

"NOW HAWAII IS ONLY HOURS AWAY!:" THE AIRLINES ALTER TOURISM

Douglas Karsner
Bloomsburg University

ABSTRACT

This article examines how commercial aviation influenced the nature of tourism between 1945 and 1970. Long-term trends such as rising real income, education levels, and leisure time, combined with postwar, airline-initiated developments, such as coach class service and credit plans, to transform pleasure travel for millions of Americans. The most significant changes include the emergence of a large middle class tourist market, and a growing preference for planes over ships and trains for long distance trips.

On October 23, 1950, while aboard a Pan American World Airways Lockheed Constellation bound for Bermuda, Vail Bontecou wrote a postcard to his mother. It said:

*Dearest Mother,
Here we are airborne at 15,000 feet over the Atlantic. It is smooth at this height, and the cabin is pressurized so we are unaware of the thin air outside. We can't see the waves; we're too high—only the blue which we know is water. I think you'd agree this giant plane has even your comfortable transcontinental train beaten.*

Love, Vail

This missive would have made wonderful advertising copy for an airline public relations campaign.¹

Until the third-quarter of the nineteenth century, only the upper class had the time and money to travel long distances for vacations. By the 1870s, several factors such as a rising standard of living and the proliferation of railroad and steamship lines, opened travel to the new middle class. In the twentieth century, mass automobility helped foster the continued transformation of the travel experience.² Yet, insufficient time and money still prevented most middle class people from journeying to faraway places.

Beginning in the late 1940s, the rapid growth of commercial aviation began to transform the nature of tourism once again. To understand how commercial aviation affected tourism, the changes should be analyzed within the broader context of the transformation of American society. The postwar shift toward a new socio-economic order, what scholars call post-industrial society, was crucial to this development.³ This paper will examine how key elements of post-industrial society such as rising real income, education levels, leisure time, and advertising expenditures facilitated the incredible postwar

expansion of the commercial airlines. Then, it will analyze how the airlines took advantage of these long-term trends to promote air travel between 1945 and 1970. Finally, the impact of these interrelated developments will be briefly discussed.

First, despite occasional recessions, the American economy grew rapidly in the quarter century after World War II. In its comprehensive 1971 study *Factors and Trends Influencing Air Travel*, the McDonnell Douglas Corporation asserted that rising income was one of the key factors that stimulated the tremendous expansion of postwar air travel in the United States. In constant dollars, disposable personal income rose an astronomical 64.6 percent between 1947 and 1962. Consumer expenditures on airline tickets increased an average 15.6 percent per year, more than twice the annual personal consumption expenditure rate during this time period.⁴

Data collected by the Port of New York Authority during the 1950s and 1960s verify that the airlines had become successful in enticing progressively more middle and upper-middle class Americans. In 1956, 25 percent of New York domestic airline passengers made over \$20,000 per year. This income bracket was far above the national median of \$4,710. By 1967, 40 percent of these passengers made over \$20,000, a figure still substantially above the national median of \$7,512.⁵

Income data collected by Detroit authorities in 1968 reveal a similar pattern. Over 27 percent of the air travelers using Detroit Metropolitan Airport made \$20,000 or more per year. Overall, two-thirds of the Motor City's air passengers earned more than the national median income.⁶

A second identifying characteristic of post-industrial American society was the rising level of education among the populace. In the mid-1960s, about 10 percent of the total population of the United States had earned college degrees. In sharp contrast, over 45 percent of Detroit air passengers and more than 50 percent of New York passengers had graduated from college. More important, in 1967, 60 percent of New York domestic air passengers traveling for pleasure had at least attended college. These data reflect the ability of the airlines to attract the expanding population of college-educated Americans for pleasure travel.⁷

The McDonnell Douglas study contended that higher education had a significant indirect impact on air travel. In the 1950s and 1960s, New York data revealed that persons engaged in occupations such as law, finance, and insurance flew more than people in other job categories. For most of these jobs, a college degree had become essential. The salaries, vacation time, and diverse interests of these people made them more inclined to use the commercial airlines when traveling for pleasure.⁸

A third key element of post-industrial society was increasing leisure time. At the beginning of the twentieth century, most Americans worked about sixty hours per week. By the early 1950s, the forty-hour work week had become standard for most employees.⁹ Many of these workers also received paid vacations. All of these interrelated factors—higher wages, fewer hours, paid vacations, and early retirements—fostered increased leisure time for an expanding number of Americans. *Business Week* proclaimed in 1953

THE AIRLINES ALTER TOURISM

that "leisure has been democratized." Though an exaggeration, it was nevertheless true that activities and goods that had once been the sole province of the upper class could now be enjoyed to some degree by a majority of Americans. Leisure time could be devoted to many things: one could garden, go bowling—or travel.¹⁰

A fourth essential element of post-industrial society was advertising. While advertising became increasingly important in the late nineteenth century, it was not until the 1920s that it began to evolve into its present form. The new image-conscious ads emphasized style and appealed to status consciousness.¹¹ In post-industrial American society, it became more and more essential for businesses to continually expand advertising expenditures to assure the mass consumption of products and services—including flying to vacation destinations.

Even prior to the introduction of commercial jet aircraft in late 1958, the airlines took advantage of these long-term socio-economic changes to help expand their businesses, which simultaneously began to foster a significant transformation in the nature of tourism. As they added larger and faster piston-engined aircraft to their fleets, they introduced numerous innovations—the most significant being coach class service, family fare plans, package tours, and credit plans.¹² These changes began to allow more and more middle income people to fly.

In 1948, President J.H. "Slim" Carmichael of Capital Airlines inaugurated regular coach class service between New York and Chicago. In little more than one year, most airlines had introduced this service. By 1957, 38 percent of all domestic passengers flew coach. Not content to focus only on the domestic tourist market, in 1952 the airlines introduced transatlantic coach fares. Prior to this time, the wealthy comprised the majority of passengers on the luxury liners that took on average five days to make the crossing. Within a few years the transatlantic tourist market had been turned upside down. These new fares were so successful that by 1955 more than 62 percent of all transatlantic airline passengers flew coach class. Passenger surveys revealed that up to three-quarters of the tourist class passengers were first-time flyers. Even before the introduction of jets, aircraft carried more passengers than ships. In an opinion piece in the *Hartford Times*, Pan Am President Juan Trippe noted that an amazing transformation had been wrought in the last few decades as new transportation technology combined with developing societal changes. "Today," he wrote, "Europe is as close to Hartford as the Middle West was 30 years ago."¹³

The airlines also began to emphasize package tour vacations. While the airlines had sold package tours before the war, they had been aimed exclusively at the luxury market. After the war, the airlines altered their marketing strategy as they began using larger aircraft, served more destinations and introduced lower rates. These special vacations offered one low all-expense rate for airfare, hotel, and ground transportation. In 1948, Delta introduced package vacations to Miami and United touted package tours to Hawaii. In the late 1940s, *Better Homes and Garden*—one of many mass circulation magazines that began to carry airline advice articles at this time—predicted that air package

tours would “undoubtedly change many established travel habits. You’ll find yourself planning in terms of where you’ll really want to go, regardless of distance.”¹⁴

Perhaps most important, in 1954 Pan Am and American Airlines established “Go Now-Pay Later” credit plans. Within four years, Delta and United had established similar plans. Each required that the customer paid at least 10 percent down, and could pay off the balance in up to twenty monthly installments. These “Pay Later” plans, which immediately attracted many new travelers, were part of the growth of credit which helped to propel the mass consumer society.¹⁵

To help ensure the success of these new services, the airlines significantly increased their expenditures on advertising. They invested heavily in national magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the *New Yorker*. They also ran frequent newspaper ads, direct mail campaigns, utilized radio spots, and became early users of the new medium of television.¹⁶ During the 1950s, airlines such as United increasingly aimed their ads at different sectors of the expanding tourist market, reflecting the segmentation of American society. They offered flights to “enchanted” Hawaii, western dude ranches, and sporting events. They targeted a variety of groups including people who wanted to take their pets with them on the plane.¹⁷

Because marketing surveys revealed that women were playing an increasingly important role in determining leisure travel plans, the airlines paid more attention to them. In 1954, for example, TWA established a special women’s division to focus on the women’s market. The airline hired and trained five women travel advisors, known as Mary Gordons, who presented promotional speeches before women’s groups at homes, clubs, business offices and industrial plants. Mary Gordons also appeared at fashion shows and made radio and television appearances. They told women “what to wear, where to go, how to pack, what to see and do.” They did this, according to TWA press relations director Ed Boughton, because “women are no longer tied down to their homes.” Vance Packard suggested another reason. In *The Status Seekers* he argued that “there is some evidence that wives . . . tend to be more status conscious than their husbands.” National women’s magazines such as *Good Housekeeping* and *House Beautiful* assisted the airlines by creating travel sections that advised women to persuade the family to fly rather than drive to their vacation destination. Doing so would certainly be an indicator that one was doing quite well in 1950s America. In an affluent society, other-directed middle class women—and men as well—were particularly susceptible to such appeals.¹⁸

These developments began to delineate a change in the spatial pattern of tourist travel for middle-class Americans. Destinations once considered too far for most Americans such as Hawaii, Florida, and Europe, became increasingly popular with the traveling public. Tourism also increasingly became a year-round phenomenon.

Hawaii exemplified this transformation. Pan American was the first airline that provided regularly scheduled passenger service to the islands. Beginning in 1935, they offered one, twenty-two hour flight per week to Honolulu.¹⁹ The depression and the high cost of fares permitted only wealthy Americans to fly to the island paradise. Most

THE AIRLINES ALTER TOURISM

pre-war tourists sailed on ships.

Immediately after the war, the Matson shipping line was still the most aggressive promoter of the islands as a major tourist destination, and carried the largest number of passengers. In 1946, United joined Pan Am in serving Honolulu, followed two years later by Northwest. Increased competition quickly led to fare wars. By 1953, three-quarters of all people who traveled to Hawaii used the airlines—only 25 percent still went by ship.²⁰

Florida was another prime example of this development. In the 1940s, Florida had drawn increasing numbers of Americans to its sunny shores. By the end of the decade, however, through the active efforts of various organizations such as airline advertising departments and local chambers of commerce, Florida was becoming a year-round tourist destination as well. Where before the war only ten percent of Miami Beach hotels stayed open for the summer season, by 1950 the vast majority of hotels kept their doors open.²¹

Airline competition in the Florida market intensified during the next decade. For example, Delta and Eastern helped pioneer off-season package tours to Miami. In 1950, Eastern began selling "Happy Holiday" off-season package tours to Miami Beach. That year they sold over 3,000 tours in conjunction with twelve Miami Beach hotels. Eight years later, with the assistance of over 110 participating hotels and motels, EAL sold more than 92,000 "Happy Holiday" tours. A satisfied Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, EAL's chairman and general manager, concluded that "the Happy Holiday program has generated air traffic that was not there before. The Happy Holiday program has encouraged people to go to Florida who probably would not have made the trip otherwise."²²

By 1957, an important milestone was reached when the year's total air passenger-miles flown by the domestic airlines surpassed the total passenger-miles transported separately by buses and trains. Even before the introduction of jet airliners, the commercial airlines had become the first choice for upper middle-class people traveling distances over 100 miles. Concurrently, the rapid acceptance of coach fares increasingly brought the cost of air travel within the means of middle-class Americans planning a vacation.²³

* * *

Between 1958 and 1970, long-term trends and airline actions fostered the rise of a mass system of commercial aviation, which in turn transformed tourism. What happened during this period was less a dramatic break with the past than an acceleration of earlier developments. The most significant innovations developed by the airlines were the introduction of jet airliners in late 1958, and the acceptance of credit cards.

On October 26, 1958, Pan American made its first transatlantic jet flight. The New York to London flight took only six-and-a-half hours, four-and-a-half hours quicker than the fastest prop airliner. Reflecting the importance of the Florida winter tourist season to the airlines, on December 10, 1958, National Airlines made the first domestic

jet flight when it flew from New York to Miami with a Boeing 707. These flights inaugurated the jet age for American air carriers. Within seven years, jets flew 89 percent of all passenger-miles. Not only were these aircraft faster and smoother than the piston-engined aircraft, they also carried many more passengers.²⁴ This was a transportation revolution similar in magnitude to when the electric trolley superseded the horsecar. The jet did everything the prop aircraft did, but it magnified it many times. Airline and aircraft advertising departments spent large sums of money preparing the American public for this change, and then even more funds celebrating the introduction of jets.²⁵

The airlines helped encourage even greater numbers of tourists to fly when they began accepting credit cards. In August, 1959, Western Air Lines, a regional carrier, agreed to accept Carte Blanche and Diners' Club.²⁶ The following year, Northeast Airlines and Continental Air Lines, the latter a competitor on certain routes with Western, began accepting credit cards, making them among the earliest major corporations to welcome credit cards. The breakthrough came in 1964. American Airlines—a leading carrier—agreed to accept American Express. This move encouraged the other major airlines to accept credit cards. By 1965, air travel had become “the fastest growing segment of the nation's credit card business.”²⁷

The airlines had finally committed themselves to accessing the full potential of the mass consumer society. Accepting credit cards allowed them to reach an even larger number of middle-income consumers. This was especially true for those traveling for pleasure who could afford the time to chose the best coach fares. By 1970, tourists comprised the majority of the 81 percent of domestic passengers who flew coach.

Hawaii provides an excellent case study of the acceleration of this process. Between 1963 and 1970, the airlines dramatically increased the number of tourist flights to Hawaii. By 1970, eight airlines offered 360 nonstop flights each week from thirteen mainland cities to Honolulu and Hilo. Massive advertising budgets trumpeted this development. Approximately one million people flew to Hawaii that year, three-quarters of them tourists. Only 3 percent of all travelers to Hawaii chose the five-day ocean voyage.²⁸

Reducing the number of take-offs and landings also encouraged more people to fly. Until the late 1960s, commercial aircraft did not have sufficient range to fly nonstop from New York to Honolulu. In 1953, for example, it took almost twenty-four hours to make the trip. Propeller-driven airliners had to make stops at Chicago and Los Angeles. By 1970, the B-707 jet airliner could fly nonstop from New York to Honolulu in ten-and-a-half hours.²⁹ This substantial reduction in time, combined with fewer stops, greater levels of in-flight comfort and reduced air fares, greatly stimulated travel to the once-distant land of Hawaii. Also, at a time when large numbers of people had not yet flown, a flight to Hawaii or Europe was surely a mark that one had “made it” in American society.

By 1970, commercial air travel had transformed the nature of American vacations. The airlines significantly expanded the spatial pattern of tourism, and helped to make

THE AIRLINES ALTER TOURISM

the vacation industry a year-round business. Beginning in the late 1940s, more and more Americans visited places that had until only recently been considered too far away. Florida, for example, once the winter domain of the rich, became a year-round destination for millions of middle-class Americans. Even more distant and exotic places like Hawaii could easily be visited during a two-week vacation, allowing the pleasure seekers to spend almost the entire time on the beaches and not in transit. The airlines, taking advantage of socio-economic changes in post-industrial America, also stimulated the emergence of shorter vacation jaunts such as the extended weekend. The preferred means of long distance travel saw an important change from ships and trains to planes. Finally, between 1945 and 1970, the number of passengers carried by the domestic airlines skyrocketed from 6.5 million to more than 153 million. International passengers zoomed from approximately one million to over sixteen million. This incredible rise reflected a significant change in class—from the few lucky upper class leisure travelers to the hordes of middle class tourists rushing to their destinations.³⁰

Notes

1. (quotation from) Vail Bontecou to Mrs. R.B. Bontecou, 23 October 1950. Other airline passengers felt a similar urge to describe the novel experience of flying. On 14 September 1956, Dave Stout exclaimed to parents Mr. and Mrs. I.W. Stout on a TWA-issued postcard: "Flying is wonderful. I can see everything." Postcards in author's collection. For other examples see postcards in the Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, Archives Center, The National Museum of American History, Aviation, Airline Co., no. 60, box 1, folder 2/6-9. See, e.g., Ruthie to Janice Mannix, 22 March 1948, TWA issued postcard, "The plane ride was wonderful—smooth, comfortable, and properly exciting." Also see Gertrude to Mr. and Mrs. Warshaw, 24 February 1955, "Trip delightful. The only way to travel." PAA folder 1/22-30.

2. Donna Braden and Judith Endelman, *Americans on Vacation* (Dearborn: Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, 1990), 8, 9, 13, 66; John Jakle, *The Tourist: Travel in Twentieth-Century North America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985); Hugh De Santis, "The Democratization of Travel: The Travel Agent in American History," *Journal of American Culture* 1 (Spring 1978): 1-17. De Santis' excellent article focused on travel from the 1830s to 1915. By the 1920s, middle class automobile tourism had become a rapidly growing industry. In the latter part of the decade, upper class people began to travel by air.

3. For a detailed discussion of various aspects of post-industrial society see Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973); John Kenneth Galbraith, *The New Industrial State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979, 3rd ed.); Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984, rev. ed.); William Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, 2nd ed.); Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); and, Richard W. Fox and T.J. Jackson Lears, ed. *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980* (New York: Pantheon, 1983).

4. Hale Bartlett, "The Demand for Passenger Air Transportation, 1942-62" (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 1965), 46; "Selected Per Capita Income and Product Items, 1929 to 1988," *Statistical Abstract of the US*, (Washington, D.C.: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, 1990, 110th ed.), 428; *Factors and Trends Influencing Air Travel: McDonnell Douglas Corporation Environmental Forecast 1971-81* (McDonnell Douglas Corporation, 1971), 2, 3.

ESSAYS IN ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS HISTORY (1999)

Year	GNP	Constant 1982 Dollars	
		Disposable Personal Income	Personal Consumption Expenditures
1930	\$5,218	\$3,727	\$3,569
1940	\$5,850	\$4,017	\$3,804
1950	\$7,935	\$5,220	\$4,834
1960	\$9,213	\$6,036	\$5,561
1970	\$11,781	\$8,134	\$7,275

Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis, Statistical Abstract

5. *New York's Domestic Air Passenger Market: June 1967 through May 1968* (New York: The Port of New York Authority, Aviation Economics Division, Aviation Department, 1970), 11, 25; *New York's Transatlantic Air Passenger Market: May 1966 through August 1967* (New York: The Port of New York Authority, Aviation Economics Division, Aviation Department, 1969), 8, 11; "Median Money Wage or Salary Income of All Workers with Wage or Salary Income, and of Year-Round Full-Time Workers, by Sex, Race, and Major Occupation Group: 1939-1970," *Historical Statistics of the US: Colonial Times to 1970 v.2* (Washington, D.C.: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1974), 305.

The data quoted are for white males. The national median income for black males and females and white females was substantially lower than white males for this time period. It is significant that in 1968 the national median income of professional and technical workers, managers, officials, and non-farm proprietors was over \$10,000 per year. These were the only occupational categories with this income level. These people also tended to fly much more than other occupations with lower incomes such as clerical personnel, craftsmen, service workers, laborers, and farm laborers.

According to data obtained from American residents flying from New York to Europe, in 1966 the median transatlantic airline passenger income was \$14,700—considerably above the 1966 median for white males of \$7,164 (for black males the median was \$4,528). This median figure was derived from the first-class passenger median of \$30,200, the economy-class passenger median of \$14,300 (in 1966, economy-class passengers comprised 91 percent of the total transatlantic passengers), and the charter-class passenger median of \$11,900. In 1963, the median transatlantic airline passenger income was \$12,800.

6. *Travel Patterns and Characteristics of Airlines Passengers, Detroit Metropolitan Airport 1968* (Detroit: Detroit Regional Transportation and Land Use Study, and Wayne County Road Commission, 1969), 2, 30-32.

7. *New York's Domestic Air Passenger Market*, 11; *Travel Patterns and Characteristics*, 38-39; *Factors and Trends*, 6-8.

Data for New York:			Data for Detroit:	
Education	1963	1967	1963	1967
college graduate	55%	54%	32.5%	31.8%
some college	23%	20%	24.8%	26.1%
high school graduate			16.6%	15.9%
graduate school			14.0%	15.8%
11 years or less			5.4%	4.1%

Note: Comparative data for business travellers reveal that in 1967, 80 percent had at least some college education.

8. *New York's Domestic Air Passenger Market*, A/38-39; *Factors and Trends Influencing Air Travel*, 6-8. In John Lansing's, *The Travel Market 1958: A Report on the Vacation Travel, Travel Patterns and Attributes of American Families* (Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, 1958), 14, the author concluded just prior to the introduction of commercial jets that people with greater income and education were "most ready to accept travel by jet plane."

Note: The 1971 McDonnell Douglas Study also confirmed that higher education had a direct impact on air travel. More and more students and teachers boarded airliners to study, do research, attend educational meetings and conferences, and travel to and from school.

9. "More Leisure Broadens Travel Market," *Aviation Week* 59 (21 December 1953): 72; "A Long Look

THE AIRLINES ALTER TOURISM

Ahead," *Aviation Week* 59 (12 October 1953); "The Leisured Masses," *Business Week* (12 September 1953): 142-52; De Santis, "The Democratization of Travel," 10. The secularization of Sunday, which began among urban dwellers in the early twentieth century, was also crucial to the growth of travel.

10. "Special Report—America on the Go: More People Going More Places," *Newsweek*, 43 (5 April 1954): 56; "More Leisure Broadens Travel Market," 72; (quotation from) "The Leisured Masses," 142-52.

11. Galbraith, *New Industrial State*, 3-5, 281-2; Galbraith, *The Affluent Society*, 111-128; Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization." Galbraith argued that in a society where concern for food and housing was no longer an issue, consumer demand and behavior was increasingly subject to manipulation by the new image conscious ads which made heavy use of illustrations and photographs. In contrast to these new ads, traditional ads were print-oriented and focused on a sober presentation of information *about the actual product*—not about the alleged effects of the product. The copywriters assumed the buyer was a thinking, rational human being. Beginning during the 1910s-1920s, this assumption began to be replaced with another one—that people were innately irrational creatures who responded best to emotional appeals.

12. *American Airlines, Annual Reports, 1945 to 1958*; *United Air Lines, Annual Reports 1945 to 1958*; *Delta Air Lines, Annual Reports, 1945 to 1958*. Other factors facilitated this development including, e.g., federal government expenditures for aviation infrastructure such as air traffic control and airports, travel agents, car rental-airline agreements (a 1952 AAL ad for its "Plane-Auto Plan" proclaimed "Let American bring you—have Hertz meet you."), and the construction of American-style hotels overseas to assuage the fears of those who could not bear the thought of eating foreign food or sleeping in unusual beds or taking care of business in strange bathrooms. Actually these socio-cultural factors are more fully developed in the larger work from which this paper is derived.

13. (quotation from) Juan Trippe, "A Guest Editorial," *The Hartford Times*, (7 August 1951): 18, Juan Trippe Collection, box 4, A Guest Editorial folder, National Air and Space Museum-Garber; "Travel: The Transatlantic Tourist," *Newsweek* 38 (19 November 1951): 41-42; "Travel: Tourist to Europe," *Newsweek* 38 (17 December 1951): 76; "Travel: Cut-Rate to Europe," *Time* 59 (5 May, 1952): 95; "Cut-Rate Boom," *Business Week* (30 March 1957): 82, 84; "Median Money Wage," *Historical Statistics*, 305; *The Airlines of the United States: An Element in National Economic Growth, an Instrument of National Prestige, a Force for National Security* (Washington, D.C.: Air Transport Association of America, 1961), 21; Davies, *Airlines of the U.S.*, 336-8; Bartlett, "Demand for Passenger Air Transportation," 24; *Handbook of Airline Statistics* (Washington, D.C.: Civil Aeronautics Board, Office of Carrier Accounts and Statistics, Research and Statistics Division, 1961), II-23; "Aviation: Travel Tourist," *Time* 62 (7 September 1953): 87; *Delta Air Lines Annual Report 1950*, 2, 3.

Note: Trippe was a tireless and enthusiastic promoter of air travel. See, e.g., Juan Trippe, "Address Before the Special Luncheon of the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce," 23 February 1950, 4, Juan Terry Trippe Collection, box 2, folder 68, National Air and Space Museum-Garber; "Clipper America Christening, Washington International Airport," 5 March 1949, Trippe Collection, box 2, folder 76; *Before the US Senate Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce Investigation of the Airlines Industry*, 29 June 1949, 1.

On domestic coach fares: Capital and the other scheduled carriers were pressured into introducing coach service by non-scheduled airlines which inaugurated this new fare structure shortly after the war. The scheduled carriers were immediately successful. The early transcontinental coach flights required passengers to squeeze into a seventy-seat configuration on a DC-6 that normally carried fifty-two passengers. The airlines served no meals. However, a passenger could purchase a meal when the airliner landed at Chicago.

On international coach fares: The December 17, 1951 issue of *Newsweek* noted the influence of international politics on the issue of coach fares. They asserted that the British decided to support tourist fares only after the conservatives came to power. A conservative government, they contended, saw the potential for American tourist dollars. The IATA agreement permitted nine foreign carriers to also offer tourist fares. At this time, TWA and Pan Am were the only American carriers permitted to offer European service from the U.S. TWA stated that 66 percent of its 1955 transatlantic passengers flew tourist class. In 1957, *Business Week* noted that 51 percent of tourist passengers earned \$7,000 or less per year. (In 1957, white male median income was \$4,950.) This income level reflected the fact that tourists out-numbered businessmen flying across the Atlan-

ESSAYS IN ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS HISTORY (1999)

tic, just the opposite of domestic flight passenger composition.

Comparison on Total Air and Maritime Passenger Traffic

Between North American and Europe:

Year	By Sea	By Air	Total	Sea/Total (%)
1953	892,000	507,000	1,399,000	64%
1958	957,000	1,193,000	2,150,000	45%
1964	712,000	3,069,000	3,781,000	19%
1969	338,000	6,776,000	7,114,000	5%

Source: H. Peter Gray, *International Travel—International Tourism* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1970), 170-171.

14. U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Banking and Currency, *International Travel in Relation to the Balance of Payments Deficit, Hearings Before the Special Subcommittee on Tourism of the Committee on Banking and Currency*. 88th Cong., 2d sess., 30 November and 1-2 December 1964, 269-70; *Delta Annual Report 1950*, 3; *UAL Annual Report 1949*, 8, 16-17; (quotation from) Louisa Comstock, "Put Your Two Weeks on Wings," *Better Homes and Gardens* 26 (September 1947): 214-216.

15. *AAL Annual Report 1954*, 8; *Delta Annual Report 1955*, 7; *UAL Annual Report 1958*, 7; "Travel on Credit," *Business Week* (17 April 1954): 66, 68; "Airlines Predict Boom from Travel Credit," *Aviation Week* 61 (13 September 1954): 12-13. According to *The Aircraft Yearbook 1955*, Pan Am recorded 16,500 passengers using its "Pan Am Pay Later Plan" during the first seven months of operation. They experienced no defaults. The crucial point is that by the mid-1950s, installment buying accounted for over half of all furniture, television, and automobile sales. The airlines needed to tap this market if they wanted to expand.

16. Daniel Pinkwater, "When it comes to TV, my father Knew Best," *Smithsonian* 21 (July 1990): 42; *Delta Annual Report 1945*, 12; *Delta Annual Report 1950*, 3; *UAL Annual Report 1951*, 8; *UAL Annual Report 1952*, 8.

17. "Now Hawaii Is Only Hours Away!," UAL ad for *Sunset* (June 1950), N. W. Ayer, box 492, folder 1; "United Air Lines . . . Favorite Way to Fly to Dude Ranch Country," UAL ad for *Dude Rancher* (16 June 1952), N. W. Ayer, box 492, folder 1; "Latter Day Saints Tour to Hawaii," UAL ad for *Intermountain News*, 1958, N. W. Ayer, box 493, folder 2; "Be sure your dog gets Extra Care when he travels . . . call United Air Lines," UAL ad for *Dog World* (July 1958), N. W. Ayer, box 493, folder 2; "Just A Little Rag Doll," UAL ad for *Time* (14 July 1958), *Newsweek* (21 July 1958), *US News and World Report* (11 July 1958), N. W. Ayer, box 493, folder 1.

Sample advertising budgets: AAL, one of the two largest airlines at this time, spent \$1.6 million in 1945, \$2.8 million in 1950, and over \$7 million in 1957. Delta, primarily a regional southern carrier at this time, spent \$125,000 in 1945, \$500,000 in 1950, and \$2.5 million in 1957. See the Annual Reports for these companies.

18. Comstock, "Put Your Two Weeks on Wings"; William Wilson, "For Sale: Extra Vacation Days," *Better Homes and Gardens* 35 (August 1957); (first and second quotations from) "Selling Airline Travel to Women," *Business Week* (25 September 1954): 116-117, 120. In T.J. Jackson Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization" from *The Culture of Consumption*, the author argues that from the 1920s onwards women became more and more crucial to the spread of the "therapeutic strategies" of a consumer culture. As part of this culture, travel advertisements were increasingly aimed at women in the postwar era. This development, combined with other factors, led women to play a progressively more important role in making travel decisions. For supporting data see the 1959 Pan Am passenger survey which disclosed that women determined 75 percent of all family vacation plans, in *Air Travel* 15 (August 1959): 1. For appeals to other-directed, status conscious, middle class Americans see David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* (1950) and Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders* (New York: David McKay Co., 1957), and (third quotation from) *The Status Seekers* (New York: David McKay Co., 1959). My thanks to the anonymous EBHS reader who suggested this connection.

19. R. E. Borgstrom, "Air Travel: Toward a Behavioral Geography of Discretionary Travel," *Transportation Geography*, 314-315.

20. *Ibid.*, 314-315, 322; Davies, *Airlines of the U.S.*, 376-77; "Airlines Battle for Hawaiian Business," *Business Week* (2 April 1949): 22-23; "Jets and Junkets Boast Travel," *Business Week* (31 January 1959): 31-32.

THE AIRLINES ALTER TOURISM

In 1952, more than 60,000 tourists visited Hawaii. The next year the airlines offered 35 weekly flights from three west coast cities. By 1957, 181,000 people vacationed in Hawaii—a major increase that came prior to the introduction of jet service.

21. *The Aircraft Yearbook 1950*, 204; "Biggest Year for Resorts," *Business Week* (10 June, 1950): 90, 92, 96; "Florida Beckons," *Business Week* (8 January 1949): 24; "Vacation Air Travel Cost \$164 million," *Aviation Week 53* (3 July 1950): 36-37; Nick Komons, *Aviation's Indispensable Partner Turns 50* (Washington, D.C.: US Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, 1986), 8. Despite the efforts of the airlines, however, about 80 percent of tourists drove to Florida at this time.

During the late 1940s, the railroads and buses also experienced increased ridership to Florida. They carried more passengers than the airlines. The strongest airline competitor to these land-based common carriers was Eastern Air Lines. EAL's air coach to Florida routes included New York/Newark—Washington, D.C.—Jacksonville—Miami; and Chicago/Detroit/Cleveland—Charlotte—Atlanta—Birmingham—Mobile—New Orleans—Houston—Tampa.

22. *Aircraft Yearbook 1955*, 267; "Coach and Economy as Percentage of Total Revenue Passenger-Miles," *Handbook of Airline Statistics, 1971 ed.* (Washington, D.C.: Civil Aeronautics Board, Bureau of Accounts and Statistics, Statistical Data Division, 1972) II-23; *Delta Air Lines Annual Report 1952*, 3; *Delta Air Lines Annual Report 1954*, 10-11; Floyd Hall, "Sunrise at Eastern: Re-Birth of a Pioneer Airline," address before the Newcomen Society, New York City, 2 December 1965, 17, EAL, Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, Aviation Collection, n. 60, box 1, folder 1/10-11, Archives Center, National Museum of American History; (quotation from) "Rickenbacker Tells 'Happy Holiday' Story," *Air Travel* (October 1959): 20.

EAL's Happy Holiday Trips Sold

Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number
1951	4,637	1953	22,204	1955	58,629	1957	95,785
1952	11,280	1954	38,647	1956	72,177	1958	92,362
Hotels		EAL Promotion and		Hotels		EAL Promotion and	
Year Participating		Advertising Costs		Year Participating		Advertising Costs	
1951	18	\$45,330	1955	61 + 4 motels	\$554,191		
1952	36	\$85,625	1956	63 + 19 motels	\$484,382		
1953	40	\$89,887	1957	80 + 20 motels	\$482,943		
1954	54	\$433,465	1958	82 + 31 motels	\$504,446		

23. "Statistical Indicators and Trends in US Air Transport: 1960-72," *Handbook of Airline Statistics*, 501-2; Roger Bilstein, *Flight in America, 1900-1983: From the Wrights to the Astronauts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984) p. 233; Keith Saunders, "Coach Popularity Surges," *The Airline Guide* (October 1960), 9; *FAA Fact Book*, 88.

Coach and Economy as Percentage of Total Revenue Passenger-Miles, Scheduled Service:

	Total Domestic Operations	International and Territorial Operations
1948 (introduced)	0.1	NA
1950	13.2	NA (1951—15.9)
1955	33.8	62.2
1960	47.2	74.6
1965	70.4	89.0
1970	81.0	89.0

Source: *Handbook of Airline Statistics*, II-34.

Note: In terms of actual numbers of domestic passengers transported, however, buses still transported more than four times as many people as the airlines, and the railroads carried more than twice as many.

24. Davies, *Airlines of the U.S.*, 508-531, 648; *AAL Annual Report 1958*, 10, 12; "Fast Growth of Air Travel—Report on a Nonstop Boom," *US News and World Report* 61 (5 September 1966): 51-52; "One of America's Proudest Moments—Jet Clippers Are Here—A Bright New Day for You," Pan Am publicity pamphlet, Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, Aviation Collection, n. 60, folder 1/22-30, Archives Cen-

ESSAYS IN ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS HISTORY (1999)

ter, National Museum of American History.

Beginning 16 November 1958, Pan Am began to offer daily Jet Clipper service from New York to London in an all-economy seating configuration of 167 passengers. Compare this figure with the largest piston airliner DC-7C's 110 passenger capacity.

In its 1964 annual report, Delta noted that 49 percent of all passengers the airline had ever carried had occurred since 1959 after the arrival of the jet airliner.

The British and the Soviets actually introduced jet service prior to the Americans. The British introduced long-haul jet service in 1952 with their Comet jet airliner. Unfortunately, inadequate research into what happened to aircraft after repeated pressurization and de-pressurization of the cabin led to a series of Comets imploding, with total loss of life. They were grounded. Later, an improved version was introduced in 1958. The Soviets introduced Tu-104 jet airliner service in 1956. The Tu-104 was developed from the Tu-16 medium bomber. See P.W. Brooks, "The Development of Air Transport," *Transportation Geography: Comments and Readings* edited by Michael Hurst (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), 269-73.

25. "What will it be like to fly in a jet?" Douglas Aircraft Company ad for *Life* (1 April 1957), 40-41; "DC-8 . . . Best of The Jets for Everyone," UAL ad for *Reader's Digest* (1960), N. W. Ayer, box 494, folder 1.

The airlines also stressed many other features of jet air travel such as movies and special menus for children. In dramatically photographed ads, they introduced hip phrases such as PAWOB (Passenger Arrived Without Baggage) to attract people's attention. See, e.g., "Movies To Hawaii," UAL ad for *New Yorker* (17 October 1964), *Travel Weekly* (20 October 1964), *Travel Trade* (October 1964), *Time* [Pacific-SW editions] (30 October 1964), *Hollywood Reporter* (5 October 1964), N. W. Ayer, box 497, folder 1; "We just hate to have a PAWOB traveling on United," UAL ad for *Time* (3 May 1963), *Business Week* (11 May 1963), *Newsweek* (5 May 1963), *U.S. News and World Report* (29 April 1963), *New Yorker* (29 April 1963), and *Harpers, Scientific American, Atlantic and Air Travel*, June 1963, N.W. Ayer, box 495, folder 1.

26. "The Charge—A Plan that Really Took Off," *Business Week* (27 February 1965): 58, 61, 63; "Credit Cards for Anything?" *Newsweek* 52 (28 July 1958): 68-70; "New Ways to Make Money," *Business Week* (26 November 1960): 120-1, 123-4, 126; "Carte Blank," *Time* 77 (28 April 1961): 96; Braden and Endelman, *Americans on Vacation*, 20; "Customers like credit cards," UAL ad for *Travel Agent* (2 August 1965), N. W. Ayer, box 497, folder 1; Keith Saunders, "Airlines Counter Outside Credit Cards," *Air Travel: Official Airline Guide* (November 1959): 5-6; *Air Travel* 16 (January 1960): 20; *Air Travel* (October 1959): 7.

27. Since major distribution of credit cards did not begin until 1958, the airlines were in the forefront of this development. See, e.g. Joseph Nocera, *A Piece of the Action: How the Middle Class Joined the Money Class* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 15-33, and Jon Friedman and John Meehan, *House of Cards: Inside the Troubled Empire of American Express* (New York: Putnam's, 1992), 56-59. Card use, the authors assert, was seen as a symbol of prestige. *Air Travel* 16 (January 1960): 20; *Air Travel* 16 (February 1960): 5; "Flying on the Cuff," 115-116; *Delta Annual Report 1965*, 7, 9, 17; *UAL Annual Report 1964*, 8; (quotation from) "Credit—Flying on Air," *Time* 85 (5 February 1965): 101-102; Statement of Marion Sadler, president of AAL, *Hearings Before the Special Subcommittee on Tourism*, 166. Sadler told the subcommittee that "air travel for pleasure is a consumer product, just like a new car or TV set, and people should be able to buy it just as easily as a consumer product, in installments." To achieve these sales, Sadler stated that "we must begin to sell what travel and these related services can do for the user." If ever there was a statement showing the connection between image conscious advertising and air travel, this was it. By February, 1965, sixty-one U.S. and foreign airlines accepted the American Express credit card, forty-eight honored Diner's Club, and thirty-one took Carte Blanche.

28. "Pan Am Plans to Offer Tour Rates to Hawaii for Smaller Groups," *The Wall Street Journal* (5 December 1968): 26; Borgstrom, "Air Travel," 315, 322. While sea travel to Hawaii declined from 24.58 percent in 1953 to 3.52 percent in 1968, absolute numbers of sea passengers increased from 31,092 to 48,857. This reveals the continued acceleration of total tourist travel to the islands.

	1953	1963	1970
From: Anchorage	To: Honolulu Hilo	Honolulu Hilo	Honolulu Hilo
			1
			7
			27 3

THE AIRLINES ALTER TOURISM

Dallas/Fort Worth				17	
Detroit				7	
Los Angeles	13		44	128	21
New York				14	
Oakland				7	
Portland, Or.	9		12	14	2
St. Louis				7	
San Diego				14	
San Francisco	13		31	61	10
Seattle				19	2
Totals:	35	0	89	322	38

Source: Table 18-1, Number of Non-Stop Passenger Flights Per Week From Mainland US Cities to Honolulu and Hilo, Borgstrom, "Air Travel," 315.

Sample advertising budgets: airline advertising budgets continued to soar in the jet age. AAL spent over \$50 million in 1961, while Delta invested \$39 million for publicity in 1967.

29. Borgstrom, "Air Travel," 318.

30. This profound shift in who flew can be seen in data published in "Per Cent of Population That has Ever Taken a Trip by Scheduled Passenger Airlines," *Aviation Daily* 209 (27 September 1973).

Per Cent of Population That Has Ever Taken a Trip
by Scheduled Passenger Airlines

	1973	1971	1962	1959
National Results	54%	49%	33%	22%
Sex:				
Men	58%	53%	37%	
Women	51%	46%	30%	
Occupation:				
Professional and Business	75%	70%	57%	
Clerical and Sales	67%	66%	45%	
Manual Workers	45%	41%	26%	
Farmers	33%	18%	16%	
Non-Labor Force	45%	43%	31%	
Income:				
\$15,000 and over	77%	74%	57%	(\$7,000 +)
\$10-14,999	58%	60%	—	
\$7-9,999	47%	45%	—	
\$5-6,999	48%	42%	32%	
\$3-4,999	36%	34%	24%	
under \$3,000	34%	28%	17%	
Size of Community:				
1,000,000 +	64%	63%	—	
500,000-999,999	71%	61%	42%	(500,000 +)
50,000-499,999	59%	55%	41%	
2,500-49,999	50%	39%	32%	
under 2,500	38%	35%	N/A	
	1973	1971	1962	1959
National Results	54%	49%	33%	22%

ESSAYS IN ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS HISTORY (1999)

Region of Country:

East	59%	51%	39%
Midwest	51%	45%	29%
South	43%	39%	22%
West	70%	68%	50%