

Acknowledgments

Books often acquire a life of their own and this one is no exception. It began as an idea several years ago that caught the imagination of the three editors who wondered whether the imminent advent of commercial observation satellites would be more than a seemingly inevitable technological milestone. On greater reflection, we came to believe that these new satellites have much to say about how the world is changing at the start of the new millennium with the rapid growth of global transparency based on unprecedented access to information. In this case, high-resolution satellite imagery is not only potentially available to all governments but also accessible by most nonstate actors, including the news media, nongovernmental and international organizations, and even small groups and individuals. Understanding the broader political, military, and economic consequences of this new technological development is the main focus of this book.

Our book rests on the combined work of a multinational group of experts and scholars who have contributed thoughtful chapters on the diverse issues raised by commercial observation satellites. We offer special thanks to the many authors for their diligence and patience in seeing this project through. Each author played an important role in writing (and rewriting) their chapters to fit within the broad framework of the book envisioned by the editors without sacrificing their unique perspectives. We encourage our colleagues to continue their good work on this subject.

The editors are particularly grateful to RAND for providing the necessary financial support needed to move this book from the idea stage to its realization as a published work. RAND colleagues who played an important role supporting this book at various points in the lengthy process include Jeff Isaacson, Stuart Johnson, Robert Nurick, and Rachel Swanger. An important step on the way was the workshop RAND held in October 1999 in Washington, D.C., which brought together many of the book authors with outside experts and provided an invaluable opportunity to review authors' early drafts and to identify convergent and divergent perspectives. The editors greatly appreciated the presentations and comments provided by Mark Brender, Richard Buenneke, Jeff Harris, Robert McDonald, Kurt Schwoppe, David Thibault, and Charles Wooldridge during the workshop.

RAND and the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS) have taken the unusual step of choosing to copublish this large volume. This approach reflects their mutual recognition of the substantial added value that came from combining their efforts on this important subject. We give special recognition and thanks to James R. Plasker, the executive director at ASPRS, for his steadfast support of its publication, as well as gratitude to the ASPRS board of directors for committing their organization to publishing this volume.

Although this large book has been an editing and production challenge for both RAND and ASPRS, the publication experts in each organization approached their tasks with a relentless dedication to producing a high-quality product. They also exhibited an impressive sense of cooperation. The editors especially thank Phyllis Gilmore and Daniel Sheehan for their great diligence in editing the manuscript, as well as Carolyn A. Staab for her excellent work as the layout designer and coordinator for this large and complex book. Kimberly A. Tilley, ASPRS's communication director, was a source of constant encouragement and good advice throughout this long project. Many individuals in RAND's publication department played important roles in helping to produce and publish this book, including Jane Ryan, Paul Murphy, Judy Lewis, and John Warren, as well as Richard Wright, Joanne Selby, and Shirley Hall. Eileen Delson La Russo did an excellent job designing the book cover.

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