

CULTURE IN THE COCKPIT

Here's what aviation safety gets wrong.

DID YOU KNOW?

The cockpit has consistently looked the same.

For most of aviation history, pilots were almost all white men. That hasn't changed much.



<5%

of U.S. airline pilots are women

<1%

of commercial pilots are Black

Western pilots wrote the rules.



THE HIDDEN ASSUMPTION

American and European aviators are the model for most cockpit training. Their culture accepts challenging authority. But in many other cultures, questioning a superior is seen as disrespectful—so crews stay silent, even when something is wrong.

A REAL, HISTORICAL EXAMPLE:

DECEMBER 20, 1995 · AMERICAN AIRLINES FLIGHT 965

159 people died when a plane crashed in Colombia.

The co-pilot saw the danger. But challenging a senior captain felt disrespectful, so he stayed quiet.

Western regulators call Nepal "behind".

International aviation bodies label Nepal's manual flying outdated. But its pilots fly through mountain weather with no radar. After autopilot failures caused recent crashes, those are the exact skills everyone else now wants.

A GLOBAL PROBLEM: NEPAL



Sources

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