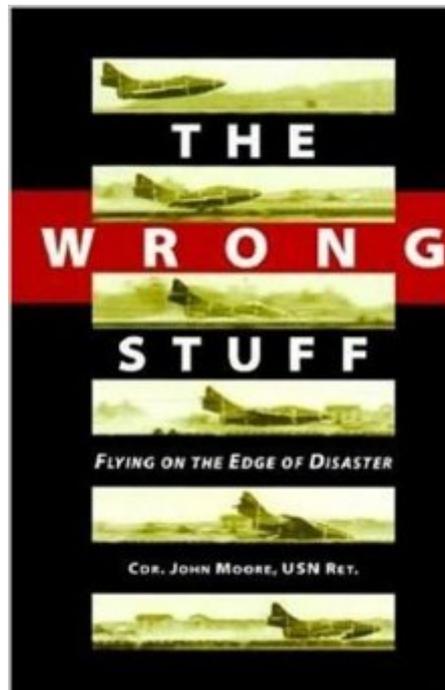


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The Wrong Stuff: Flying On The Edge Of Disaster



Synopsis

Author John Moore is the "cat with nine lives" of the aviation fraternity. From his early days as a Naval Aviation Cadet he had a knack for flying but seemed to be in the neighborhood of disaster. Through two Korean combat tours, Navy test operations, his years as test pilot for North American Aviation, and the space program he was associated with many near and some real catastrophes.

Book Information

Hardcover: 216 pages

Publisher: Specialty Press (March 29, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 188380910X

ISBN-13: 978-1883809102

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.8 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (21 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,425,005 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #74 in [Books > History > Military > Korean War > Aviation](#) #987 in [Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > Aviation > History](#) #1730 in [Books > Science & Math > Astronomy & Space Science > Aeronautics & Astronautics](#)

Customer Reviews

John Moore does a masterful job of telling it like it is. His descriptions of life aboard ship as a fledgling Navy pilot, first combat butterflies, the realities of being a test pilot, personal tragedies and close calls draw the reader in for a close up, raw look at the life of a real pilot in a real world. No glamour here, only the stark reality of mistakes made (not necessarily by the author) and consequences suffered. Mr. Moore spices the book with a generous dose of humor guaranteed to make the reader laugh out loud. Certainly anyone who is or has been a test pilot, or those that aspire to be, or those with even a mild interest in aviation will appreciate and maybe even treasure this book. It is a book for everyone.

... and many of them have honored places in my library: Colonel Robert Scott's "God Is My Co-Pilot", Heinz Knoke's excellent and sadly unknown "I Flew for the F-4 Phantom II", Bob Hoover's "Forever Flying", Jim Lovell and Jeffrey Kluger's "Lost Moon" (which is as much an autobiography of Lovell as a recounting of the Apollo 13 incident)..... and then there's this book. If you go into "The

Wrong Stuff" expecting another self-congratulatory throttle-jockey memoir (not that there's anything wrong with those :), you'll be sorely disappointed, because John Moore isn't the self-congratulatory throttle-jockey type. He seems frankly surprised that he survived his aviation career, and his tongue-in-cheek delight at being alive permeates the work. Somehow, this man managed to wind up involved in some of the wackiest projects in aviation history, and his wry reminiscences make this the funniest flyboy book in history. I'm just amazed, with his karma, that Moore didn't end up testing the Pogo Planes. Highly, highly, highly recommended.

Cdr. John Moore tells it like it is (or was), back then when test flying was not as sophisticated as it is now, along with the trials of the line Carrier Pilot, during "The Korean Thing". An easy, can't-put-it-down read which had me up 'till 4 AM. It gives the reader a poignant, down-to-earth glimpse of life as he saw it and lived it, often on the edge.

Even on the "edge of disaster" Cdr. John Moore never lost his sense of humor. Especially when he had to jump over the side of the U.S.S. Essex, 60 feet to the water. His exploits as a North American Aviation Test Pilot is accurate and exciting during the "fifties" when more new aircraft came on the scene than any time in our history.

A great story of flying during the transition from the great piston powered aircraft of WW2 to the jet age. Also a good reminder that the most dangerous words in aviation are often an engineer saying, "I have a great idea." For them the danger of the first flight is that they will choke on their coffee. Such was the case of one project to rid carrier aircraft of their landing gear and to have them land on a rubber "bed". Somehow I get the feeling that the engineering team never spent any time at sea, certainly not on a dark stormy night. While it lacks the polish and emotional content of Stranger To the Ground, it packs more of a flying punch. And the author also pulls no punches when it comes to the so called Tailhook incident for which senior naval aviators were punished for simply being at the same hotel. All in the name of political correctness.

Full of self-deprecating humor and curmudgeonly wisdom, Mr. Moore's account of his years testing early jets hits the mark in every way. It's great history. He pulls no punches on his views of either machines (the F7U Cutlass) or bureaucrats (the NASA apparatchiks who ordered the Challenger launch).

Well written by a guy who ran the course from the bottom to the top of flying. Both a lucky and skilled pilot who survived mistakes and shared his thoughts. Not the usual hero stuff pilots tend to rant about. Good reading if you are a pilot and can relate.

Sorry , I got this book at the library. I've been on a military reading binge and this was on a list I created. Nine before it, all memoirs. All very dry and full of pathos. It was WAR! But this one was a surprise. Pathos yes. Sadness and anger, yes. But Mr. Moore's career alone is worth the read. Often told right from notes of the day, what is most obvious is his retained sense of humor and humanity."...and I wondered what would happen if I put my shoes outside the door as at Boscomb Down. And so I did. The next morning they were gone."...This is not a laughing matter, this career, the wars, the loss of so many friends and family members. But what is most obvious is the affection he holds for the best parts of it all. And the planes. Good lord, those amazing airplanes.

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