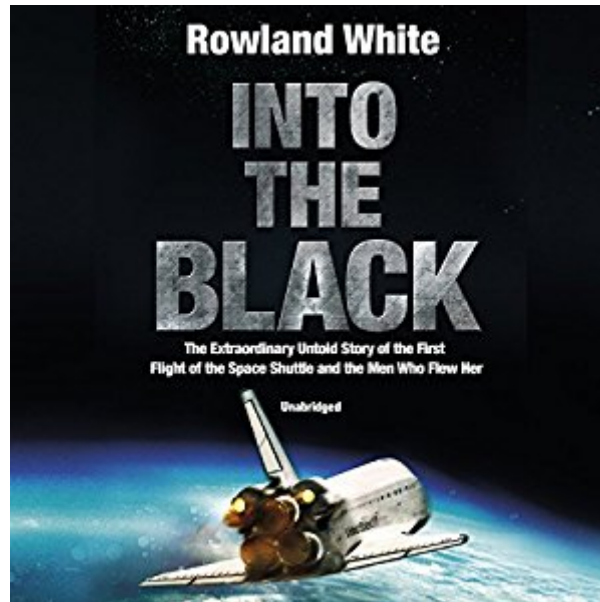




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Into The Black



Synopsis

On 12th April 1981 a revolutionary new spacecraft blasted off from Florida on her maiden flight. NASA's Space Shuttle Columbia was the most advanced flying machine ever built - the high watermark of post-war aviation development. A direct descendant of the record-breaking X-planes the likes of which Chuck Yeager had tested in the skies over the Mojave Desert, Columbia was a winged rocket plane, the size of an airliner, capable of flying to space and back before being made ready to fly again. She was the world's first real spaceship. The Shuttle's Commander, moonwalker John Young, was already a veteran of five spaceflights. Alongside him, Pilot Bob Crippen was making his first, but Crip, taken in by the space agency after the cancellation of a top secret military space station programme in 1969, had worked on the Shuttle's development for a decade. Never before had a crew been so well prepared for their mission. Yet less than an hour after Young and Crippen's spectacular departure from the Cape it was clear that all was not well. Tiles designed to protect Columbia from the blowtorch burn of re-entry were missing from the heatshield. If the damage to their ship was too great the astronauts would be unable to return safely to earth. But neither they nor mission control possessed any way of knowing. Instead, NASA turned to the National Reconnaissance Office, a spy agency hidden deep inside the Pentagon whose very existence was classified. Into the Black is a thrilling race against time; a gripping high stakes cold-war story, and a celebration of a beyond the state-of-the-art machine that, hailed as one of the seven new wonders of the world, rekindled our passion for spaceflight. With a foreword by Astronaut Richard Truly. PLEASE NOTE: When you purchase this title, the accompanying reference material will be available in your Library section along with the audio.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Excellent history about how the Space Transportation System (Shuttle) was created as a follow-up to the Apollo Program. This isn't a technical history but White provides plenty of pertinent details on the challenges faced in building a reusable shuttle under tight budget constraints. White also digs deeper into the connection between the Air Force and the Shuttle Program in the area of design and with the astronauts who migrated from the canceled Manned Orbiting Laboratory over to NASA. These men helped design, test and fly the shuttle through its early years. White also provides some insight on the political side detailing the thought process and support from the Nixon and Carter Administrations. White writes this fascinating history in such a manner that makes it feel more like a Cold War novel than a dry technical story about machines. I started reading it and was so caught up in White's engaging narrative that I stayed up until 4 in the morning to finish it. This is the way history should be written for the general audience. White nailed the facts while making this a story about the amazingly talented and driven people who made the Shuttle a reality.

We aerospace enthusiasts have all read most of the details of the Space Shuttle. This book goes beyond. The author has used a number of recently declassified documents to portray the true story of how the Shuttle program actually went from idealistic dreaming, to reality, to production, and then to actual flight. I enjoyed the whole thing. The authors portrayal of the astronauts involved is fascinating.

This is one great book. It's a history book with tons of adventure woven in. You get a real sense for the test pilots turned astronauts and the colossal achievement building and flying the space shuttle was. From her bleeding edge main engines to airplane spaceships for the 1930s, this is a marvelous piece of romanticism with something for all dreamers.

If you want a look at the black world and connection to the shuttle program, then you need to read into the black. Lots of wonderful information here. Will make you proud of NASA, air force and the not. Real good look at what it took to make projects work. Lot of great people in the service of the it country. Once you start book, you have to finish it before putting it down. Mr white did a great job on this book. Thanks!!!!

This is really the first book that I have read about the beginning and development of the STS, culminating with the launch of STS-1. It was well written and engaged you with its various people that were involved. Only dipped a little with some of the political battles in its creation. Stayed mostly on the engineering and operational side. The only other books that I have seen on this topic is the NASA Mission Reports.

Excellent. If you love flying, or space subjects, or the Shuttle, or the last quarter of the 20th century, you'll enjoy Into The Black. Written with authority by a man who love flying, the book details (and it is detailed) the intricacies of building Earth's first reusable spacecraft system, a historical journey off planet which heralded the arrival of the Space Age as a viable, doable concept. Even if you followed the newspapers and TV coverage of the entire Shuttle era, you never knew much of what really went on behind the scenes of one of civilization's crowning achievements. This book is a wonderful read and an exciting reveal of the Shuttle and it's political backdrop, much of which remained under wraps until now.

So, so many stories from the development of the Shuttle program I had never heard before. Really a well written, detailed account focused primarily on the period thru the first flight. If you're a shuttle fan, read it!

This book was a joy to read. I have an interest in flight as a pilot and space flight is an easy place to find amazement and excitement. Mr. White made this historical review into a riveting story that was stranger than fiction. While not as "glamorous" as Apollo 13, this was no less exciting and filled with a willingness to overcome obstacles well before the first flight even occurred. If you're interested in the Space Shuttle program, this is THE book to start with. If only all books written on history could be done as deftly, we'd all be historians!

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