

Researching Unexpected Events: The Case of 4U9525

Open Discussion

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Field-level Discourse Following The Crash of Germanwings 4U9525



Field-level Discourse Following The Crash of Germanwings 4U9525

- Number of persons on flight deck
- Health checks of pilots
- Cockpit door safety features
- Remote control of airplanes
- Passenger ID requirements
- Corporate PR
- Media ethics



Unexpected Event = Unexpected Research Opportunity?

- capture the event and its aftermath
- need to start the research immediately
- devise instruments for a unique event
- get close, but view the whole field
- stay scientific, not journalistic

NSF Grants for Rapid Response Research (RAPID)



“The RAPID funding mechanism is used for proposals having a severe urgency with regard to availability of, or access to data, facilities or specialized equipment, including quick-response research on natural or anthropogenic disasters and similar unanticipated events.”

- Project Description, 2-5 pages, justifying urgency
- Only internal merit review, but usual standards
- Up to \$200k for one year (renewable)
- Typical: storms, oil spills, ebola, also policy evaluations

See: http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf09_1/gpg_2.jsp#IID1

How might we draft a RAPID proposal on the field-level effects of 4U9525?

- What would be our Research Question?
- What would be our theoretical basis:
 - for justifying the urgency?
 - for grounding the project?
- What would be our methods
 - given the urgency of the research?
 - given general considerations for field-level research?
- What would be the pitfalls:
 - ethically, politically, scientifically?

