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Sputnik: The Shock of the Century

Paul Dickson

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On October 4, 1957, as *Leave It to Beaver* premiered on American television, the Soviet Union launched the space age. Sputnik, all of 184 pounds with only a radio transmitter inside its highly polished shell, became the first man-made object in space; while it immediately shocked the world, its long-term impact was even greater, for it profoundly changed the shape of the twentieth century.

In Sputnik, Paul Dickson chronicles the dramatic events and developments leading up to and emanating from Sputnik's launch. Supported by groundbreaking, original research and many recently declassified documents, *Sputnik* offers a fascinating profile of the early American and Soviet space programs and a strikingly revised picture of the politics and personalities behind the facade of America's fledgling efforts to get into space.

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