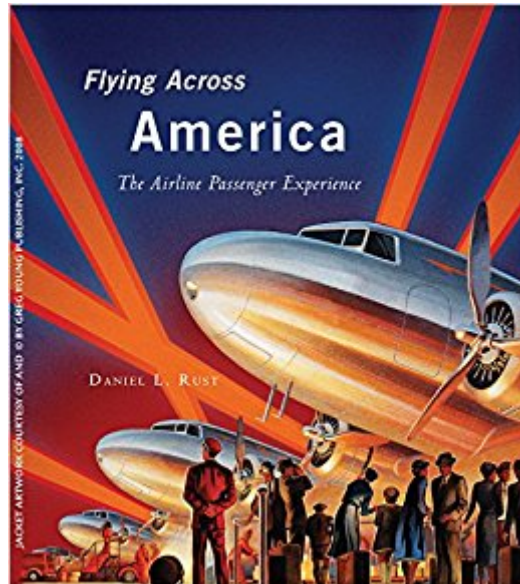




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# Flying Across America



## Synopsis

Americans who now endure the inconveniences of crowded airports, packed airplanes, and missed connections might not realize that flying was once an elegant, exhilarating adventure. In this colorful history, Daniel L. Rust traces the evolution of commercial air travel from the first transcontinental expeditions of the 1920s, through the luxurious airline environments of the 1960s, to the more hectic, fatiguing experiences of flying in the post-9/11 era. In the beginning, flying coast-to-coast was an exciting yet uncomfortable journey of nearly forty-eight hours that required numerous stops and overnight travel by train. With time and technical innovation, passengers became increasingly removed both physically and psychologically from the raw experience of flying. Faster planes, pressurized cabins, onboard amenities, and stronger safety precautions made flying more convenient and predictable—but also less evocative and sensational. Prior to the 1980s, Americans dressed for air travel in their formal best and enjoyed such luxurious onboard amenities as delicious meals and ample cabin space. What made air travel glamorous, however, also made it more expensive. With deregulation in 1978, cost reductions reduced flying to a more tedious and, after 9/11, more regimented experience. Rust's narrative brims with firsthand accounts from such celebrities as Will Rogers and from ordinary Americans. Enlivened by more than 100 illustrations, including vintage brochures, posters, and photographs, *Flying Across America* reminds today's airline passengers of what they have gained—and what they have lost—in the transcontinental flying experience.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Daniel L. Rust is Assistant Director of the Center for Transportation Studies at the University of Missouri, St. Louis.

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The author did a remarkable job in providing readers an extensive overview of the historical development of air travel in the U.S. The photos that were utilized provided the additional visual support to make this book a winner. I am a pilot and have flown within the states for many years. The author has given me a deeper understanding of the development of the airline industry and its great accomplishments that have provided us with the best aviation passenger service in the world.

THE BOOK on commercial aircraft in America. Will fascinate almost everyone who has flown. PLENTY OF GREAT EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR PHOTOS OF EARLY PLANES. Fascinating history at its best! You will LOVE this book!

Great book on the experiences of early airline travel.

Awesome photography. Thorough and intriguing historical details written in conversational style. Great gift for anyone interested in aviation, the history of aviation, or history in general.

Excellent description of the way it was, when being an airplane passenger was exciting. Has many interesting details and great illustrations and photos.

I am pilot and aviation buff. I enjoyed the written history aspect but was greatly disappointed at the lack of depth of pictures. The same photos and illustrations were used over and over in succeeding chapters. I would not give this book as gift to other aviation buffs.

In a single generation, civilian aviation went from a few adventure hardy men and women trying out the new transportation technology of airplanes, to a common place occurrence among a majority of the American population. What might not be obvious to the current generation whose experience with air flight transportation is one of crowded terminals, weather related delays and cancellations,

missed connections and lost luggage, is that in its 'Golden Age', travel by airplane was one of elegance, luxury, and the thrill of a lifetime. "Flying Across America: The Airline Passenger Experience" by Daniel L. Rust (Assistant Director of the Center for Transportation Studies at the University of Missouri--St. Louis), is a superbly illustrated and informatively written account of the evolution of commercial passenger service from its beginnings in the 1920s through its increasing accessibility in the 1960s, to the Post 9/11 problematic conditions that are the present day norm. Laced through this deftly written history are firsthand accounts from celebrities like Will Rogers (who ultimately lost his life in an air plane crash) to ordinary American passengers. Unique and inherently entertaining, "Flying Across America" is a welcome and highly recommended addition to community, and academic library Aviation Studies and American Aviation History reference collections and personal reading lists.

I just returned from a flight from San Francisco to Boston....actually my first "cross country" flight, although I've flown quite a bit to other places, including Europe and Great Britain. I was talking to friends about my first experience flying, in 1960, to my grandmother's in Florida from Pittsburgh. I was 15 years old, wore a dress, and high heels on the flight. There was absolutely no security. The plane sat on the tarmac behind a chain link fence. The airline person collected your ticket at the gate in the fence, and someone took your bag there also, carrying it to the plane. There was plenty of space on the plane, and the flight attendants were friendly and polite to each passenger. When my grandmother flew back to Florida from her Pittsburgh visits, my mother would get onto the plane with her, helping her carry her bag and whatever else she had with her. I feel badly that young children and people today will never know that type of experience. I know I sound like an "old fogie" but flying today certainly ain't what it used to be!!!! No doubt about it!!! Today, it's like riding on a bus!!

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