



Truth, Lies, and O-Rings: Inside the Space Shuttle Challenger Disaster

Allan J McDonald, James R. Hansen

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What they didn't want you to know

"We all watched in shock and disbelief when *Challenger* was lost. Probably no one felt more disappointment and regret than Allan McDonald, who had warned us not to launch that day. His story tells of loss, grief, and the eventual rebuilding and recovery."--Robert "Hoot" Gibson, former Space Shuttle pilot and commander

"A major contribution to a difficult episode in the history of human spaceflight."--Roger D. Launius, Division of Space History, Smithsonian Institution

"McDonald tells the heartbreaking tale of how he saw his words of warning ignored, and the fateful consequences of that decision."--Donald C. Elder III, Eastern New Mexico University

On a cold January morning in 1986, NASA launched the Space Shuttle *Challenger*, despite warnings against doing so by many individuals, including Allan McDonald. The fiery destruction of *Challenger* on live television moments after launch remains an indelible image in the nation's collective memory.

In *Truth, Lies, and O-Rings*, McDonald, a skilled engineer and executive, relives the tragedy from where he stood at Launch Control Center. As he fought to draw attention to the real reasons behind the disaster, he was the only one targeted for retribution by both NASA and his employer, Morton Thiokol, Inc., makers of the shuttle's solid rocket boosters. In this whistle-blowing yet rigorous and fair-minded book, McDonald, with the assistance of internationally distinguished aerospace historian James R. Hansen, addresses *all* of the factors that led to the accident, some of which were never included in NASA's Failure Team report submitted to the Presidential Commission.

Truth, Lies, and O-Rings is the first look at the *Challenger* tragedy and its aftermath from someone who was on the inside, recognized the potential disaster, and tried to prevent it. It also addresses the early warnings of very severe debris issues from the first two post-*Challenger* flights, which ultimately resulted in the loss of *Columbia* some fifteen years later.

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