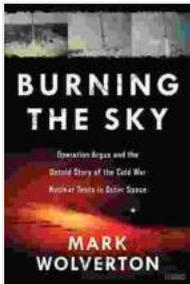


# Operation Argus: The Untold Story of the Cold War Nuclear Tests in Outer Space



## Burning the Sky: Operation Argus and the Untold Story of the Cold War Nuclear Tests in Outer Space

by Amie Kaufman

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English  
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Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
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Operation Argus was a series of three nuclear tests conducted by the United States in the South Atlantic Ocean in 1958. The tests were designed to study the effects of nuclear weapons on the Earth's magnetic field and radiation belts. The tests were successful in achieving their objectives, but they also raised concerns about the potential environmental and health effects of nuclear weapons testing in space.

### The Origins of Operation Argus

The origins of Operation Argus can be traced back to the early days of the Cold War. In the aftermath of World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union emerged as the two superpowers. Both countries were engaged in a

race to develop new and more powerful weapons. One of the most important areas of research was in the field of nuclear weapons.

In the early 1950s, scientists began to explore the possibility of using nuclear weapons in space. One of the main goals of this research was to develop a weapon that could disrupt the Earth's magnetic field. Such a weapon could have devastating consequences, as it could disable communications and navigation systems. The United States was particularly interested in developing this type of weapon, as it could give them a strategic advantage over the Soviet Union.

## **The Tests**

The three tests conducted as part of Operation Argus were:

- **Operation Argus I:** This test was conducted on August 27, 1958. A nuclear weapon was detonated at an altitude of 300 miles above the South Atlantic Ocean. The test was successful in creating an artificial aurora borealis.
- **Operation Argus II:** This test was conducted on September 4, 1958. A nuclear weapon was detonated at an altitude of 150 miles above the South Atlantic Ocean. The test was successful in disrupting the Earth's magnetic field and creating a temporary radiation belt.
- **Operation Argus III:** This test was conducted on September 6, 1958. A nuclear weapon was detonated at an altitude of 20 miles above the South Atlantic Ocean. The test was successful in creating a large amount of debris in space.

## **The Results**

The Operation Argus tests were successful in achieving their objectives. The tests showed that it was possible to create an artificial aurora borealis, disrupt the Earth's magnetic field, and create a temporary radiation belt. The tests also showed that nuclear weapons could create a large amount of debris in space.

However, the tests also raised concerns about the potential environmental and health effects of nuclear weapons testing in space. The tests released a large amount of radiation into the atmosphere, which could have harmful effects on human health. The tests also created a large amount of debris in space, which could pose a hazard to satellites and other spacecraft.

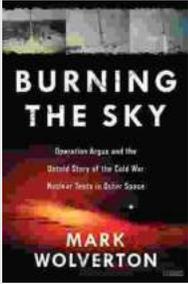
## **The Legacy of Operation Argus**

Operation Argus was a major turning point in the history of nuclear weapons testing. The tests showed that it was possible to use nuclear weapons in space, but they also raised concerns about the potential environmental and health effects of such tests. The tests led to a moratorium on nuclear weapons testing in space, which has been in place ever since.

The legacy of Operation Argus is still felt today. The tests continue to be studied by scientists who are trying to understand the effects of nuclear weapons on the Earth's environment and space. The tests also serve as a reminder of the dangers of nuclear weapons and the importance of nuclear disarmament.

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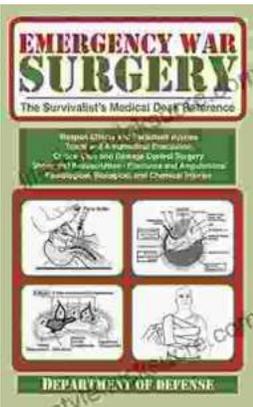
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