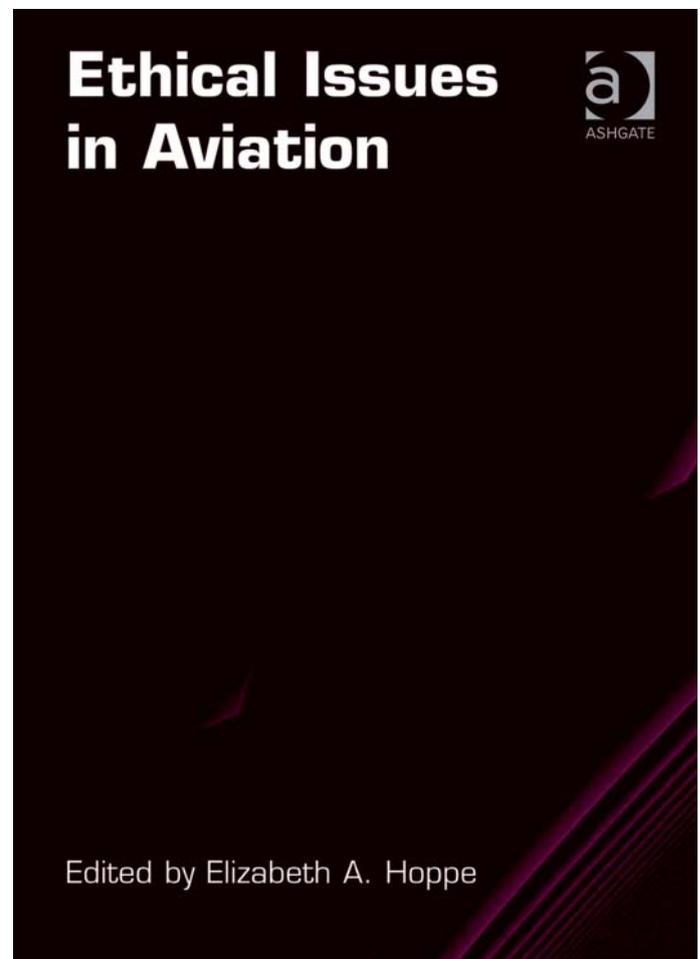# Ethical Issues in Aviation

The book is dedicated to the first 7 students who have completed the Aviation Ethics course at Lewis University. This emphasizes the need to explicitly incorporate ethics in education and training. As such, the book is a novelty in its kind and provides a unique opportunity for aviation students, scientists and practitioners to get explicitly acquainted with ethics in aviation beyond the level of codes of conduct, normative behavior and anecdotic, operational dilemmas.

By Elizabeth A. Hoppe

Book Review by: John Stoop

'Ethical issues in aviation' explores an array of ethical theories, backgrounds, motives and control mechanisms in the American aviation industry that have had a –frequently hidden- impact on ethical issues. The book is very informative for in particular non-American readers, because it highlights contexts and developments in the USA that are not frequently made explicit to the rest of the world, such as the Deregulation Act of 1978. The approach in this book differs from the ethics and safety discourse that is going on in other parts of the world, -in particular the European region- which are more dealing with human error, organizational failure, responsibilities and judgments of operator behavior. For a further reading on such more normative topics, Ashgate provides other books in its human factors and resilience engineering series. This book provides a refreshing and new line of reasoning into aviation ethics.

This book is a collection of contributions of 25 authors and is structured along 5 parts, each focusing on a specific aspect of ethics and aviation, emphasizing decision making and moral standards. The most interesting part as far as I am concerned dealt with four theoretical frameworks, covering a Utilitarian, Kantian, Rights and Virtue based perspective on ethical decision making. The novelty of this part is in the clear description of strengths, weaknesses and assumptions of each of these theories, highlighting their potential and limitations. A unique chapter is on capitalism and its critics, putting the generic moral issues and ethics theories in the context of a specific high-technology industry, the aviation community and national governance control. This chapter elaborates not only on the role of labor and the position of workers in the system, but provides an interesting insight in the role of consumers as well and how they are captured in a never ending cycle of consumer behavior. A next series of authors opens up crucial questions by touching on the topics of pricing, maintenance and manufacturing outsourcing, cost control and corporate and governance responsibility, which are closely related to the issue of safety. The other parts of the book deal with other critical issues in aviation which are in the center of public and political eyes, but have a less distinct or di-

rect relation to ethical questions in terms of business continuity and safety. These parts deal with equal rights for minorities, with airport, ATC , security, health and environmental issues.

A moral dilemma that is not discussed in this book however, is how these aspects interfere with safety critical design decisions and operational behavior of the aviation system. There is anecdotic evidence that noise abatement procedures, strict security regimes, free flight concepts, certification of new aircraft configurations and technological innovations may jeopardize safety by defining acceptable quantitative risk levels and sacrificial

Ethical Issues in Aviation *is an innovative and thought-provoking book that explores an important, but heretofore, neglected area of research. While the study of ethics has been applied in numerous other industries, its application to aviation is long overdue. For those who study aviation, this book is sure to provide multiple new perspectives on familiar issues. It was a treat to read about the business of aviation, safety, diversity, airport development, and environmental issues through an ethical lens.*
Andrew R. Goetz, University of Denver, USA

Ethical Issues in Aviation

Applied ethics has been gaining wide attention in a variety of curriculums, and there is growing awareness of the need for ethical training in general. Well-publicized ethical problems such as the *Challenger* disaster, the Ford Pinto case and the collapse of corporations such as Enron have highlighted the need to rethink the role of ethics in the workplace. The concept of applied ethics originated in medicine with a groundbreaking book published in 1979. Business ethics books began to appear in the 1980s, with engineering ethics following in the 1990s. This volume now opens up a new area of applied ethics, comprehensively addressing the ethical issues confronting the civil aviation industry.

The book provides the reader with an overview of the major themes in civil aviation ethics. It begins with theoretical frameworks, followed by sections on the business side of aviation, employee responsibility, diversity in aviation, ground issues regarding airports, air traffic control and security, as well as health and the environment. The contributors to the volume include both academics doing research in the field as well as professionals who provide accounts of the ethical situations that arise in the workplace.

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decision making considerations. Such decision making is based on utilitarian principles only and does not mobilize the array of opportunities that have been presented in this book. The ethical underpinning of such complex multidimensional decision making at an integrated systems level could be the subject of a next book. This could be done even in a multi-modal context because as the CEO of a major railway company once said at a European safety conference: if we start killing our crew and passengers, we are on the wrong track.

My conclusion: a very worthwhile book that deserves reading, a follow-up on some unresolved issues and a wide audience.

About the author:
Dr. Elizabeth A. Hoppe is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Lewis University, Illinois. She is a member of the Association for Professional and Practical Ethics.

About the reviewer:
John Stoop is an aerospace engineer, specialized in safety investigations in all modes of transportation. He works at Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands and is a guest professor in safety investigation methodology and systems engineering at the University of Lund in Sweden. Stoop is a full member of ISASI, the international, professional association of air safety investigators.

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