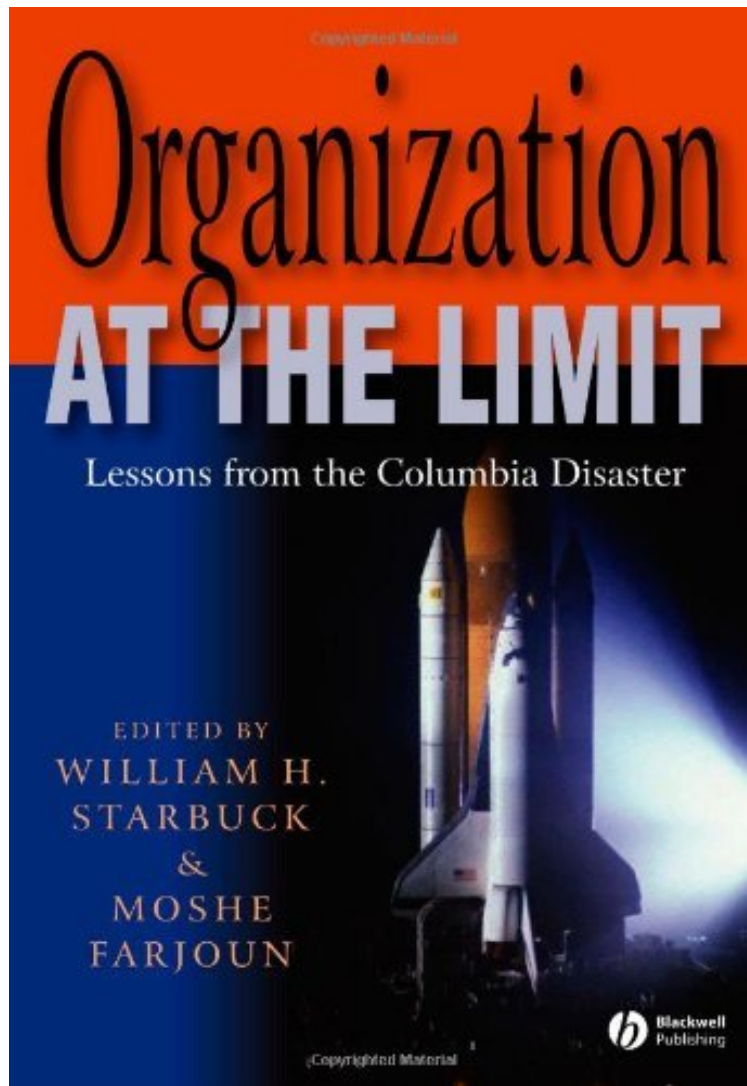


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## Organization at the Limit: Lessons from the Columbia Disaster

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**From Wiley-Blackwell : Organization at the Limit: Lessons from the Columbia Disaster** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Organization at the Limit: Lessons from the Columbia Disaster:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Limits to human control over risky technologyBy Howard AldrichAfter two horrible disasters, do you think that NASA has learned from its mistakes, and that it will never happen again? If so, you need to read this book! In 18 well-written chapters, the editors have assembled a set of experts on organizations and disasters to analyze lessons from the Columbia disaster. Because the Challenger disaster foreshadowed many of the problems that subsequently turned up in official investigations of the Columbia disaster, it also figures heavily in this edited book. The authors demonstrate the analytic power of an historically informed

organizational analysis of a large governmental agency under strong political pressure to produce results with limited resources. Two points in particular caught my eye. First, after the Challenger disaster, NASA was supposedly reorganized to place greater emphasis on safety. However, because the organization began to define the space exploration program as a problem of meeting production goals and deadlines, "safety" never achieved the priority in the organization than it deserved. Instead of seeing the space shuttle program as a developmental one, exploring the risky frontier of technological knowledge, NASA officials treated it like any other flight program. Second, as anomalies continued to crop up after flights, engineers and officials began to think about deviations from acceptable practices and outcomes as "normal." As deviation was normalized, unusual events were taken for granted and didn't provoke the kind of response than one would expect from life threatening occurrences. Scholars interested in organization studies, organizational learning, systems theory, and other academic disciplines will learn much from this book. However, one can also hope that public officials will take its lessons to heart and look more closely at the design of other risky systems that are operating close to the limits of our scientific knowledge. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good overview By Mr. Andrew Evans A series of powerful essays from an excellent and diverse range of writers including the initial ideas on resilience engineering. Covers issues of communications over the imagery requests well.

The book offers important insight relevant to Corporate, Government and Global organizations management in general. The internationally recognised authors tackle vital issues in decision making, how organizational risk is managed, how can technological and organizational complexities interact, what are the impediments for effective learning and how large, medium, and small organizations can, and in fact must, increase their resilience. Managers, organizational consultants, expert professionals, and training specialists; particularly those in high risk organizations, may find the issues covered in the book relevant to their daily work and a potential catalyst for thought and action. A timely analysis of the Columbia disaster and the organizational lessons that can be learned from it. Includes contributions from those involved in the Investigation Board report into the incident. Tackles vital issues such as the role of time pressures and goal conflict in decision making, and the impediments for effective learning. Examines how organizational risk is managed and how technological and organizational complexities interact. Assesses how large, medium, and small organizations can, and in fact must, increase their resilience. Questions our eagerness to embrace new technologies, yet reluctance to accept the risks of innovation. Offers a step by step understanding of the complex factors that led to disaster.