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Homeland Security & Cybersecurity

9/11 Attacks

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Lesson 2
9/11

Rick White, Ph.D.
University of Colorado, Colorado
Springs



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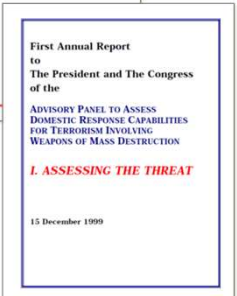


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9/11 Attacks

- As a result of the 1995 Tokyo subway attacks, the Clinton administration issued PDD-39 increasing the FBI's authority to prevent and respond to WMD attack.
- Congress commissioned two panels to investigate the WMD threat and recommend how the Federal government could better organize to counter it.

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- In January 2001, the presidency passed from the Clinton to the Bush administration.
- The outgoing National Security Advisor, Sandy Berger, briefed the incoming National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice.
- **He warned her about the WMD threat from non-state actors.**



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- **Berger's warning was duly noted but quickly faded to the background as the administration got caught up in more pressing issues.**
- At home, President Bush pressed Congress to pass the No Child Left Behind education bill.
- Overseas, the United States confronted China over the capture of a US Navy EP-3 electronic surveillance aircraft.



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But eight months into the new administration, the former National Security Advisor's warning was to manifest itself in a manner nobody foresaw, and thrust the Bush administration onto a path it never anticipated.



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- On the morning of September 11, 2001, 19 hijackers formed into four teams and made their way to three airports.
- **Within a matter of hours they successfully negotiated security measures designed to flag suspicious passengers and screen for weapons.**



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- At 7:59 am, the first team took off from Boston Logan airport aboard a Boeing 757 fueled for transcontinental flight.
- Within 40 minutes, all four teams were airborne aboard similar flights originating from Logan, Dulles, and Newark airports.
- Shortly after gaining cruising altitude, the hijackers made their move.



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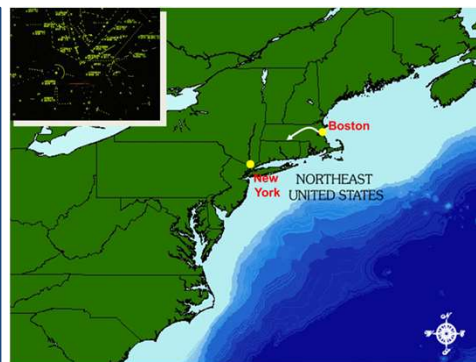
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- They took over the cabin using pepper spray and razor knives before forcing their way into the cockpit and subduing the pilot and copilot.
- Once in control, they disengaged the transponder and dove the aircraft to lower altitude, effectively disappearing from FAA tracking screens.



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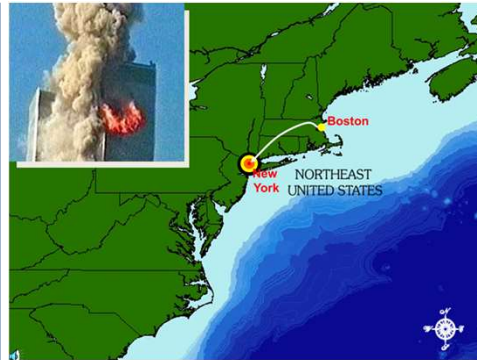
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9/11 Attacks

- At 8:46 am, the first aircraft crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center.
- Loaded with fuel, the aircraft disintegrated into a giant fireball as it ploughed into the skyscraper.



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9/11 Attacks


- Within minutes, dramatic video was broadcast across network television news.
- Any thoughts that it was a tragic accident were erased less than 20 minutes later when a second aircraft crashed into the South Tower of the World Trade Center.
- **There was no doubt that the United States was under attack.**



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- Fighter interceptors were scrambled from Langley Air Force Base in Virginia.
- But in the confusion of events, they were directed out over the Atlantic to intercept expected enemy military aircraft.



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- Passengers aboard the fourth aircraft were warned about the suicide hijackings over their cell phones.
- As the aircraft made its way towards Washington DC, passengers and crew rose up against the hijackers.
- Flight recorders captured the sound of passengers trying to force their way into the cockpit when the hijackers decided to dive the aircraft into the ground.



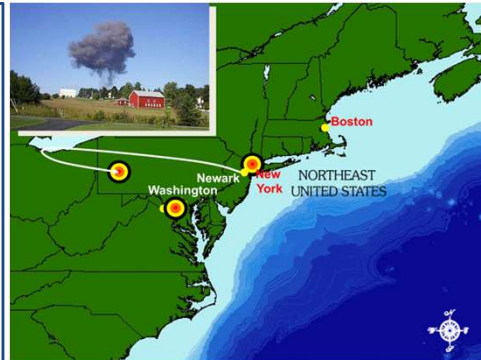
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9/11 Attacks

At 10:03, the last hijacked aircraft crashed into the countryside outside Shanksville Pennsylvania.



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9/11 Attacks

- From start to end, the attacks had taken a little over two hours.
- More than 2,600 people died at the World Trade Center, including 333 firefighters; 125 died at the Pentagon; and 256 passengers died aboard the four aircraft.
- **All told, the attacks resulted in 3,000 deaths and \$40 billion in damages.**



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- The death toll was greater than that at Pearl Harbor in December 1941.
- But where the destruction at Pearl Harbor was inflicted by an armada of the Imperial Japanese Navy, the destruction on 9/11 was caused by only 19 young men, most from Saudi Arabia.



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- Some had been in the United States for more than a year.
- Though four had pilot training, most were not well-educated.
- Most spoke English poorly, and some hardly at all.



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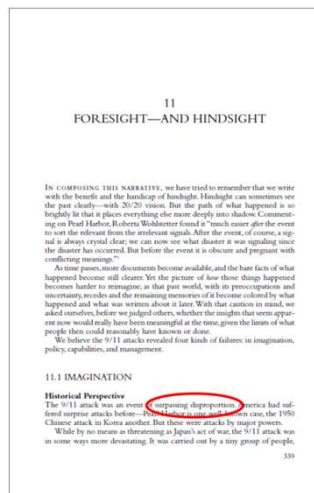
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9/11 Attacks

- The ensuing investigation by the 9/11 Commission estimated the cost of the attack at less than \$400,000.
- According to the 9/11 Commission, the singular feature of the attack was its **"surpassing disproportion"**.



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9/11 Attacks

- The hijackers had subverted the nation's transportation infrastructure and turned passenger jets into guided missiles.
- Just as the Tokyo subway attacks had dramatically multiplied the number of potential enemies, 9/11 dramatically multiplied the number of potential weapons.



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- Infrastructure, including transportation, water, energy, and communications are an integral component to the US national economy and citizens' well being.
- **We are literally surrounded by the means of our own destruction.**



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9/11 demonstrated how infrastructure could be leveraged to achieve WMD effects without the use of WMD.



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Conclusion

Questions?



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