



Skygods: The Fall of Pan Am

By Robert Gandt

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Told from the point of view of aviators and executives, the inside story of Pan American Airlines reveals the glory days and downfall of the aeronautical giant from the time when Pan Am ruled the skies to deregulation and Lockerbie. 25,000 first printing. \$30,000 first printing. Tour.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Pan Am and its founder Juan Trippe were major players in the creation of the commercial airline industry. Pan Am, founded in 1927, was the first airline to fly across the Pacific, across the Atlantic and around the world. It was also the first U.S. airline to fly jets. Pan Am's early success in aviation allowed the company to expand into other areas such as ownership of the Intercontinental Hotel chain and the Pan Am Building in New York City. In the mid-1970s, however, Pan Am began to lose money and Trippe's successors were unable to turn the airline around. The company's last years were punctuated by attempts to find a buyer as well as the piecemeal divestiture of the company. Gandt peppers his recounting of the decline of Pan Am with anecdotes from former employees, mainly pilots. And while this is an involving account, Gandt, an aviation freelance journalist, does not provide much analysis of the root causes of Pan Am's failure, attributing its demise in 1991 to bad management and bad luck. At the end of this tale readers will likely ask themselves--as apparently did most Pan Am employees--why did Pan Am die?

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From Library Journal

Aviation journalist and pilot Gandt interweaves the complex and interesting story of Pan Am's rise under founder and visionary Juan Trippe with American business and politics. Trippe molded Pan Am from the glory days of flying boats and the opening of Pacific routes to new piston-driven airliners and the transition to jets. In 1965 Pan Am was the world's preeminent airline, boasting 40,000 employees, 143 airliners, and over \$1 billion in revenues; it was also the torchbearer for new aircraft designs. How Trippe achieved this and influenced Presidents Kennedy and Johnson reveal the workings of American business and politics. In 1968 foreign carriers increased, revenues declined, and Trippe resigned. In the Seventies a series of catastrophic accidents, increasing competition, rising fuel costs, and a strike started the downward spiral exacerbated by the 1988 Lockerbie tragedy and Chapter 11 proceedings. A fascinating commentary on aviation and American business; for public libraries.

William A. McIntyre, New Hampshire Technical Coll. Lib., Nashua

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From [Booklist](#)

The history of pioneering Pan American World Airways has already been well chronicled in more than a half dozen books, but Gandt--himself a pilot--tells Pan Am's story from the point of view of those who proudly worked for it. He focuses on the airline's heady glory days of the 1960s, when it showily began accepting reservations for the first commercial flight to the moon, and then he tracks its slow but steady descent and ultimate crack-up when it was forced to call it quits at the end of 1991. Gandt documents the toll taken by the company's participation in airlifting troops to Vietnam, a bitter strike in 1985, deregulation, and the Lockerbie terrorist bombing tragedy; and he vividly describes the subsequent effects on both the company and the men and women--in particular the pilots ("skygods")--who worked for it. *David Rouse*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Annette Carroll:

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