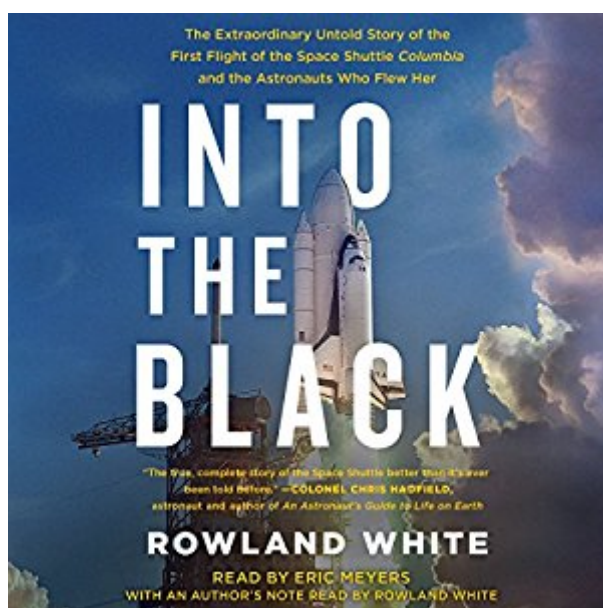


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# Into The Black: The Extraordinary Untold Story Of The First Flight Of The Space Shuttle Columbia And The Astronauts Who Flew Her



## Synopsis

The real-life techno-thriller from a best-selling author and aviation expert that recaptures the historic moments leading up to the launch of the space shuttle Columbia and the exciting story of her daring maiden flight. Using interviews, NASA oral histories, and recently declassified material, *Into the Black* pieces together the dramatic untold story of the Columbia mission and the brave people who dedicated themselves to help the United States succeed in the age of space exploration. On April 12, 1981, NASA's Space Shuttle Columbia blasted off from Cape Canaveral. It was the most advanced, state-of-the-art flying machine ever built, challenging the minds and imagination of America's top engineers and pilots. Columbia was the world's first real spaceship: a winged rocket plane, the size of an airliner and capable of flying to space and back before preparing to fly again. Onboard were moonwalker John Young and test pilot Bob Crippen. Less than an hour after Young and Crippen's spectacular departure from the Cape, all was not well. Tiles designed to protect the ship from the blowtorch burn of reentry were missing from the heat shield. If the damage to Columbia was too great, the astronauts wouldn't be able to return safely to Earth. NASA turned to the National Reconnaissance Office, a spy agency hidden deep inside the Pentagon whose very existence was classified. To help the ship, the NRO would attempt something never done before. Success would require skill, perfect timing, and luck. Set against the backdrop of the Cold War, *Into the Black* is a thrilling race against time and the incredible true story of the first space shuttle mission that celebrates our passion for spaceflight.

## 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 its 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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