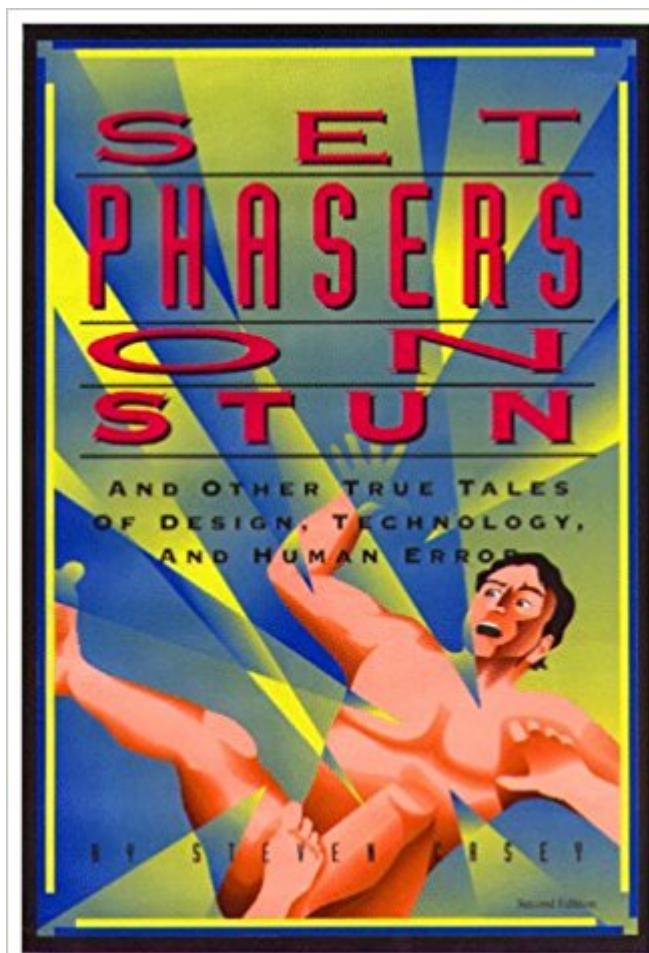The book was found

Set Phasers On Stun: And Other True Tales Of Design, Technology, And Human Error

Synopsis

A disturbing share of technological disasters are caused by incompatibilities between the way things are designed and the way people actually perceive, think, and act. Structurally sound aircraft plummet to the earth, supertankers run aground in calm weather, and the machines of medical science maim unsuspecting patients - - all because designers sometimes fail to reflect the characteristics of the user in their designs. Designers and the public alike are realizing that many human' errors are more aptly named designed-induced' errors. Most consumers experience the frustration of using many new products; amusing stories about programming a VCR, operating a personal computer, or finding the headlight switch on a rental car are heard in everyday conversation. The problems consumers experience with modern everyday things are shared by the users of large-scale technologies where the consequences of design can go well beyond simple matters of inconvenience or amusement. In the new second edition of Set Phasers on Stun' and Other True Tales of Design, Technology, and Human Error, noted designer and author Steven Casey has assembled 20 factual and arresting stories about people and their attempts to use modern technological creations. Although the operator or pilot usually gets blamed for a big disaster, the root cause can frequently be found in subtle characteristics of the device's human interface.' Technological disasters can often be traced directly to the interplay between people and the design of a device - - be it an airliner cockpit, the controls in an industrial plant, a spacecraft's instruments, a medical system, a nuclear reactor, or even a commercial dishwashing machine. The most effective way to convey the consequences of design-induced human error is with a good story and just the right level of technical detail, and this is what Casey has done in his new book. As stated by Alphonse Chapanis, one of the founders of the human factors engineering discipline, Set Phasers on Stun is A tour de force. A collection of gripping and often alarming true stories meticulously documented and skillfully told about design-induced human errors. It should be required reading for all engineers and designers, and everyone else concerned about the ways our modern technological creations can affect our everyday lives. Skylab-4 astronaut Gerald Carr agrees: The book is ...an engrossing tour through the world of human susceptibility to subtle variations in environment and in design.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

...extremely readable and fascinating... recommended to anyone, particularly those interested in human factors research or design. Marine Technology -- Marine TechnologyShows how basic paradigms, assumptions, and minor oversights of the designer combine with those of the user to produce disastrous consequences. Health Physics -- Health PhysicsSteven Casey has put together an astonishing collection of graphic and depicting stories of human and technological error... you will not be able to put it down. American Scientist -- American ScientistThese skillfully told anecdotes take the reader through an array of settings from an A320 Airbus, to ConEd, to the wizardry of Wall Street... Casey has written a book that demonstrates to laypersons and technocrats alike how far we are from adequately controlling hazards and managing risks. How safe is safe enough? Design Management Journal -- Design Management Journal

In the new and expanded Second Edition of 'Set Phasers on Stun' and Other True Tales of Design, Technology, and Human Error, noted designer and author Steven Casey presents 20 factual and arresting stories about people and their attempts to use modern technological creations. Set Phasers on Stun demonstrates - - with shocking and graphic candor - - how technological failures result from the incompatibilities between the way things are designed and the way people actually perceive, think, and act. New technologies will succeed or fail based on our ability to minimize these incompatibilities between the characteristics of people and the characteristics of the things we create and use. Two new chapters, as well as a new introduction, have been added to this Second Edition. In Murphy's Law and Newton's Law', listen in as a team of Swedish rocket technicians prepare to launch a payload into space above the arctic circle, and learn how the user interface on a simple device resulted in one of the most horrific but least publicized accidents in the history of rocketry. In The Price of the Amagasaki', accompany British Navy diver James Kull as he attempts a

night-time attack on a Japanese warship off Singapore while using a new and poorly understood oxygen rebreather. Read the gripping stories of a tragic air show demonstration in France involving a new computer-controlled cockpit, the disaster of the supertanker Torrey Canyon, the human factors at play in the runaway chemical reaction that we have come to know as Bhopal, and, last but not least, Set Phasers on Stun, the tragic tale of a medical patient who meets his fate beneath a poorly designed radiotherapy machine in Texas. From space above Russia, an island in the South Pacific, the hustle and bustle of Wall Street, remote Newfoundland, a bar in Topeka, northern Iraq, and the Pacific Northwest, Steven Casey lets the reader understand first hand how the combination of technology and human limitations can go wrong. Set Phasers on Stun' and Other True Tales of Design, Technology, and Human Error affirms the harsh consequences of designing things that are incompatible with the characteristics of the people who will use them.

This book wasn't as good as I thought it was going to be. The stories of each disaster are good, but I was also expecting a detailed post-mortem on each one, listing and discussing all the things that went wrong, the lessons learned, and more details on the fixes that were applied afterwards. There's almost none of that in the book! The things that went wrong, or were poorly designed, are only mentioned in a conversational way during each story, and sprinkled around the rest of the story. So I felt like almost every story wasn't finished, they need a proper conclusion to each one. I was disappointed about that.

I first read Set Phasers on Stun (the first edition) as a textbook in one of my safety classes in college. In addition to being one of the most entertaining textbooks I ever had, it also had the deepest impact on me as far as illustrating how quickly and easily catastrophes can happen. Many of the cases presented in the book leave you shaking your head and wondering how such a simple mistake or oversight could lead to such horrific consequences.I've used many of the cases in this book as examples when trying to make a point during my safety career. I would highly recommend this book to any engineer or safety professional. It's also entertaining reading for anyone with an interest in technology and complex systems.

pleasantly surprised how the author decided to write these collection of stories. Many fascinating case studies and my interest has piqued considerably.

Narrative explanantion of several famous Engineering disasters. Think Modern Marvel's

Engineering Disasters in book form

as i asked for very happy

It's frightening to read accounts of tragedies and disasters that occur when designers can't put themselves in the position of a typical user operating the equipment they have designed. If I had a dollar for each time a software engineer asked me "why would anyone ever do it that way?"...

No engineer, Engineer, should Fail to read this book and its sequel. Please read these stories of true disasters before you build one of your own.

I think the book brings a good point about stories of poor, planning design and execution. However, I don't like the writing style of the author. It is sometimes complicated to follow; his stories have too much detail in a few aspects but on other en it leaves relevant case information outside the story.

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