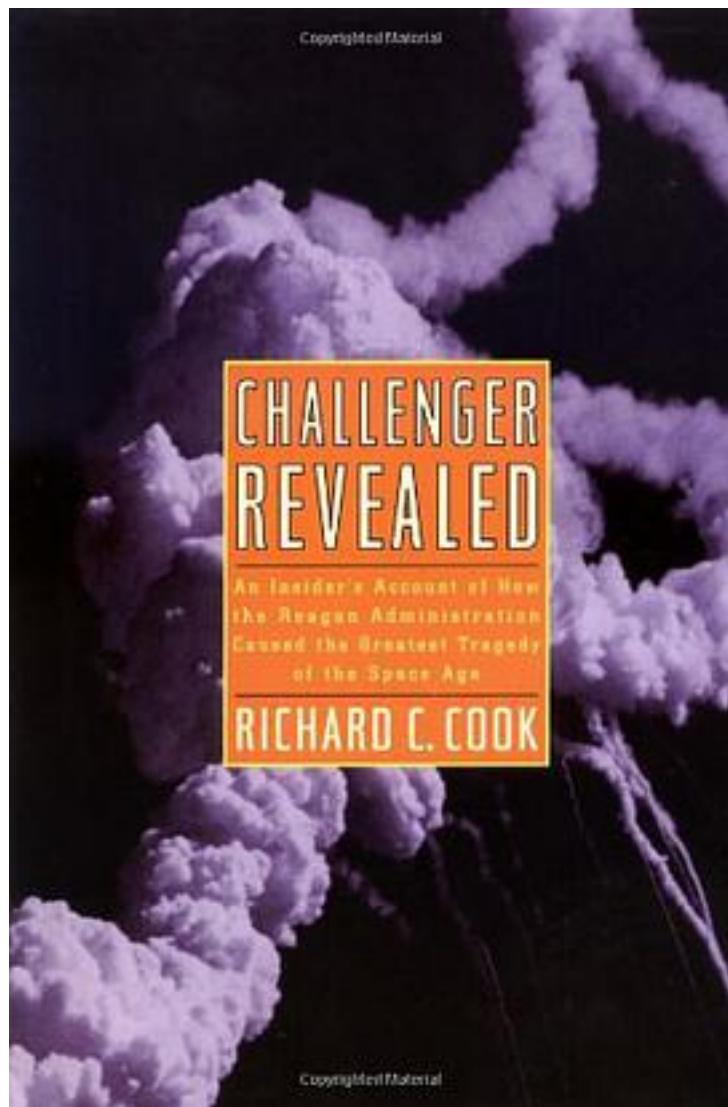


# Challenger Revealed



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著者:Richard C. Cook

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We all know about the O-rings. But what we don't know is how the Reagan Administration pushed hard for NASA to launch shuttle mission 51L before it was ready. The result was that, seventy-three seconds into the mission, the shuttle exploded. Seven people were dead and a nation traumatized. Richard Cook, the lead resource analyst at NASA for the Solid Rocket Boosters (SRBs), was the first to warn of possible catastrophic failure. His memo, which detailed warnings from NASA headquarters engineers and the shuttle builders at Morton Thiokol, were ignored by top NASA officials and members of the Reagan administration. Why would they disregard such critical information? Cook reveals in plain English the plans between the Air Force and NASA's top managers to militarize the space program and to "fly-as-is" with flawed O-ring joints so as not to interfere with planned military launches, causing NASA to downplay Shuttle safety issues. NASA launched an investigation to "discover" the cause of the disaster. Though within NASA there was absolute certainty about the O-ring joint failure, they publicly proclaimed that the cause of the explosion was unknown. When Richard Cook realized that the Commission was not interested in revealing the truth, he acted as a true patriot and hero and leaked the original O-ring warning documents to the New York Times. The Times article set off a cascade of disclosures about the events leading up to the disaster, including revelations by Morton Thiokol engineers that they had tried to stop the launch. Now, with his retirement from public service, Richard Cook shares with us behind-the-scenes accounts. *Challenger Revealed* is the only book to tell the complete story of the Challenger disaster and its aftermath by the only person with the knowledge to tell it.

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目录:

[Challenger Revealed 下载链接1](#)

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