

Ewelina Anna Randall

ENGL 11000

Professor Danielle Carr

Flying across the aviation gender gap

Since the beginning of the world gender has impacted different parts of human life such as career, passion and household duties. Traditionally women were perceived as the ones that should be taking care of the house and raising children, while men were out there making big changes in the world, huge steps in their careers and big salaries. Currently in the XXI century, we don't classify gender anymore and we encourage more women to study in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) programs, but we still see a significantly larger number of men in the aviation industry. ^{← something, a transition sentence, should go there.} Even though men seem to be larger, stronger, faster and less emotional than women, the success rate of female pilots doesn't depend on the physical and psychological differences between genders. } good here

How many times have you sat inside the commercial airplane waiting to take off and heard a soft, female voice greeting you and wishing you a good flight through the speakers? Your first thought could be "Do you mean the stewardess speaking to me"? What if I told you that the speaking voice comes from a female pilot? Seeing a woman in the cockpit of the airplane is still a surprising situation that some people are not able to deal with trusting stereotypes over pilot's approved skills. It is known that the world has been battling with the lack of women in STEM programs. Physical differences between women and men led us to believe that each one is made to work in a different field characterized by the gender specimens. Men, mostly seen as a strong ^{and} leaders great under the pressure, ^{students they usually} are the majority of STEM programs, becoming ^e an engineers,

architects and more. "Aviation, in particular, is one of those nongender-neutral occupations. It had been historically considered to be a fixed masculine occupation" (Walton and Politano 68). In fact, it took until 1907 before the name "Aviatrix" was created for female pilot.

More here

There are few aviatrixes that are recognizable by all, one of them is Amelia Earhart, one of the most famous pilots in the world. Knowing that she could be a pioneer and achieve more than any men out there is another proof that gender doesn't limit our capabilities. Being successful in aviation industry takes a lot of work, courage and focus. It also requires potential candidates to have an excellent health and vision which is hard to find. Becoming a pilot is not an easy road that can discourage many people in the very beginning. From the financial point of view, a price for one flight lesson varies between \$180-\$250 per hour. To receive a basic private pilot license, you will need at least 40 hours of flight. Math doesn't lie, flying is a very expensive hobby or a huge investment in your career. Adding those stress factors, requirements and costs all together the goal of being a pilot becomes unattractive, out of reach and undoable. On top of that, female candidates

have to face discrimination and have to prove themselves throughout the entire course focused more on not making any mistakes than men, instead of focusing on pleasure of flying. Those small problems like ^{how} what to dress when going for a flight lesson ^{in order to} not to be judged by other pilots or how to act amongst the pilots so they respect you but don't see you as an object to flirt with, seem not even worth attention but if you add it all up with the amount of studying that you need to do and price you pay for each flight lesson it becomes tiring and not worth it, which could be one of the factors why it is so rare to find an aviatrix. *This was all on law and Order the other day.*

Searching for the reasons behind the lack of women in aviation brings up a few questions. Are we really that different? Since we still don't know what exactly makes most females play with a doll as a kids and men with robots and cars, how can we judge our abilities based on the gender?

Also, this is true of many careers though...

In the Naval Postgraduate School in California it was noticed that "White male students succeed at a rate 10-20 percent greater than female and minority students for the overall flight program" (Miller 10). Due to their concerns about existing bias they did a research that showed that even though there are no proven differences between gender/race and pilot's abilities, there is a noticeable discrimination and double-standard bias. Women were given more flight lessons than men due to the guilt coming from the history of discrimination or they were given worse grades and were treated poorly due to their gender and race. Another example of research based on gender in the aviation industry is a study done by Massoud Bazargan and Vitaly Guzhva, which analyzed the impact of gender, age and experience of pilots on aviation accidents. From the surveys and databases it was concluded that the ratio of pilot error to the total number of accidents is higher for women, although "male general aviation pilots are taking more risks than female pilots and those risks lead to more fatal accidents" (Bazargan and Guzhva 966). Those two studies showed that there's no simple evidence to prove that physical and psychological differences can directly influence pilot's flight performance.

has thus spending more money?

Cause neither agree. And since there less women pilots, +

Even though the aviation industry is open to all the genders it doesn't welcome you without any judgments. After passing all the medical and theoretical exams to become a pilot, which are very difficult and eliminate approximately 40% of the candidates, you have to face the male dominated community. Unfortunately to this day women have to overcome stereotypical mindsets and prove themselves to gain respect and be treated equal to men. When men sign up for their first flight lesson they are seen as the prospective pilot. Women seen anywhere close to the airport are mistaken by the wife of the pilot, a woman who is using the flight school as a dating platform or a desk assistant afraid to fly. "The continuation of the gendered culture of masculine beliefs, values, and gender biases of the air pilot industry has resulted in sexism, high visibility and scrutiny,

just mean that has to have some significance

Also, there are few mentors, especially for women people of color.

people need mentors to advance in careers, this might be another reason

isolation and ostracism, less favorable advancement opportunities, and harassment of female pilots” (Walton and Politano 68), which could be the main reason for the absence of women in aviation. Nobody wants to be part of the industry that constantly reminds you of the inequality and embraces your mistakes as the proof for the commonly known stereotype. As Mitchell, Kristovics and Vermeulen said “The aviation industry, in an attempt to encourage women to take up flying as a career, needs to address many latent issues that provide disincentives to women” (Mitchell, ~~and~~ Kristivics, and Vermeulen 55), what also shows us that possible another reason behind absence of women pilots is the mentality ^{of the} and aviation industry itself. On the bright side, there are communities of aviatrixes which main goal is to help, engage and reward those determined women who chose this aviation path. “Women in Aviation International” is one of those organizations which provides their members with hundreds of scholarships every year helping women get their licenses and succeeding in many STEM careers. } ² good

Even though there are visible physical differences between women and men, the real reason behind the lack of women in aviation is not fully science based. Women have been facing prejudice for a long time and to this day it is a problem worth exploring. Encouraging young girls to become part of the STEM world is one of the ways to fix this ongoing issue. The technology and science world needs more experts and is evolving very fast, with women on board it will evolve even faster making this world a better place to live.

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