# Blue Origin’s all-female rocket launch sparks debate over empowerment and commercialisation in space exploration



On Monday, Blue Origin executed its much-anticipated all-female rocket launch, aimed at celebrating female representation in the field of space exploration. The flight, attended by high-profile figures, raised eyebrows with what some viewed as a departure from the intended message of female empowerment.

The launch took place in West Texas, with a crew of six women, led by Jeff Bezos' fiancée Lauren Sánchez, which included pop star Katy Perry, CBS anchor Gayle King, activist Amanda Nguyen, film producer Kerianne Flynn, and NASA rocket scientist Aisha Bowe. The event was streamed for a global audience, with Bezos himself present, watching as the crew boarded the New Shepard rocket prior to its ascent.

Designed by Fernando Garcia, the astronaut suits worn by the crew were modelled with elements of fashion, featuring a design that combined practicality with what Garcia described as 'flattering and sexy.' He explained, “I wanted to make something that was a little dangerous, like a motocross outfit. Or a ski suit.” Perry, enthusiastic about the launch, remarked, “Space is going to finally be glam,” and expressed her desire to take a glamorous touch to space by stating, “Let me tell you something, if I could take glam up with me, I would do that."

Despite the aspirations for a groundbreaking moment in space travel, many critics have pointed to the launch as emblematic of stereotypes rather than an extraordinary achievement. As the rocket ascended, social media buzzed with commentary on the seemingly trivial focus displayed by the crew during the brief 11-minute jaunt to the edge of space, peaking at an altitude of 62 miles.

While onboard, the crew engaged in a flurry of light-hearted antics, taking selfies and trading playful banter in zero gravity. Notably, Perry was seen holding up a cut-out of a butterfly to discuss her upcoming concert tour while belting out Louis Armstrong's "What a Wonderful World." In contrast, serious space exploration calls for profound reflection about humanity's place in the universe. This lighter portrayal led some experts to question the actual impact of this mission on scientific advancement.

Upon completion of the flight, the crew emerged from the capsule to jubilant cheers. Bezos welcomed them, albeit with a degree of misfortune as he stumbled upon arrival. The celebration continued as the women performed a choreographed set of actions, including dropping to their knees to kiss the ground, which—while colourful—drew derision from critics who noted the spectacle lasted longer than substantive acts of exploration.

University of Birmingham space scientist Dr Garrett Dorian commented on the launch, describing it as one that contributed little to the advancement of science or space exploration. He remarked, “Let's call it what it is and not tell ourselves that this is contributing meaningfully to science or space exploration. I am afraid I do still think these flights are essentially just joyrides for the super-rich."

In the shadow of this event, comparisons were drawn to trailblazers like Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman in space, who undertook a singular and challenging journey back in 1963. This juxtaposition sparked further discussion about the genuine contributions that are often associated with historic achievements in space exploration versus the more recent trend of space tourism.

In summary, while the Blue Origin launch garnered significant attention and aimed to celebrate female empowerment, it also sparked debate around the portrayal of women in such high-profile events, as well as the broader implications for science and space exploration in an increasingly commercialised space industry.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://abcnews.go.com/US/blue-origin-rocket-female-crew-including-katy-perry/story?id=120779187> - This article supports the claim that Blue Origin's NS-31 mission included an all-female crew, featuring Katy Perry, Lauren Sanchez, Gayle King, Aisha Bowe, Amanda Nguyen, and Kerianne Flynn. It also notes that this mission was the first all-female spaceflight since Valentina Tereshkova's solo journey in 1963.
2. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/gayle-king-space-launch-blue-origin-live-stream/> - This report confirms the crew composition and mission details, highlighting the historic nature of the all-female flight. It also shares reactions from the crew, including Gayle King and Amanda Nguyen, emphasizing their experiences during the flight.
3. <https://www.geekwire.com/2025/blue-origin-launch-women-only-space/> - This article details the mission specifics, such as the liftoff from West Texas and the crew's reactions during the flight. It also mentions Lauren Sanchez's role in selecting the crew and includes comments from critics about the mission's impact.
4. <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/21082070/blue-origin-katy-perry-lauren-sanchez-glamour-space/> - Article not available, but similar stories might cover how the event integrated fashion elements, such as designer astronaut suits, reflecting the blend of glamour and space exploration.
5. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-57875151> - Article not available, but typically BBC coverage of space events would discuss the scientific implications and public reactions to such missions.
6. <https://space.com/news/valentina-tereshkova-first-woman-in-space> - This article provides historical context by highlighting Valentina Tereshkova's pioneering achievement as the first woman in space, offering a comparison to the Blue Origin mission.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14610441/blue-origin-launch-lauren-sanchez-katy-perry-kennedy.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data