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9/11 Case Study Write-Up

On September 11, 2001, I was four years old. I lived with my parents and three-year-old brother in Chicago’s north side. Both my mom and dad held jobs at the time, so my brother and I were in day care when the attacks began. I have little recollection of the day or how I reacted to the news. All I remember from that time is my brother’s Buzz Lightyear birthday party the weekend before.

The material presented in this case study changed my perspective on 9/11. Before reading these analyses of the event, I assumed the actions of the terrorists were an anomaly. I believed the attacks were evil for evil’s sake. Now, having understood the importance of information infrastructure in relation to this case, I believe the airline system had a significant involvement in the disaster. The terrorists responsible for the 9/11 attacks used flaws in the American airline system to wage asymmetric war against the US. By taking control of these planes, terrorists used infrastructure inversion to transform commercial airliners into weapons. Infrastructure inversion was also used by the passengers of United Flight 93 to take back control of the plane and avoid further disaster. The state of airline security and protocol allowed for these transformations to occur. I do not believe that the agents handling the infrastructure of the airport were focused on the correct requirements. Information infrastructure designers must consider the behavior of every potential stakeholder. This, unfortunately, includes those willing to use the system in a hostile manner. I believe that the behavior of these stakeholders should not only be considered, but focused on. Especially in an industry that places their customers in immediate danger, hostile behavior must be understood and easily counteracted. So, I now believe that the events of 9/11 were inevitable. Any time an infrastructure with the size and importance of airport security has flaws, there will be individuals looking to take advantage of them.

For this reason, I do not believe alternate theories for the cause of 9/11. Terrorism attacks the most vulnerable targets that will cause the most damage. At the time, the airport infrastructure was the ideal destination for terrorists. The system allowed for these individuals to take advantage of the technology it provided and a violation of its integrity was inevitable. I believe the terrorists of 9/11 were in the right place, at the right time, to cause catastrophe they were looking for.

The internet facilitates unconventional views of events. The internet’s freedom of use allows for this to occur. Anyone can contribute to the information of the internet. This phenomenon has become more and more harmful. With so much information, it is naïve to not critic the validity of every article and message on the web. “Fake news” is perhaps the most discussed issue regarding the internet. Conspiracy theorists are a strong contributor to “fake news” and I do not believe the dissemination of incorrect information will slow down without regulation.