

## **The Black Swan 9/11 Attacks, its Background perspectives and impacts on Humanity**

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### **Abstract:**

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This search paper is about the impacts of 9/11 Attacks on the humanity because after 9/11, the whole structure of international policies and the mode of behaviour of the Dominant forces have been revolutionary changed. The whole world bore the cost of this incident especially the Muslim Countries. Many Muslim Estates have been eradicated and their rulers had become the symbol of paying personalities in the human history. Many western writers called it as a preplanned incident, and they use the term Black Swan for this incident. However, this incident was a dreadful for those who have the wish to create harmony, prosperity and peace in this universe without any discrimination of creed, color or sect.

**Key words:** 9/11 attacks, black swan, Americans, the West, Muslims

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### **Introduction**

September 11, 2001 was a tragic milestone in the history of the world that shook the world. In the United States, four passenger planes were hijacked and crashed into the World Trade Center, a symbol of American capitalist supremacy. As a result, thousands of people died and fear spread throughout the world. The planes were reportedly hijacked by al-Qaeda members, who later found evidence. The Americans called this terrorist incident 9/11.

At about eight o'clock in the morning on September 11, 2001, a series of accidents occurred. The first Boeing 757 collided with a 110-story tower in New York. Eighteen minutes later, another Boeing 757 collided with another tower. Two passenger planes crashed into the skyscrapers of the World Trade Center in New York, causing the buildings to collapse. Exactly one hour later, another hijacked Boeing 757 crashed into the Pentagon, partly destroying the Pentagon. - Half an hour later, news came that another plane, which was being hijacked and taken to the White House, was also a Boeing 757, which was shot down by fighter jets in Pennsylvania.

At 8:46 a.m., the first five terrorists crashed into the North Tower-1 of the American Aviation Flight 11, the World Trade Center. Shortly afterwards, at 9:30 a.m., another United Airlines Flight 175 crashed into South Tower 2. At 9:37 a.m., a hijacked

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American Airlines Flight 77 was shot down by five hijackers from the Pentagon. Shortly afterwards, a third plane, United Airlines Flight 93, was hijacked by four hijackers at the White House. But he was shot down by fighter jets near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. It was 10:30 p.m. All of the passengers on board were killed in the attacks. Before departure, many passengers reported to various locations via their mobile phones. All of this information was later compiled so that the internal events of the accident could be linked in detail.

The two towers that were hit by the planes crashed just minutes later, destroying a third of their towers. There were 10,000 people in the building at the time of the accident.

Following these incidents, a red alert was issued throughout the United States. The United States has closed its border with Mexico and Canada.

Fighter jets began flying over American airspace. The US Navy moved. All airports were closed and no ordinary aircraft were allowed to fly. All government buildings were evacuated and troops were deployed at government installations. The General Services Administration has directed that all courts and offices in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and West Virginia remain closed until further notice. Similarly, the Congress building was evacuated. All 19 buildings under police control were closed. Similarly, all district government offices were closed. The Virginia Railway Express has been suspended. And all trains from Union Station stopped. Along with buses, the Pentagon subway station was also closed. All schools in the state of Maryland were closed and classes at Georgetown University were suspended. The world's largest commercial highway, Wall Street, was overwhelmed by the Senate.

In this article, two major things would be discussed, the meanings of Black swan and the background and the consequences of 9/11 attacks.

### **Black Swan theory and 9/11 Attacks**

A black swan is an event or occurrence that deviates beyond what is normally expected of a situation and is extremely difficult to predict. Black swan events are typically random and unexpected.<sup>3</sup> So, the black swan theory or theory of black swan events is a metaphor that describes an event that comes as a surprise, has a major effect, and is often inappropriately rationalized after the fact with the benefit of hindsight. The term is based on an ancient saying that presumed black swans did not exist – a saying that became reinterpreted to teach a different lesson after black swans were discovered in the wild.

The theory was developed by Nassim Nicholas Taleb to explain

The disproportionate role of high-profile, hard-to-predict, and rare events that are beyond the realm of normal expectations in history, science, finance, and technology. The non-computability of the probability of the consequential rare events using scientific methods (owing to the very nature of small probabilities). The psychological biases that blind people, both individually and collectively, to uncertainty and to a rare event's massive role in historical affairs. Unlike the earlier and broader "black swan problem" in philosophy (i.e. the problem of induction), Taleb's "black swan

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<sup>3</sup> Taleb, Nassim Nicholas (2010) ,*The Black Swan: the impact of the highly improbable* (2nd ed.). London: p.124

theory" refers only to unexpected events of large magnitude and consequence and their dominant role in history. Such events, considered extreme outliers, collectively play vastly larger roles than regular occurrences.<sup>4</sup> More technically, in the scientific monograph 'Silent Risk', Taleb mathematically defines the black swan problem as "stemming from the use of degenerate metaprobability".<sup>5</sup>

The phrase "black swan" derives from a Latin expression; its oldest known occurrence is from the 2nd-century Roman poet Juvenal's characterization of something being "raraavis in terrisnig roquesimill imacygno" ("a rare bird in the lands and very much like a black swan").<sup>6</sup> When the phrase was coined, the black swan was presumed not to exist. The importance of the metaphor lies in its analogy to the fragility of any system of thought. A set of conclusions is potentially undone once any of its fundamental postulates is disproved. In this case, the observation of a single black swan would be the undoing of the logic of any system of thought, as well as any reasoning that followed from that underlying logic.

Juvenile's phrase was a common expression in 16th century London as a statement of impossibility. The London expression derives from the Old World presumption that all swans must be white because all historical records of swans reported that they had white feathers.<sup>7</sup> In that context, a black swan was impossible or at least nonexistent.

However, in 1697, Dutch explorers led by Willem de Vlamingh became the first Europeans to see black swans, in Western Australia. The term subsequently metamorphosed to connote the idea that a perceived impossibility might later be disproven. Taleb notes that in the 19th century, John Stuart Mill used the black swan logical fallacy as a new term to identify falsification.<sup>8</sup>

Black swan events were discussed by Nassim Nicholas Taleb in his 2001 book *Fooled by Randomness*, which concerned financial events. His 2007 book *The Black Swan* extended the metaphor to events outside of financial markets. Taleb regards almost all major scientific discoveries, historical events, and artistic accomplishments as "black swans" undirected and unpredicted. He gives the rise of the Internet, the personal computer, World War I, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the September 11, 2001 attacks as examples of black swan events.

Prologue Taleb asserts: <sup>9</sup>

What we call here a Black Swan (and capitalize it) is an event with the following three attributes.

First, it is an outlier, as it lies outside the realm of regular expectations, because nothing in the past can convincingly point to its possibility. Second, it carries an

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<sup>4</sup> *The Black Swan: the impact of the highly improbable* : p.124

<sup>5</sup> Taleb, Nassim Nicholas (2015), *Doing Statistics Under Fat Tails: The Program*, retrieved 20 January 2016, p.59

<sup>6</sup> Puhvel, Jaan (Summer 1984). "The Origin of Etruscan tusna ("Swan")". *The American Journal of Philology*. Johns Hopkins University Press., p. 209

<sup>7</sup> Taleb, Nassim Nicholas. "Opacity". *Fooled by randomness*. P.139

<sup>8</sup> Hammond, Peter (October 2009), "Adapting to the entirely unpredictable: black swans, fat tails, aberrant events, and hubristic models", *WERI Bulletin*, UK: Warwick p.43

<sup>9</sup> Taleb, Nassim Nicholas (22 April 2007). *The Black Swan*, Chapter 1: The Impact of the Highly Improbable". *The New York Times*. p.86

extreme 'impact'. Third, in spite of its outlier status, human nature makes us concoct explanations for its occurrence after the fact, making it explainable and predictable.

I stop and summarize the triplet: rarity, extreme 'impact', and retrospective (though not prospective) predictability. A small number of Black Swans explains almost everything in our world, from the success of ideas and religions, to the dynamics of historical events, to elements of our own personal lives.

### **Examples of Past Black Swan Events**

The financial crash of the U.S. housing market during the 2008 crisis is one of the most recent and well-known black swan events. The effect of the crash was catastrophic and global, and only a few outliers were able to predict it happening.<sup>10</sup>

Also in 2008, Zimbabwe had the worst case of hyperinflation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a peak inflation rate of more than 79.6 billion percent. An inflation level of that amount is nearly impossible to predict and can easily ruin a country financially.

The dot-com bubble of 2001 is another black swan event that has similarities to the 2008 financial crisis. America was enjoying rapid economic growth and increases in private wealth before the economy catastrophically collapsed. Since the Internet was at its infancy in terms of commercial use, various investment funds were investing in technology companies with inflated valuations and no market traction. When these companies folded, the funds were hit hard, and the downside risk was passed on to the investors. The digital frontier was new and nearly impossible to predict the collapse.<sup>11</sup>

As another example, the previously successful hedge fund, Long-Term Capital Management (LTCM), was driven into the ground in 1998 as a result of the ripple effect caused by the Russian government's debt default, something the company's computer models could not have predicted.<sup>12</sup>

### **Was 9/11 a Black Swan?**

A vicious black swan has an additional elusive property: its very unexpectedness helps create the conditions for it to occur. Had a terrorist attack been a conceivable risk on Sept. 10, 2001, it would likely not have happened.

In the analysis of black swans (which by definition will likely never be repeated), human beings engage in what is called hindsight bias. This is the tendency to believe that the event was predictable based on knowledge gained after the event occurred. In effect, people unknowingly substitute current knowledge of outcomes into the gaps of knowledge that were present when building earlier expectations of potential events. In regards to 9/11, Nassim points out the following:

We will focus on specificity at the expense of the holistic. 9/11 analysis has unearthed specific facts (the Phoenix memo for example) that may have enabled the prevention of the event. These factual revelations have resulted in a useless blame game. The flaw is that specific facts taken out of context prevent sufficient consideration of the

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<sup>10</sup> Ackoff, R. (1989), From Data to Wisdom, Journal of Applied Systems Analysis, 16,p. 3–9.

<sup>11</sup> Davenport, Thomas H. and Prusak, Laurence (1998), Working Knowledge - How organizations manage what they know, Harvard Business School Press.p. 292

<sup>12</sup> Moore, P. 1992, When Politeness is Fatal: Technical Communication and the Challenger Accident, Journal of Business and Technical Communication 6 (3),p. 269

larger informational landscape. A better approach is to develop general knowledge that can be used to improve future responses.

We won't compare the negligence in this single case to the normal rate of negligence. It is impossible to guard against everything. We don't have infinite resources. That is as true today as it was before 9/11. A real test of negligence during the pre-9/11 time period is to examine whether resources applied in other areas of security were ineffective too. If they weren't effective, there are major systemic problems that need to be fixed.<sup>13</sup>

We will assume that is possible to incentivize behavior that prevents future black swans. Prevention of uncertain events is almost impossible to quantify in any meaningful way -- a necessary step for the establishment of incentives. Notice how few people in the government lost their job due to 9/11. This is an example of the failure of incentives to guard against black swans despite assumptions to the contrary.

### **The 9/11 Attack and its Impacts**

The events of 9/11 seared the American psyche. A country whose continental states had not seen a major attack in nearly 200 years was stunned to find that its financial and military centers had been hit by a small terrorist group based thousands of miles away. More mass attacks suddenly seemed not just probable but inevitable.

The catastrophe set in motion a sequence of reactions and unintended consequences that continue to reverberate today. Its most lasting and consequential effects are interlinked: a massively expensive and unending “war on terror”, heightened suspicion of government and the media in many democratic countries, a sharp uptick in Western antagonism toward Muslims, and the decline of US power alongside rising international disorder – developments that aided the rise of Donald Trump and leaders like him.

### **War without end**

Just weeks after 9/11, the administration of US President George W. Bush invaded Afghanistan with the aim of destroying al Qaeda, which had been granted safe haven by the extremist Taliban regime. With the support of dozens of allies, the invasion quickly toppled the Taliban government and crippled al Qaeda. But it was not until 2011, under President Barack Obama, that US forces found and killed al Qaeda's leader and 9/11 mastermind – Osama bin Laden.

Though there have been efforts to end formal combat operations since then, over 10,000 US troops remain in Afghanistan today, fighting an intensifying Taliban insurgency. It is now the longest war the United States has fought. Far from being eradicated, the Taliban is active in most of the country. Even though the war's price tag is nearing a trillion dollars, domestic pressure to end the war is minimal, thanks to an all-volunteer army and relatively low casualties that make the war seem remote and abstract to most Americans.

Even more consequential has been the second major armed conflict triggered by 9/11: the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. Although Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein was not

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<sup>13</sup> Werther, G.F.A. (2013), When Black Swans Aren't: On Better Recognition, Assessment, and Forecasting Of Large Scale, Large Impact, And Rare Event Change, Risk Management and Insurance Review, 2013, 16 (1), p. 1-23

linked to 9/11, officials in the administration of George W. Bush were convinced his brutal regime was a major threat to world order. This is largely due to Saddam Hussein's past aggression, his willingness to defy the United States, and his aspirations to build or expand nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons programs, making it seem likely that he would help groups planning terrorist attacks on the West.

The invading forces quickly ousted Saddam, but the poorly executed, error-ridden occupation destabilized the entire region.

In Iraq, it triggered a massive, long-running insurgency. In the Middle East more broadly, it boosted Iran's regional influence, fostered the rise of the Islamic State, and created lasting disorder that has led to civil wars, countless terrorist attacks, and radicalization.<sup>14</sup>

In many parts of the world, the war fuelled anti-Americanism; in Europe, public opinion about the war set in motion a widening estrangement between the United States and its key European allies.

### **Monetary and social costs**

Today, the United States spends US\$32 million every hour on the wars fought since 9/11. The total cost is over US\$5,600,000,000,000. (5.6 trillion dollars). The so-called war on terror has spread into 76 countries where the US military is now conducting counter-terror activities, ranging from drone strikes to surveillance operations.

The mind-boggling sums have been financed by borrowing, which has increased social inequality in the United States. Some observers have suggested that government war spending was even more important than financial deregulation in causing the 2007-2008 Global Financial Crises.<sup>15</sup>

### **Eroding democracy**

The post-9/11 era has eroded civil liberties across the world. Many governments have cited the urgent need to prevent future attacks as justification for increased surveillance of citizens, curbing of dissent, and enhanced capacity to detain suspects without charge.

The well-publicized missteps of the FBI and the CIA in failing to detect and prevent the 9/11 plot, despite ample warnings, fed public distrust of intelligence and law enforcement agencies. Faulty intelligence about what turned out to be nonexistent Iraqi "weapons of mass destruction" (WMDs) undermined public confidence not only in the governments that touted those claims but also in the media for purveying false information.

The result has been a climate of widespread distrust of the voices of authority. In the United States and in other countries, citizens are increasingly suspicious of government sources and the media at times questioning whether truth is knowable. The consequences for democracy are dire.

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<sup>14</sup> Vaughan, D. (1997), *The Trickle-Down Effect: Policy Decisions, Risky Work, and the Challenger Tragedy*, California Management Review, 39 (2), p.67

<sup>15</sup> Van der Spek, B. R. and Spijkervet, A. L. (1997), *Knowledge management - Dealing intelligently with knowledge*, Utrecht - the Netherlands: CIBIT Consultants | Educators, p.43



### **Increasing Islamophobia**

Across the West, 9/11 also set off a wave of Islamophobia. Having fought a decades-long Cold War not long before, Americans framed the attack as a struggle of good versus evil, casting radical Islam as the latest enemy. In many countries, voices in the media and in politics used the extremist views and actions of Islamic terrorists to castigate Muslims in general. Since 9/11, Muslims in the United States and elsewhere have experienced harassment and violence.

In Western countries, Muslims are now often treated as the most significant public enemy. European populists have risen to power by denouncing refugees from Muslim majority countries like Syria, and the willingness and ability of Muslims to assimilate is viewed with increasing skepticism.

A week after his inauguration, US President Donald Trump kept a campaign promise by signing the so-called “Muslim ban”, designed to prevent citizens of six Muslim-majority countries from entering the United States.<sup>16</sup>

### **Religious and Spiritual Responses to 9/11**

A major function of religion is what Berger calls world-maintenance. Humans’ understanding of the social order is socially constructed and thus in need of legitimation in order for it to be maintained. Religion, according to, “legitimizes social institutions by bestowing upon them an ultimately valid ontological status, that is, by *locating* them within a sacred and cosmic frame of reference” (emphasis in original). Although religion serves a world-maintaining function in everyday life, it is especially good at providing answers when everyday understandings of reality are called into question by marginal situations, such as the 9/11 attacks. Indeed, Berger suggests that in catastrophic situations, “religious legitimating almost invariably come to the front.”<sup>17</sup>

Just as religion legitimizes social institutions by locating them in a sacred frame of reference, it accommodates marginal situations into a sacred frame of reference. Put another way, religion is able to explain, situate, or give meaning to catastrophic events in light of a super empirical reality. This is attractive to many people, as humans are, at bottom, meaning-seeking creatures. The explanations religion provides are of course variable across (and even within) religious traditions. Disasters can be cast as “the will of a God who works in mysterious ways” or as the result of human “sinfulness,” among myriad other possible explanations. Though the content of the explanations varies, the function of them does not: Religion serves to provide meaning and legitimation, especially during times of threat such as the 9/11 attacks. Religious explanations may be more or less plausible to or necessary for individuals, so it is important to ask which people are most likely to appropriate these explanations.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Dr Suhaib Hassan, *Inglistan mi Islam*, Matbooaat Masjid Tauheed, p. 99

<sup>17</sup> Berger Peter L. *The Sacred Canopy*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday; 1967, p.521

<sup>18</sup> Smith Christian. *Moral, Believing Animals: Human Personhood and Culture*. New York: Oxford; 2003. p.158

## **Socially-Conditioned Turns to Religion and Spirituality in Response to Tragedy**

A central task of a sociological study of religious and spiritual responses to September 11<sup>th</sup>—or a sociological study of any sort—is to explain why the same event evokes different responses from different groups of people. Following Ellison and Taylor (1996), suggest that an individual's response to a tragic event may vary by that individual's social location, personal resources, and religious characteristics.<sup>19</sup>

### **Social location**

Individuals embedded in different social contexts may have experienced and interpreted 9/11 in different ways. There are at least five key aspects of social location that may affect how young adults responded to the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks: gender, race, region of residence, educational attainment, and religious tradition. Men and women are known to respond differently to stressors. While men tend to utilize solitary coping techniques, women are more likely to seek out social or relational coping techniques. If religion is indeed an individualistic phenomenon among young adults, men may have been more prone to respond religiously and spiritually to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Young adults from different race-ethnic groups may also have interpreted the attacks differently. The 9/11 attacks may have been viewed as an attack on America and its dominant culture, so race-ethnic minorities such as Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians might have perceived the attacks as less threatening to their way of life than their White counterparts, and thus be less likely to respond religiously or spiritually. At the same time, Blacks are more likely than Whites to respond religiously to stressors so even if their reaction to 9/11 was not as strong as Whites', their heightened tendency to cope religiously may result in more noticeable religious and spiritual responses to the event.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to gender and race, young adults' relative proximity to the attacks may have affected their responses to them. Those who were closer to the attacks geographically may have interpreted the events as more threatening than those who lived far away. Indeed, young adults who lived closer to an attack site were more likely to display symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and sadness. Thus, young adults living in the northeastern United States may be most likely to exhibit a religious or spiritual response to 9/11 as a means of coping. Alternatively, in regions where conservative civil religion—which envisions America as a chosen nation of God tasked to preach Christianity to the world—is strong, such as the South and the Midwest (i.e., "red states"), the attacks might have been interpreted through a more directly religious lens and might have evoked a stronger religious and spiritual response among young adults.<sup>21</sup>

Young adults with different levels of educational attainment may also have had different religious and spiritual responses to September 11<sup>th</sup>. Young adults with lower educational attainment may have been more likely to employ a religious framework to

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<sup>19</sup> Ferraro Kenneth F, Koch Jerome R. Religion and Health among Black and White Adults: Examining Social Support and Consolation. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. 1994;p.362

<sup>20</sup> Arnett Jeffrey Jensen, Jensen Lene Arnett. A Congregation of One: Individualized Religious Beliefs among Emerging Adults. *Journal of Adolescent Research*. 2002;17,p. 451

<sup>21</sup> Blanchard Edward B, Kuhn Eric, Rowell Dianna L, Hickling Edward J, Wittrock David, Rogers Rebecca L, Johnson Michelle R, Steckler Debra C. Studies of the Vicarious Traumatization of College Students by the September 11<sup>th</sup> Attacks: Effects of Proximity, Exposure, and Connectedness. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*. 2004,p.191



interpret 9/11 because they may possess more restricted symbolic codes as the result of less sophisticated cognitive capacities<sup>22</sup>.

Finally, young adults from different religious traditions may have responded differently to the attacks. Because religion appears to be an individualistic phenomenon for young adults and religious and spiritual responses can be viewed as solitary coping mechanisms, we might expect personal religious and spiritual responses to be strongest among members of religious traditions that are most individualistic. Trinitapoli's study of adolescents suggests that mainline Protestant, Catholic, and religiously unaffiliated youth are the most religiously individualistic, while evangelical and black Protestant youth are more likely to accept their church teachings as a whole. So, 9/11 may have spurred religious responses among mainline Protestants, Catholics, and the nonreligious, but not among evangelical and black Protestants.<sup>23</sup>

### **Personal resources**

Young adults with different social and psychological resources may have responded differently to 9/11. Religion may serve as a compensatory coping device for young adults who are lacking other means of social support; thus, those who are not in a marital or cohabiting union, those who have suboptimal relationships with their parents, and those who have no friends to support them (or to whom they can offer their support) may be more likely to turn to religion as a provider of either social support (which is not likely given the individualistic nature of young adult religion) or the support of a "divine other"<sup>24</sup>. Similarly, young adults who feel alone, depressed, or are otherwise psychologically distressed may also be more likely to turn to religion and spirituality for support in the face of adversity.

### **Religious characteristics**

Berger asserts that the less stable the religious plausibility structures (i.e., religious communities) upholding religious belief, the more religious legitimation is needed. If this is indeed the case, those individuals who are uninvolved or minimally involved in their religious communities, or who attach little-to-no importance to their religious faith, may be more likely than the religiously involved to seek out religion and spiritually in the aftermath of a tragic event. The opposite case, however, could also be made. Many studies have found, for example, that those with higher religiosity are more likely to use religion as a coping mechanism. As Pargament argues, individuals cope with the tools that are most available to them. Those for whom religion is a more important part of life are more likely to draw upon it in times of trouble simply because it is a larger part of their orienting system. In more economic terms, increased involvement in religion can be viewed as the accumulation of religious capital that can be drawn upon when hardship arises.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Pollner Melvin. *Divine Relations, Social Relations, and Well-Being*. Journal of Health and Social Behavior. 1989;p.92

<sup>23</sup> Trinitapoli Jenny. 'I Know This Isn't PC, But...': Religious Exclusivism among U.S. Adolescents. *The Sociological Quarterly*. 2007p.452

<sup>24</sup> Pollner Melvin. *Divine Relations, Social Relations, and Well-Being*. Journal of Health and Social Behavior. 1989,p.104

<sup>25</sup> Levine Linda J, Whalen Carol K, Henker Barbara, Jamner Larry D. Looking Back on September 11, 2001: Appraised Impact and Memory for Emotions in Adolescents and Adults. *Journal of Adolescent Research*. 2005;p.497

### **Cultural Influence of 9/11 Attacks**

The cultural influence of the September 11 attacks (9/11) has been profound and long-lasting. The impact of 9/11 has extended beyond geopolitics into society and culture in general. Immediate responses to 9/11 included greater focus on home life and time spent with family, higher church attendance, and increased expressions of patriotism such as the flying of American flags.<sup>26</sup>

The radio industry responded by removing certain songs from playlists, and the attacks have subsequently been used as background, narrative or thematic elements in film, television, music and literature. Already-running television shows as well as programs developed after 9/11 have reflected post-9/11 cultural concerns. 9/11 conspiracy theories have become social phenomena, despite lack of support from scientists, engineers, and historians. 9/11 has also had a major impact on the religious faith of many individuals; for some it strengthened, to find consolation to cope with the loss of loved ones and overcome their grief; others started to question their faith or lost it entirely, because they could not reconcile it with their view of religion.<sup>27</sup>

The culture of the United States succeeding the attacks is noted for heightened security and an increased demand thereof, as well as paranoia and anxiety regarding future terrorist attacks that includes most of the nation. Psychologists have also confirmed that there has been an increased amount of national anxiety in commercial air travel.<sup>28</sup>

Due to the significance of the attacks, media coverage was extensive, including disturbing live pictures, and prolonged discourse about the attacks in general, resulting in iconography and greater meaning associated with the event. Don DeLillo called it "the defining event of our time". The attacks spawned a number of catchphrases, terms, and slogans, many of which continue to be used more than a decade later.

Through an endless reproductions in mass media and popular culture the attacks have an important cultural meaning for many people: "The attacks percolate as a central theme or historical backdrop in countless works of art, which bear witness to the complexity of 9/11 as historical, political, and media event, and contribute to the negotiation of its cultural meaning." Regarding the attacks of 9/11 and Pearl Harbor Arthur G. Neal said:

"We create the world through our perceptions of it and seek to maintain that world in a manner consistent with our beliefs about it. It is through such symbolic constructions that we are provided with usable frameworks for shaping our memories and organizing them into coherent systems of meaning."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Bernardo J. Carducci (February 20, 2009). *The Psychology of Personality: Viewpoints, Research, and Applications*, Wiley-Blackwell. pp. 200

<sup>27</sup> Huffington Post (August 29, 2011). "After 9/11, Some Run Toward Faith, Some Run The Other Way", p.134

<sup>28</sup> Brad Schmidt, Ph.D. "Anxiety After 9/11", p.59

<sup>29</sup> Neal, Arthur G. *National Trauma and Collective Memory: Extraordinary Events in the American Experience*. M.E. Sharpe: London, 2005.

### **The Effects of 9/11 on Faith and Religious Beliefs**

The world was shocked by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and one of the effects of 9/11 was on religious beliefs. Although the research showed that most people who lost a loved one on 9/11 did not experience a change to their religious beliefs, about a fifth of these people did experience a shift in their faith.

Have you experienced a traumatic event that has left your beliefs shaken? Are you possibly dealing with PTSD? Find out how traumas shape our religious beliefs—and how you can get help for your lasting pain.<sup>30</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The 9/11 terrorist attacks brought on feelings of anxiety and vulnerability as many Americans had their sense of safety and comfort threatened. Given the traumatic nature of 9/11, it's not surprising that this event would also test people's religious beliefs. The lives of many people permanently changed on 9/11 when they were faced with the unexpected loss of loved ones. A group of researchers affiliated with the New York State Psychiatric Institute, Columbia University and the Veterans Administration Boston Healthcare System surveyed a large number of people who had lost a loved one during the 9/11 attacks. About a quarter had lost a child, relative, or spouse, and most people had lost someone as a result of them being near the World Trade Center or in lower Manhattan during the terrorist attacks.<sup>31</sup>

The attack claimed 2977 lives. (Approximately 50,000 people die each year in the United States from opioid use.) At the same time, the United States and its supporters suffered a financial crisis. The global market began to crash, which began to recover somewhat after 24 hours. As news of the attacks spread, world oil and gold prices soared, and the European currency, the euro, lost ground against the dollar. Oil prices in the London market rose to 30.10 from 26.26 for the next month, October, while the oil market in New York closed with reports of attacks.

Similarly, the price of gold rose by about 19 dollar per ounce. Financial markets around the world are in turmoil. The world's largest stock exchange, New York, closed. The London Stock Exchange has been evacuated in the UK. Markets in Germany, Paris, Tokyo, Bonn and Moscow, among others, suffered huge losses. As a result of the catastrophe, insurance companies estimated the damage at 15 billion.

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<sup>30</sup> Trouble in the Kingdom, p.80

<sup>31</sup> Sulaiman Al-Hattlan, "In Saudi Arabia, an Extreme Problem," The Washington Post, May 8, 2002, p. A21