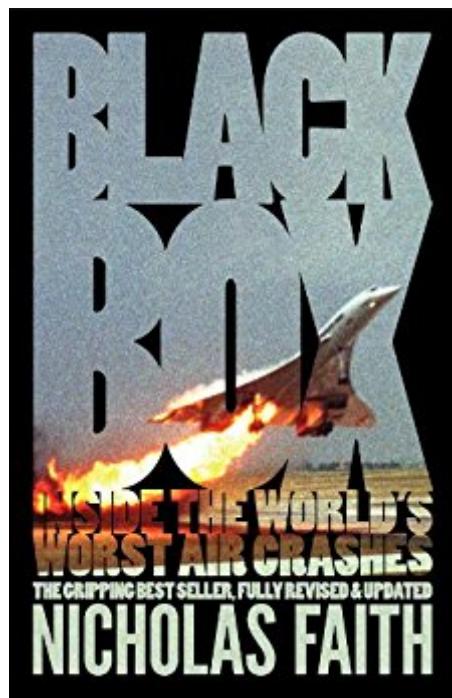


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Black Box: Inside The World's Worst Air Crashes



Synopsis

The smash-hit bestseller about the world's worst air crashes and the disaster detectives who pick through the wreckage to find out why they happened - now fully revised and updated, with 30% new material. From the early tragedies of the Comet and the DC10 to the modern-day horror of the Concorde catastrophe in Paris and the mysterious loss of an Air France Airbus over the Atlantic, Faith painstakingly recreates the accidents, explains what went wrong and discusses how they can be prevented from recurring. It's a gripping, fascinating and chilling book.

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Customer Reviews

I really enjoyed this book because many of the NTSB accidents that are laid out in the book, I had heard of, but never really knew the whole story. I have great respect for the men and women of the NTSB who have to respond to the accidents and see sights I hope I'll never see. The book also goes into accidents in Europe, and different parts of the world. I was very interested in the detail of TWA flight 800 that blew up over Long Island, the author brings out information that I never heard. As a pilot myself, who lost a brother in an aircraft crash, I was very compelled to go to the scene of

the accident. At the end of the book the author talks about this very thing. The police would not let me close to the plane, but then a worker from the NTSB came over, told the police it was alright to let me go with him in the woods to the crash site. I was always thankful to this man who was the head investigator of the crash scene. It gave me a quick understanding of what most likely might have happened even before the official NTSB report was out. When reading the book I got the impression that politics and money often get in the way of safety. What else is new!! Now with what I just said and giving the book five stars, I must say that I got off to a bad start with the author in the forward section of the book when he seems to want to crucify us general aviation pilots out there. Like any group of people who share a common interest, you have the bad ones that make it hard on us. Most of the pilots I know who reside below 10,000 feet do their best to obey the rules, after all, the FAA will come down hard on us with fines, loss of license, etc., and most of us don't have a death wish. Yes there are cowboys and showoffs, but they usually don't stick around for long, if you know what I mean. Enough said, I just don't agree with Nicholas Faith about us GA pilots, but still think this book is great reading. Read it and I don't think you'll be disappointed.

If you have interest in aviation, or in history, this book is a great read. Even if you fly only occasionally, you will end by appreciating all of the technological and safety advances that have been implemented after people gave up their lives while flying. I remember when many of the air crashes occurred that are well documented by Mr. Faith. However, in many cases I had no appreciation of the safety improvements resulting from those crashes - things I take for granted when I fly today. This book is not scary; this book is thoughtful and compassionate toward the victims. It is also not shy about pointing out flaws and faults with airlines, governments of various countries and corporations. Important takeaway: travelers should stop trying to haul all of their worldly goods onto a plane and cramming them into the overhead bins. After reading this book, I find that I would rather pay to check a bag and live to wear the clothes in my luggage. Better that than being the unintentional cause of some victim's horrific injury in the event of inflight turbulence or an evacuation. Don't agree? Read Black Box!

I had to stop reading at 53%, when the author says about an accident in Brazil: "In September 1988, a Brazilian pilot on a routine domestic flight became so obsessed with listening to a football match between his country and Chile that in the end he had to make a crash landing in the jungle after having flown in exactly the opposite direction to his supposed route. It was said that his first question after he had hacked through the jungle to meet his rescuers was 'who won?'" This is very

far from truth. The pilot did a very bad work indeed, as he set the direction of flight to 2700 instead of 0270 (270.0 instead of 027.0). Then, after that, he could not detect the error of flying to the sun at the end of the day instead of having the sun at his left. But the instrument for that direction to be registered had been modified and, after the accident, other pilots did a similar error in simulations. As the fiction of listening to the match, the pilot tried to get directions from radio transmitters as it was at the time of the match. This kind of basic and huge mistake made loose all interest in reading the entire book.

Before chapter 1, he insults all private pilots and NRA members. Chapter 1 is all about air crash investigators and the tough job that they have. At one point, they were referred to as the "unsung heroes" of aviation. (Come on, really?) 1 chapter is all about the black boxes, but it does not really go into any detail about them. Politics come up often. And plane crashes are briefly mentioned throughout, but never in any real detail. It was painful and frustrating to read!

I'll start by saying I'm a search and rescue pilot, so I have a particular interest in this subject. His insights on the Airbus A320 clearly show that the author has done his homework. Pilots on the new fly by wire don't need more training or less training, they need different training. His contrast between the Boeing and Airbus approach is spot on, and is designed to help both layman and expert better understand tragedies like Air France 447, and to help others prevent this in the future. It has a very international flavor, and very real insights as well as even a few humorous moments. This is a very interesting book, one that I am now recommending to my friends in the aviation community.

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