



Absent Aviators: Gender Issues in Aviation

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The objective of this book is to present a number of related chapters on the subject of gender issues in the workplace of the aviation industry. More specifically, the chapters address the continuing shortfall in the number of women pilots in both civilian and military aviation. Considerable research has been carried out on gender issues in the workplace and, for example, women represent about 10% of employees in engineering. This example is often used to show that the consequences of gender discrimination are embedded and difficult to overcome in masculine-dominated occupations. However, women represent only 5-6% of the profession of pilot. Clearly there are many factors which mitigate women seeking to become pilots. The chapters within this volume raise both theoretical and practical issues, endeavouring to address the imbalance of women pilots in this occupation. Absent Aviators consolidates a diverse range of issues from a number of authors from Australia, Austria, the United States, Canada, South Africa and the United Kingdom. Each of the chapters is research-based and aims to present a broad picture of gender issues in aviation, gendered workplaces and sociology, underpinned by sound theoretical perspectives and methodologies. One chapter additionally raises issues on the historical exclusion of race from an airline. The book will prove to be a valuable contribution to the debates on women in masculine-oriented occupations and a practical guide for the aviation industry to help overcome the looming shortfall of pilots. It is also hoped it will directly encourage young women to identify and overcome the barriers to becoming a civilian or military pilot.

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Editorial Review

Review

Aviation is an intensely competitive, global industry providing transportation and employment across the world. Absent Aviators is a must read for anyone with an interest in the gendered history, structure and culture of this fascinating industry. It is predicted that over 400,000 new pilots will be needed within the next two decades to meet increasing demand. Against this background, the contributors to this timely book ask, why are women so under-represented in commercial airline piloting, and what can be done to address this problem? Melissa Tyler, University of Essex, UK

About the Author

Donna Bridges has a PhD in sociology from the University of Western Sydney (UWS). Her doctoral thesis 'The Gendered Battlefield: Women in the Australian Defence Force' is a qualitative, feminist exploration of gender inequalities in the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Donna lectures across a range of sociology subjects at Charles Sturt University. Donna is co-editor of the qualitative research book 'Creative Spaces for Qualitative Researching: Living Research' Higgs, J; Titchen, A; Horsfall, D and Bridges, D. (2011). Her research interests include qualitative research methodologies; gender, masculinity and feminist theory; culture; peace studies; peacekeeping and women's roles; and military sociology. Jane Neal-Smith has a PhD in Industrial Psychology and Sociology which explored the working lives of UK commercial women airline pilots. She is currently a senior lecturer at London Metropolitan Business School in the Management, Strategy and Leadership subject group. Her research interests are in aviation psychology and human factors, women in the workplace, gender in employment and organisational behaviour. She is a member of the Royal Aeronautical Society (MRAeS) and the European Association for Aviation Psychology (EAAP). Albert J. Mills is Professor of Management and Director of the PhD (Management) Program at Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. His 300 publications include numerous books, book chapters, and journal articles on gender and commercial aviation. He is an Associate Editor of three scholarly journals - Organization; Gender, Work and Organization, and Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management, and serves on the editorial boards of several other journals. He is the author of Sex, Strategy and the Stratosphere: the gendering of airline cultures (Palgrave/MacMillan), and his latest book is ANTi-History: Theorizing the Past, History, and Historiography in Management and Organizational Studies (IAP, 2012).

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