You are to select one of these topics (modifications can be made if they are approved by one of the professors). You are to write an approximately ten page (double spaced) paper on the topic in place of the shorter paper assigned to the rest of the class. Your paper will receive the same number of points for credit, but will be graded to a higher standard. In addition, we will hold a seminar on each topic at a time to be selected (but not in the regular class hour) toward the end of the term, and you should be prepared to take part in the discussion.

Books to read and topics

1. Harvard College Observatory and women in astronomy

2. Space program and management
   OR
   OR
   OR
3. Use “Starry Night” to recreate the following events – write up the circumstances (date, picture of the sky at the time of the event, astronomical circumstances, and historical impact):
   a. Star of Bethlehem
   b. The eclipse that saved Columbus
   c. The painting of the Crab Nebula supernova in Chaco Canyon
   d. The eclipse that stopped a battle
   e. The Battle of Hastings

Further instructions for using “Starry Night” will be distributed to those choosing this topic. “Starry Night” is available on PCs at the Information Commons in the ILC.

4. Astronomical chaos and mass extinctions