report to the People,* Vol. 1, 139, 172.

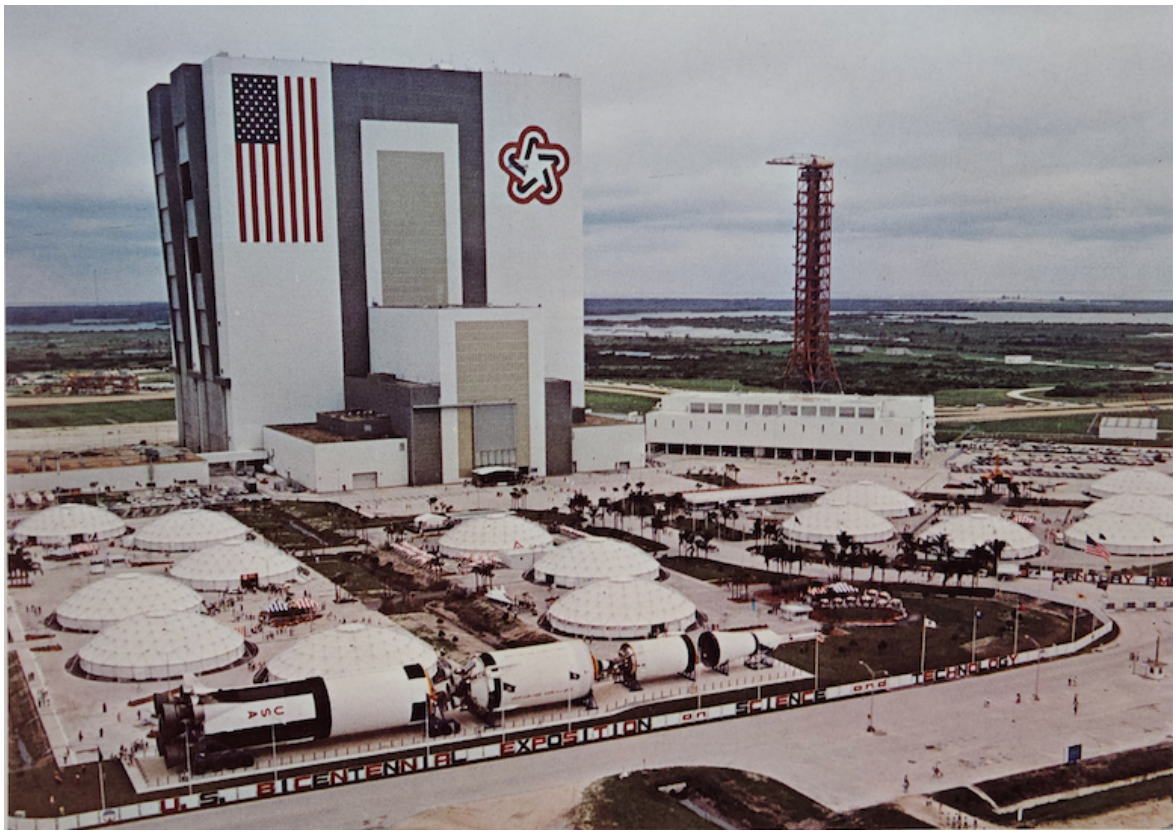


Fig.1. Aerial view of "Third Century America" at the Kennedy Space Center, comprised of the mammoth Vertical Assembly Building, the Saturn V rocket, and individual geodesic domes that served as exhibit spaces.[152]

Fig. 2. The symbol for "Third Century America," featuring a geodesic dome and an individual embracing the future.[153]

[152] "Third Century America Official Souvenir Brochure, May 1976," uncatalogued items, United States Air Force Space and Missile Museum, Cape Canaveral Florida, Courtesy of Roger McCormick.
[153] "Third Century America Official Certificate of Attendance, May 1976," uncatalogued items, United States Air Force Space and Missile Museum, Cape Canaveral Florida, Courtesy of Roger McCormick.

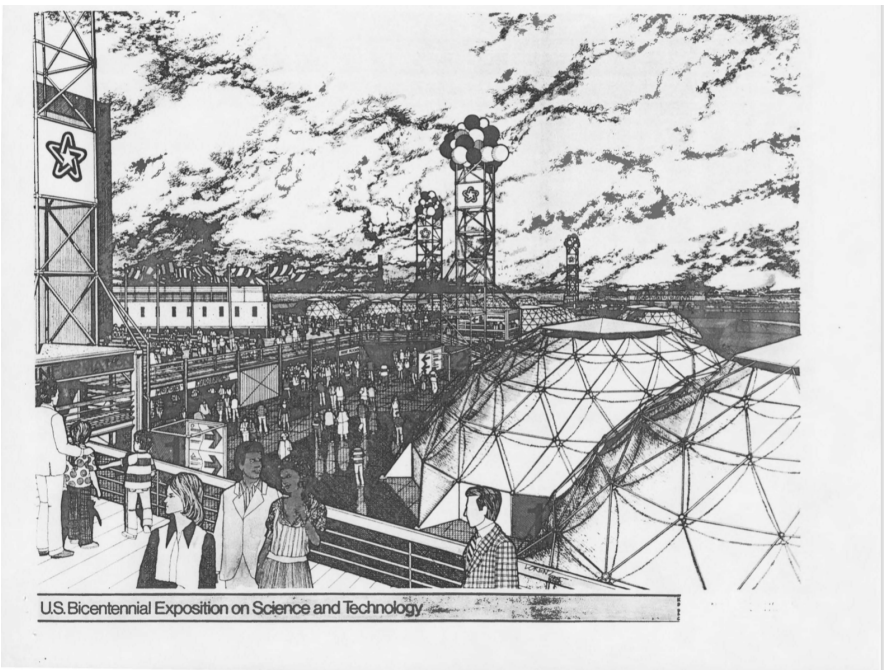


Fig. 3. (Left) Artist's sketch of "Third Century America" as a world's fair or trade-fair-style event, with elevated boardwalks, entrance flags, and theme towers with the official Bicentennial logo.[154]

Fig. 4. (Right) Rendering of the VAB with "Expo '76" depicted on two large vertical banners.[155]

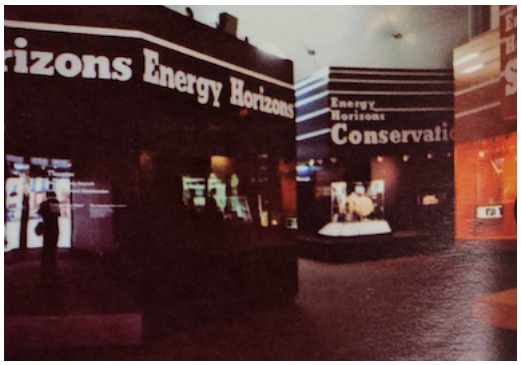


Fig. 5. The ERDA's dome, featuring exhibits on "Energy Horizons" and "Conservation." [156]

Fig. 6. A graphic on recycling, displayed in the Department of the Interior's dome.[157]

[154] "Sketch of the U.S. Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology, n.d.," BEST-BP.
[155] Harris, "Expo at Cape May be in Trouble," *Sentinel Star*, November 9, 1975.
[156] "Third Century America Official Souvenir Brochure, May 1976," uncatalogued items, United States Air Force Space and Missile Museum, Courtesy of Roger McCormick.
[157] "Third Century America Official Souvenir Brochure, May 1976," uncatalogued items, United States Air Force Space and Missile Museum, Courtesy of Roger McCormick.

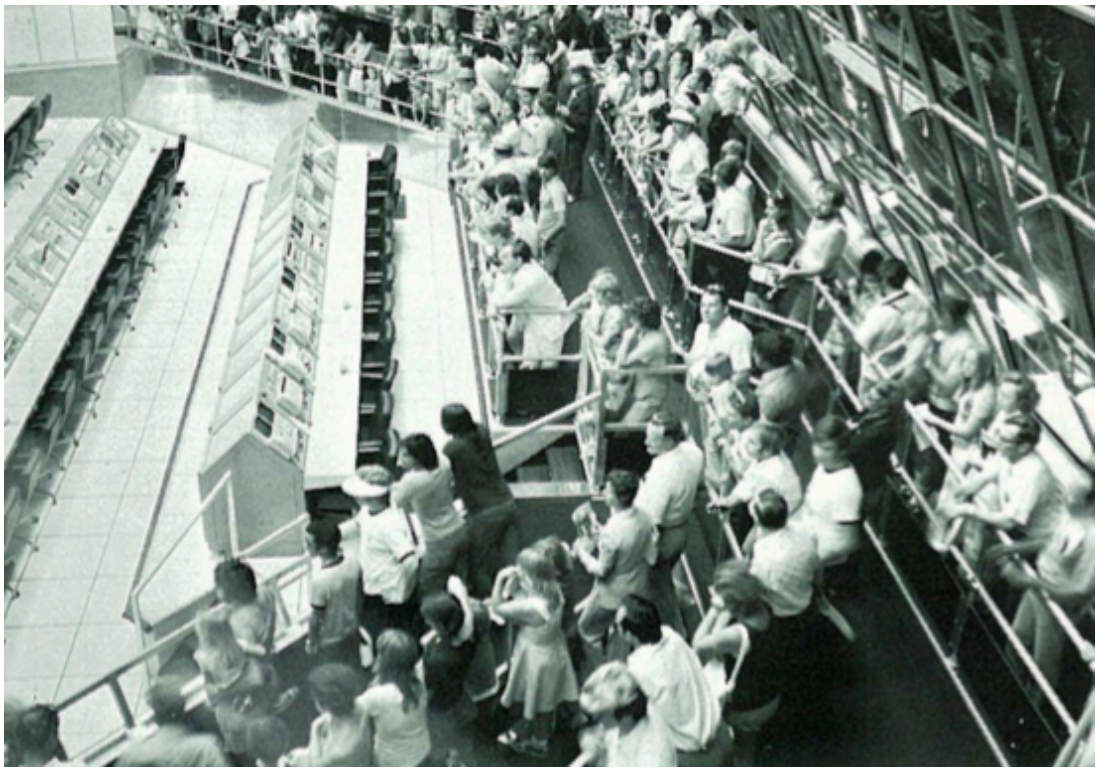
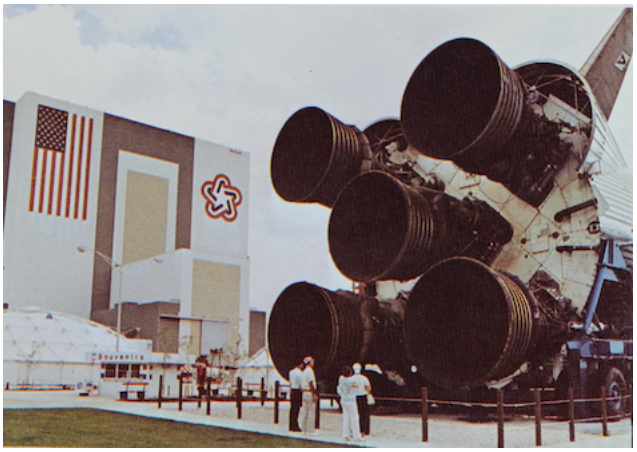


Fig. 7. Visitors gather to watch the simulation of the Apollo 11 launch in the launch control room.[158]



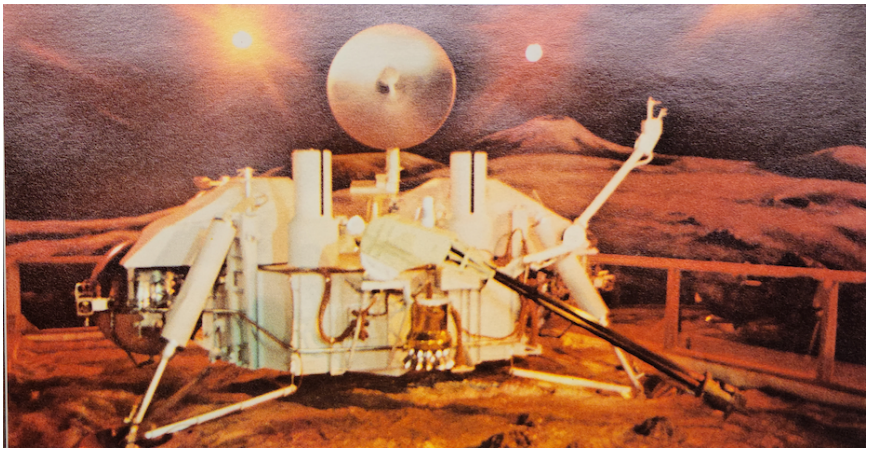


*Fig. 8. (Left)*Visitors stand beneath the massive engines of the Saturn V rocket.[159]
Fig 9. (Right) A full-scale model of the Viking lander on a simulated Martian surface on display inside the VAB.[160]

[158] *Spaceport News*, vol 15, no. 12, June 11, 1976.
[159] "Third Century America Official Souvenir Brochure, May 1976," uncatalogued items, United States Air Force Space and Missile Museum, Courtesy of Roger McCormick.
[160] "Third Century America Official Souvenir Brochure, May 1976," uncatalogued items, United States Air Force Space and Missile Museum, Courtesy of Roger McCormick.

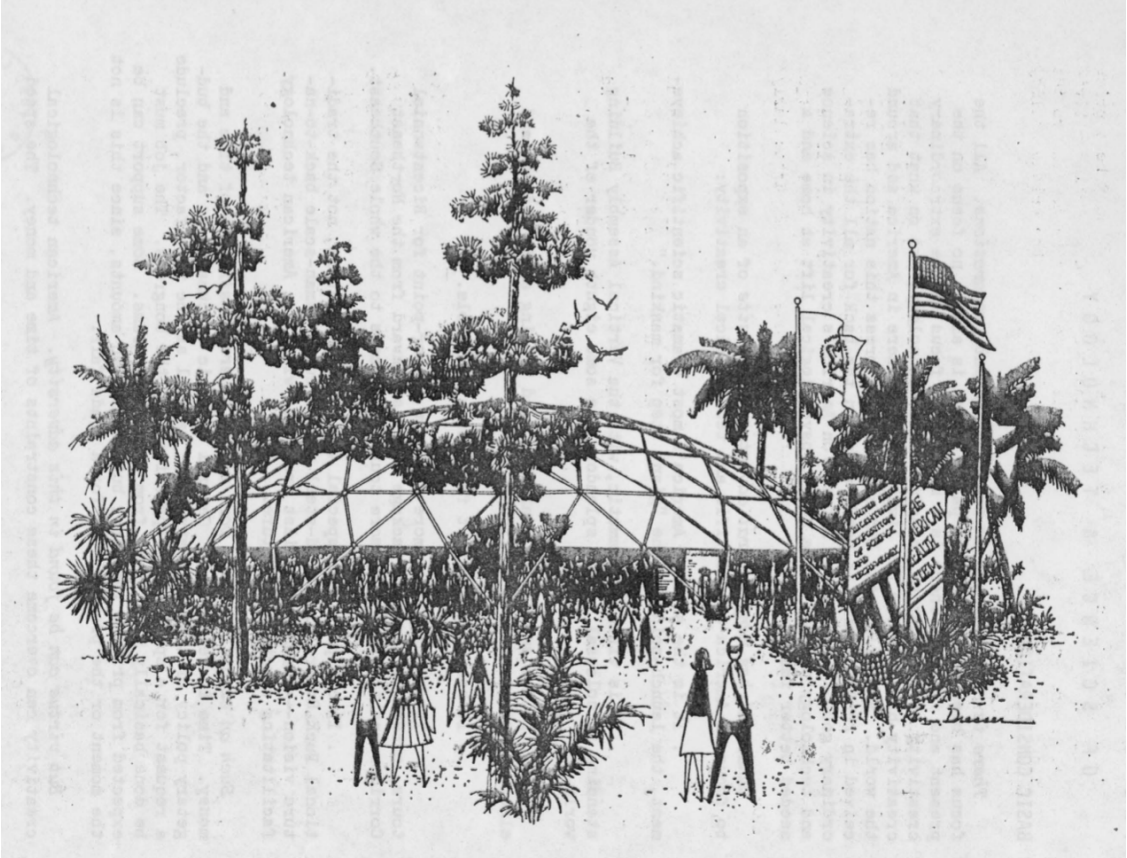


Fig 10. (Top) Sketch depicting John Stiles' "back to nature" vision for the Expo, showing geodesic exhibit domes immersed in forest groves with wildlife flying overhead.[161]
Fig 11. (Bottom) Photograph of the interior of the Department of Defense dome, with the geometric pattern of the geodesic dome cover as a backdrop.[162]

[161] "Preliminary Exposition Concept prepared by the office of John R. Stiles, July 10, 1975*,"* BEST-PP (2).
[162] "Third Century America Official Souvenir Brochure, May 1976," uncatalogued items, United States Air Force Space and Missile Museum, Courtesy of Roger McCormick.

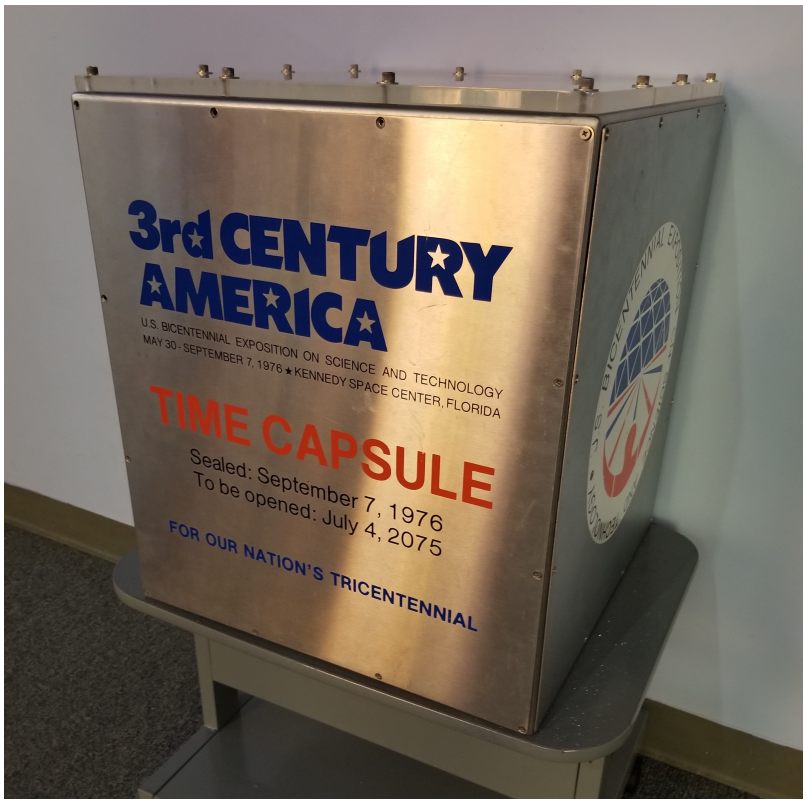


Fig 12. (Left) Photograph featured in the *Sentinel Star's* feature on the Expo's opening. Combining symbols like the Declaration of Independence, Mount Rushmore, the Grand Union flag, the Wright brothers' plane, and a model space shuttle, this mural in the Rockwell International exhibit underscores the continuity of progress and American values 'Third Century America' hoped to reinforce.[163]
Fig 13. (Right) The "3rd Century America" Time Capsule, photographed when the capsule was on loan to the Brevard Museum of History and Natural Science.[164]

[163] "Bicentennial Exhibit," *Sentinel Star*, May 30, 1976.
[164] "Third Century America Time Capsule, n.d.," Courtesy of James W. Draper, Museum Director at the United States Air Force Space and Missile Museum.

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