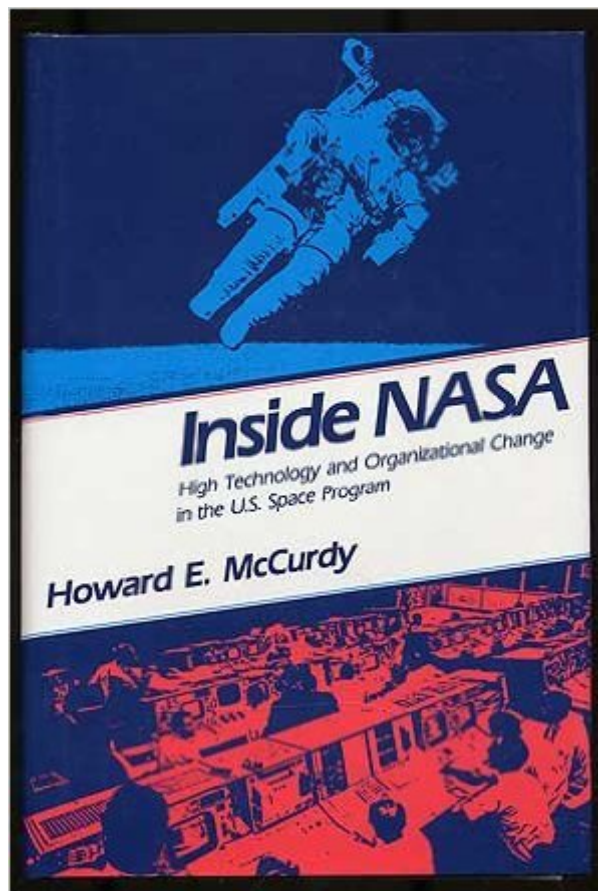# Inside NASA: High Technology And Organizational Change In The U.S. Space Program (New Series In NASA History)

Synopsis

Inside NASA explores how an agency praised for its planetary probes and expeditions to the moon became notorious for the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger and a series of other malfunctions. Using archival evidence as well as in-depth interviews with space agency officials, Howard McCurdy investigates the relationship between the performance of the American space program and NASA's organizational culture. He begins by identifying the beliefs, norms, and practices that guided NASA's early successes. Originally, the agency was dominated by the strong technical culture rooted in the research-and-development organizations from which NASA was formed. To launch the expeditions to the moon, McCurdy explains, this technical culture was linked to an organizational structure borrowed from the Air Force ballistic-missile program. Changes imposed to accomplish the lunar landing--along with the normal aging process and increased bureaucracy in the government as a whole--gradually eroded NASA's original culture and reduced its technical strength.

Book Information

Series: New Series in NASA History

Hardcover: 232 pages

Publisher: The Johns Hopkins University Press (January 1, 1993)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0801844525

ISBN-13: 978-0801844522

Product Dimensions: 0.8 x 6.5 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.0 out of 5 stars See all reviews (1 customer review)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,954,225 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)   #556 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Communication Policy   #2050 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Public Affairs & Administration   #3235 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Aerospace

Customer Reviews

They are government jobs:people who could when the spending cuts of the 70's came,held on to their jobs. Some of them have moved up and haven't retired yet.So it is an agency that hasn't really renewed itself over the years.The 60's bunch are mostly too old to be much good anymore (I hate

to saythat but it seems true).The only way you can get anything useful out of a government agencyis to start fresh?As you get older you see that there is no reformation or revolutionbuilt into human organizationsand the result is usually they get worse as they get older.War, revolution and depression seem to be built into counter that kind of trend.Corporate shake-ups are the free enterprise versionthat makes corporate structure a little better:but looking at Ford and GM, you have to say it doesn't work well long term either?The original idea for a space station and a shuttlewas a means to planetary exploration.All the ideals of early NASA seem goneand you are left with an empty structure of government employees.

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