

## The Secret of Apollo: Systems Management in American and European Space Programs (New Series in NASA History)

*By Stephen B. Johnson*

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### **The Secret of Apollo: Systems Management in American and European Space Programs (New Series in NASA History)** By Stephen B. Johnson

How does one go about organizing something as complicated as a strategic-missile or space-exploration program? Stephen B. Johnson here explores the answer-systems management-in a groundbreaking study that involves Air Force planners, scientists, technical specialists, and, eventually, bureaucrats. Taking a comparative approach, Johnson focuses on the theory, or intellectual history, of "systems engineering" as such, its origins in the Air Force's Cold War ICBM efforts, and its migration to not only NASA but the European Space Agency. Exploring the history and politics of aerospace development and weapons procurement, Johnson examines how scientists and engineers created the systems management process to coordinate large-scale technology development, and how managers and military officers gained control of that process. "Those funding the race demanded results", Johnson explains. "In response, development organizations created what few expected and what even fewer wanted-a bureaucracy for innovation. To begin to understand this apparent contradiction in terms, we must first understand the exacting nature of space technologies and the concerns of those who create them".

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

Soundly based on the secondary literature and on archival research in the United States and Europe and provides an excellent overview of the topic within Johnson's chosen boundaries... I can highly recommend Johnson's book to historians of both the Cold War military and civilian space programs.

*(Journal of Military History)*

Johnson has been inspired by engineering to write good history.

*(Jon Agar British Journal for the History of Science)*

This is a wonderful story and a great book. The issue is of maximum importance today, since NASA and other high-tech operations are replacing systems management with 'faster, better, cheaper' approaches to space flight, with decidedly mixed results. Skillfully interweaving technical details and fascinating personalities, Johnson tells the history of systems management in the U.S. and Europe. It is a very important work.

*(Howard McCurdy, author of Inside NASA)*

A book for general readers interested in business and management issues in the space program.

*(Choice)*

Johnson's in-depth, nuts-and-bolts manual sheds much light on a seldom studied secret of our recent space history.

*(Space Review)*

Well written and engaging in style.

*(Satellite Evolution Group)*

### From the Publisher

"This is a wonderful story and a great book. The issue is of maximum importance today, since NASA and other high-tech operations are replacing systems management with 'faster, better, cheaper' approaches to space flight, with decidedly mixed results. Skillfully interweaving technical details and fascinating personalities, Johnson tells the history of systems management in the U.S. and Europe. It is a very important work."—Howard McCurdy, author of Inside NASA

### About the Author

**Stephen B. Johnson** is an associate professor of space studies at the University of North Dakota.

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