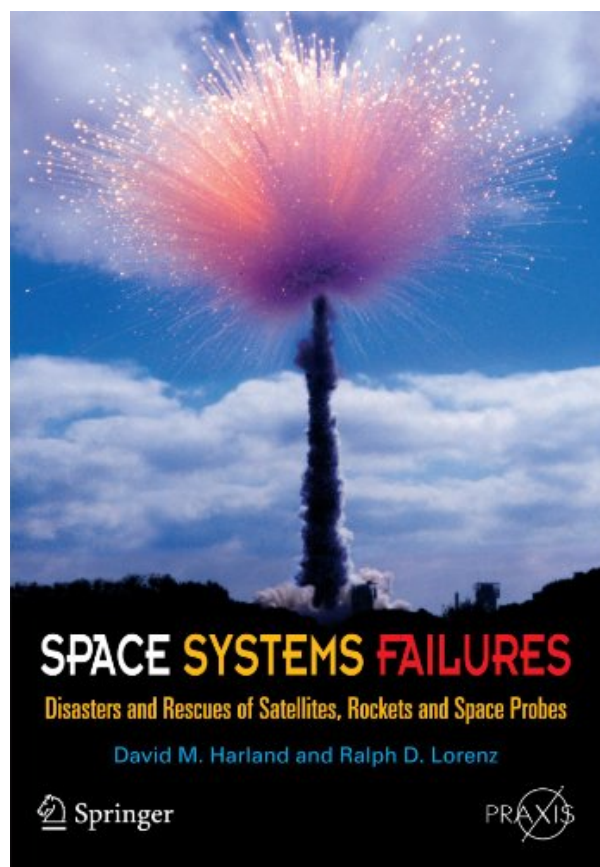
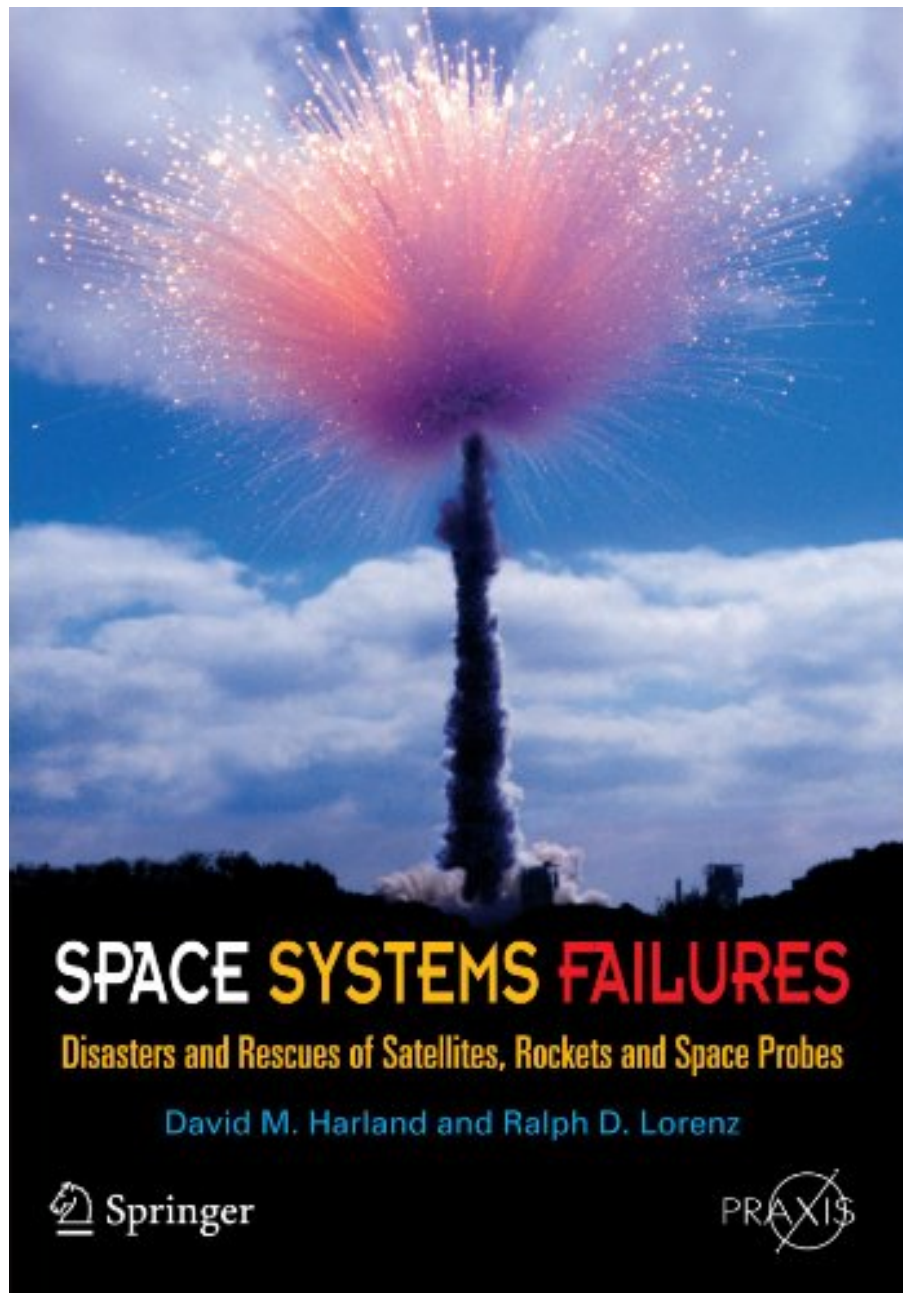


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## Review

From the reviews:

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The very first book on space systems failures written from an engineering perspective.

Focuses on the causes of the failures and discusses how the engineering knowledge base has been enhanced by the lessons learned.

Discusses non-fatal anomalies which do not affect the ultimate success of a mission, but which are failures nevertheless.

Describes engineering aspects of the spacecraft, making this a valuable complementary reference work to conventional engineering texts.

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- Dimensions: 9.61" h x .88" w x 6.69" l, 1.35 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 370 pages

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Most helpful customer reviews

13 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

Encyclopedic ...

By S. Austin

... by which I mean a small amount of information about each of a large number of facts, with very little analysis or insight. And, just about as interesting to read as chapter after chapter of encyclopedia entries.

Looking at each chapter's bibliography, you can tell that the authors spent a lot of time poring over back issues of Aviation Week and other publications, so that might save you some time if you are researching a specific failure. And they do have a very extensive collection of failures - this is not just Apollo 13 and Ariane 5.

I was surprised to find mention (and a small amount of detail) of some of the relatively minor programs I have been involved with over the last 15 years or so. However, the visually spectacular failure of the Conestoga launch vehicle (certainly in the category of "minor players") wasn't covered, so this can't be said to be a definitive collection of every launch or spacecraft failure.

If you want to know how failures are analyzed post-mortem, or what processes and procedures are put in place to learn from those mistakes, you won't find it here. This is really just a diary of the timeline of failures in the Space Age.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Excellent book on space failures

By Haubrechts Patrick

This book examines failures related to space exploration in general. It is thorough, much more than I expected. A bit depressing, but it provides invaluable insight into the science, art and craft of building and launching satellites.

The book is divided in two quite different parts: launchers and satellites, with a special chapter on repairs undertaken from the space shuttle.

The launcher part is organized by launchers types, and has a very good objective of putting things in historical perspective, a very good point. The satellite part is organized by failures types. This is a wise way to do in this case.

There is not much to do in case of problems on a launcher apart from doing fault analysis, with corrections to be applied to the next launches. This is quite different and much more interesting with problems on satellites or probes.

They are examples of missions which looked like total write-offs being rescued by the skills and intelligence of engineers using treasures of imagination and ingenuity to rescue a mission, sometimes exceeding the objectives planned originally for the mission. ( Hipparcos, Deep Space 1, etc ) This makes the reading of this section very interesting, sometimes feeling like a thriller.

The real added value of this book is the description of the incredible ingenuity applied by engineers and operators to solve the problems when a satellite fails in orbit, therefore out of physical reach. This is the best part and shows that in general, human being are better to adapt to given situations and solve problems imposed on them than being able to predict them and act accordingly beforehand.

This is proven by the number of incredibly stupid faults described in the book, from the decimal point

misplaced, to the calculations made in imperial units instead of metric, leading sometimes to billion size dollars bills.

I regret that some important recap tables (page 157) and some figures are not better printed or be made more readable. Also a good improvement would be to put a success/failures table at the end of each section covering a given launcher.

Also, I regret the absence of a simple tutorial chapter explaining the basics of rocket and satellite event recording and telemetry, the amount and nature of the parameters recorded, the various captors and a basic description of the procedures of post-mortem analysis. This would help appreciate even more the reading of the book.

Patrick Haubrechts Geneva Switzerland

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

No real insight or investigation

By Jeffrey L. Smith, PE

The references at the end of each chapter are mostly from Aviation Week. Basically, it is a collection of the press releases and Aviation Week reporting on the incidents covered in the book. That IS useful, but it could be so much more powerful with the insight that engineers who worked these programs could have brought.

All the information is available and some of the conclusions don't stand the test of time. One glaring example, when discussing the Chinese launch of commsats "18 July 1998 effectively marked the end of Chinese participation in the commercial launcher market." This has proved laughably untrue as China is one of the dominate players, whereas it is the USA that pushed out of this market.

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