

INST 154

Apollo at 50

Discussion Questions

Session 25: The Soviet Lunar Landing Program

1. There were a number of technical differences between the US and Soviet lunar landing programs. Some reflected choices that one side or the other made because they faced different circumstances. Others reflected unconstrained choices that could have been made either way by either side. List as many of the unconstrained choices as you can. Then, for each, identify which side made the better choice.
2. Look back at your answers from question 1. Did any of these, or any combination of these, determine the outcome (that the Americans succeeded in a human landing on the moon, whereas the Soviet Union never did)? Or was it the different circumstances of the two sides that essentially predetermined the outcome? Or could it have come out either way, with the actual outcome simply being a matter of chance?