





We have to get beyond blame to the systemic and cultural and leadership issues that actually led to decisions being made.

We can't end up going 'it's because of the cladding...'  
Yes, we have to hold people to account... but there are broader systemic issues that need to be addressed.

*Gill Kernick, BBC Today Program, 16 June 2017*

# Piecemeal versus Systemic Change

	Piecemeal Change	Systemic Change
<b>Intent</b>	Solving a piecemeal issue	Shifting the conditions holding the status quo in place
<b>Question</b>	What's wrong with the system?	What is the system perfectly designed for?
<b>Assumption</b>	Controllable, predictable world	Complex, emergent world
<b>Access to change</b>	Fix what is wrong	Make the Water Visible: grapple with the messy kaleidoscope
<b>Approach to change</b>	Technical Solutions (if I do x, y will happen)	Disrupting the status quo, experimenting (if I do y, what will happen?)
<b>Leadership Style</b>	Bureaucratic, command and control, rules based	Organic, emergent, values and principles based
<b>Requires</b>	Traditional Expertise	All Stakeholders - tacit expertise (requires validating different ways of knowing)

**Making the Water  
Visible...**



**Why does our failure to learn make sense?**

# The Grenfell Model for Systemic Change

OBSCURE



## RELATIONAL (Interacting)

How **interactions** between stakeholders contribute to catastrophic events.  
E.g. regulatory capture, revolving door, speaking truth to power



## CONTEXTUAL (Thinking)

The **contextual** aspects that impact our ability to prevent & learn.  
E.g. culture, trust, bias, unquestioned assumptions & beliefs.

OBVIOUS



## BEHAVIOURAL (Acting)

The mechanisms in place to **prevent & respond** to catastrophic events.  
E.g. regulators, scrutiny mechanisms and inquests or inquiries



## FOUNDATIONAL (Structural)

The elements in place to **prevent** catastrophic outcomes.  
E.g. regulations, guidance, governance & accountabilities.

OPERATING FRAMEWORK

GOVERNING FRAMEWORK

# The Analysis



**RELATIONAL**  
(Interacting)



**CONTEXTUAL**  
(Thinking)

- Myths
- Known Issues
- Lessons from Grenfell
- Conditions holding status quo in place
- Opportunities to disrupt

**BEHAVIOURAL**  
(Acting)



**FOUNDATIONAL**  
(Structural)



# Making the Water Visible: The Messy Kaleidoscope



## RELATIONAL. (Interacting)

- Issues with Regulators (e.g., Regulatory Capture)
- Issues with Institutions (e.g., Group Think)
- Difficulty of Speaking Truth to Power
- Weak Public Consultations
- Using narratives that silence
- Insufficient attention to relational issues
- Failing to rebalance Power
- Not tapping tapping & distributed knowledge



## CONTEXTUAL (Thinking)

- The web of Competing Tensions
- Bias & Decision Making
- Trust, Deception & Dissonant Action
- Not tending to contextual elements
- The role of Measurement & the Media
- The role of grief in change.
- Not effectively changing culture
- Lack of Political Intent and Will
- Lack of safe spaces to explore deeply held beliefs



## BEHAVIOURAL(Acting)

- Reactive Regulators
- Failure to respond to Scrutiny
- Weak Supply Chain management
- Poor procurement practices
- Inquiry recommendations not effectively implemented
- Focus on blame and blame avoidance
- Unfairly borne consequences
- Outdated product classification, testing & marketing



## FOUNDATIONAL (Structural)

- Regulatory Vulnerabilities
- Weaknesses in Governance & Accountability
- High turnover of ministers and civil servants
- Complex delivery mechanisms
- Increasingly complex Risks
- Political agendas & the role of lobbying
- Failure to distinguish low probability, high consequence risks
- Lack of Competency to deal with risk, ambiguity & complexity



# Making the Water Visible: The Myths



## RELATIONAL. (Interacting)

Issues with Regulators (e.g., Regulatory Capture)  
Issues with Institutions (e.g., Group Think)  
Insufficient attention to relational issues  
Failing to rebalance Power  
Not tapping tapping & distributed knowledge

**SOFTER 'RELATIONAL' ISSUES AREN'T THAT IMPORTANT**



## CONTEXTUAL (Thinking)

The web of Competing Tensions  
Bias & Decision Making  
Trust  
Not  
The  
The  
Not effectively changing culture  
Lack of Political Intent and Will  
Lack of safe spaces to explore deeply held beliefs

**YOU CAN CREATE SYSTEMIC CHANGE WITHOUT SHIFTING CONTEXT**



## BEHAVIOURAL (Acting)

Reactive Regulators  
Failure to respond to Complexity  
Focus on blame and blame avoidance  
Unfairly borne consequences  
Outdated product classification, testing & marketing

**THE PERFECT ERROR-FREE WORLD**



## FOUNDATIONAL (Structural)

Regulatory Vulnerabilities  
Weak  
High  
Con  
Incre  
Political agendas & the role of lobbying  
Failure to distinguish low probability, high consequence risks  
Lack of Competency to deal with risk, ambiguity & complexity

**REGULATIONS GUARANTEE SAFE OUTCOMES**

# Making the Water Visible: Opportunities to Disrupt



## RELATIONAL. (Interacting)

Issues with Regulators (e.g., Regulatory Capture)  
The web of competing tensions

**TAP DIVERSE AND DISTRIBUTED  
KNOWLEDGE**

Insufficient attention to relational issues  
Failing to rebalance Power  
Not tapping tapping & distributed knowledge



## CONTEXTUAL (Thinking)

The web of Competing Tensions  
Bias & Decision Making

**CREATE SAFE SPACES TO CHALLENGE  
DEEPLY HELD VIEWS**

The role of grief in change.  
Not effectively changing culture  
Lack of Political Intent and Will  
Lack of safe spaces to explore deeply held beliefs



## BEHAVIOURAL (Acting)

Reactive Regulators

**ENSURE FAIRLY BORNE  
CONSEQUENCES**

Focus on blame and blame avoidance  
Unfairly borne consequences  
Outdated product classification, testing & marketing



## FOUNDATIONAL (Structural)

Regulatory Vulnerabilities

**INCREASE CAPABILITY TO DEAL WITH  
COMPLEXITY & AMBIGUITY**

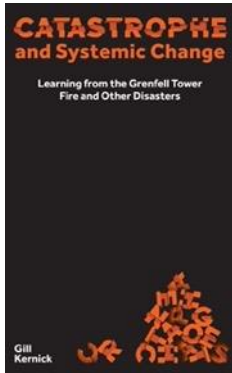
Political agendas & the role of lobbying  
Failure to distinguish low probability, high consequence risks  
Lack of Competency to deal with risk, ambiguity & complexity





# The book

## #CatastropheTheBook



Published: 27 May 2021  
Editor: Diane Coyle  
Publisher: London  
Publishing Partnership

'Learning from catastrophic events to drive necessary change should happen in every area where public safety is a fundamental requirement – as, for example, in the provision of housing. It is scandalous that there is widespread and fundamental failure to apply any lessons learned. Read this book to understand the interplay between those at the top and those at the bottom of the power ladder, and understand how we all can, and should, influence decision and policy makers to facilitate and achieve the changes which are so needed.'

Her Honour Frances Kirkham CBE,  
coroner in the Lakanal House inquests

### Contents

<i>Introduction: the book I wish I'd never had to write</i>	1
<b>PART I: THE GRENELL TOWER FIRE</b>	<b>11</b>
Chapter 1 The Grenfell Tower fire: not just the cladding	13
Chapter 2 Before, during and after: getting in the tunnel	27
<b>PART II: ANALYSIS AND REFLECTIONS</b>	<b>59</b>
Chapter 3 Complexity, safety and systemic change: 'making the water visible'	61
Chapter 4 Foundational elements: 'of bricks or stone'	87
Chapter 5 Behavioural elements: 'blame fixes nothing'	115
Chapter 6 Relational elements: 'I thought I will make happy both of them'	147
Chapter 7 Contextual elements: 'the patronising disposition of unaccountable power'	173
Chapter 8 The democratization of change: of despair and hope	205
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	227
<i>Endnotes</i>	229

vii

# The podcast

## #CatastropheThePodcast



### Episode one. FIRE

Guests: Guillermo Rein, professor of Fire Science at Imperial College London  
Diane Coyle, economist and co-director of the Bennett Institute for Public Policy at Cambridge University

### Episode two; AIR

Guests: David Learmount, consulting editor at Flight Global,  
Jim Wetherbee, retired NASA Astronaut, and Laura Einsetler domestic airline pilot

### Episode three: WATER

Guests: Rose Metcalf, a dancer who was on board the Costa Concordia as it was sinking.  
Andy Brown, CEO of the Portuguese Energy Company Galp

### Episode four: DISEASE.

Guests: Front-line workers, Chidera Ota and Louise Curtis.  
David Alexander, professor of risk reduction at UCL,  
Jill Rutter a senior research fellow at UK in a Changing Europe.

### Episode Five; BLAME.

Guests: Salma Shah, former government advisor and Charlotte Ivers Times Radio correspondent  
Christopher Hood Emeritus Professor of Government at All Souls Oxford and author of The Blame Game .

### Episode 6 HOPE

Guests: Hanan Wahabi, a former resident and survivor of the fire,  
Julian McCrae CEO of Engage Britain -



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Gill Kernick & Matthew  
Price  
A Mother Come Quickly  
Production

