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A Million Little Pieces

Category: Literature

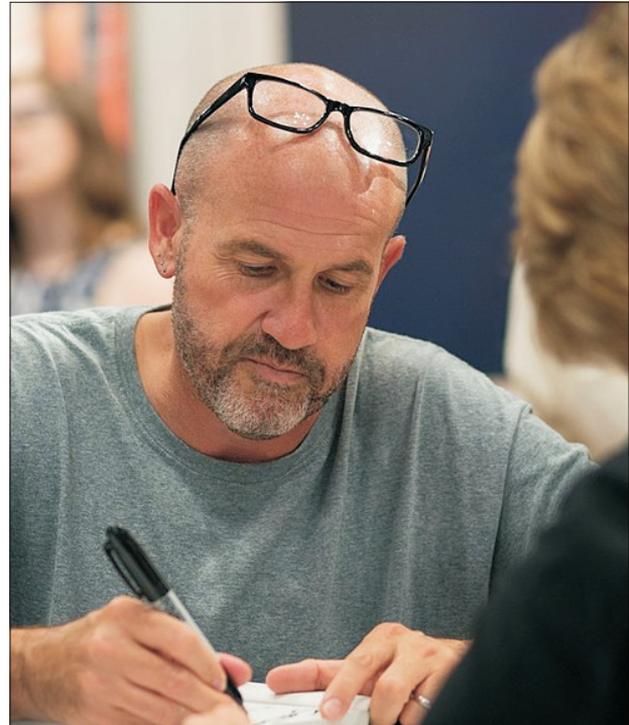
Date: Published April 15, 2003

Few other book scandals reached the magnitude of *A Million Little Pieces*. The book was published in 2003 by Doubleday, a division of Random House, as a memoir that detailed the author James Frey's battle with drug and alcohol addiction. After winding up on a path of self-destruction, he endured various rehabilitation methods until he successfully regained both his health and control of his life. The narrative resonated especially with other addicts who tended to view the book as a self-help manual. Its publication represented a growing interest in the memoir genre and appealed to fans for its captivating narrative, crafty writing, and confessional nature.

In 2005, Oprah Winfrey selected *A Million Little Pieces* for her popular book club, thus ensuring Frey of instant celebrity status and his book a place on the *New York Times* Best Sellers list. While most readers enjoyed the book at face value, investigators at the *Smoking Gun* website began questioning some of the incidents and dates. Their full investigation, released in early 2006, showed that Frey had misrepresented himself numerous times, including lying about a three-month-long period of incarceration. Frey went on the defensive, refusing to admit he had intentionally deceived his readers and blaming discrepancies on poetic license and faulty memory. Nevertheless, he and his publisher agreed to offer refunds to readers and to include a disclaimer from Frey in future printings. His most public

defense took place on the *Larry King Show*, during which time Winfrey surprised some fans by calling in with her support for Frey.

As the event unfolded, Frey became the target of a seemingly endless barrage of public jokes and vicious hate mail while angry and hurt readers sued for compensation.



James Frey. (Rhododendrites via Wikimedia Commons)

Frey and Random House eventually settled a class-action lawsuit for \$2.35 million. Oprah again invited him to appear on her show, but this time she shamed him mercilessly.

Impact

The scandal's wider impact included the instigation of a national dialogue about truth and writers' responsibilities to their readers. While Frey eventually recovered and went on to publish additional books, the scandal—along with others—ultimately changed the publishing industry. Publishers felt themselves under tighter scrutiny, and, wary of future scandals, began to include fact-checking in the publishing process, at a time when publishers were already being squeezed as a result of changes in the digital age.

—Sally Driscoll

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Abu Ghraib Torture Scandal

Categories: International Relations; Military; Politics

Date: Became public April 2004

Abu Ghraib prison was a detention center for captured Iraqis run by the United States from 2003 to 2006 during the Iraq War. In 2004, the revelation of graphic and disturbing photographs of U.S. Army prison guards abusing Iraqi detainees shocked the world, appearing in conjunction with revelations that the United States had secretly approved interrogation techniques long condemned as torture by the international community. The story was broken by veteran reporter Seymour Hersch who, years before, had reported on the My Lai massacre in Vietnam, in which hundreds of Vietnamese civilians had been brutally murdered by U.S. soldiers.

The Abu Ghraib story, when it appeared in a series of articles in the *New Yorker*, caused an international outrage. A fifty-three page report about the abuse, written by Major General Antonio M. Taguba and leaked by the *New Yorker*, elucidated a plethora of instances of blatant and criminal abuses against the Iraqi prisoners. U.S. soldiers perpetrated such acts as kicking, beating and sodomizing detainees; forcing them to strip naked, masturbate, or perform like animals; and making threats of rape. Graphic evidence, including eyewitness accounts and photographs, backed up the allegations.

The War in Iraq

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, President Bush launched the War on Terrorism, which embroiled the United States in separate wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. During the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Abu Ghraib, located just west of Baghdad, had emerged as an internationally infamous prison demarcated by bloodshed, torture, and filthy living conditions caused by overcrowding. The United States entered the war in Iraq predicated on the premise of eliminating such autocratic brutality and ushering in a democratic free society for the oppressed Iraqi people. However, the impulsive nature of US war plans led to several missteps that the Bush administration would have to address and served as a major hindrance to the establishment of peace in the Middle East.

After the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003, Janis Karpinski, an Army reserve general and intelligence and operations officer, was placed in charge of all military prisons in Iraq, a service novel to her despite her experience in the Gulf War and in Special Services. Soon thereafter, Karpinski was formally suspended pending an investigation of the Army's prison system, which would uncover a widespread, systematic abuse of power.

The investigation led to a report, written by Major General Antonio M. Taguba and leaked to the public by the *New Yorker*. Taguba's report states that the following acts were perpetrated by US soldiers in Abu Ghraib:

- a. Punching, slapping, and kicking detainees; jumping on their naked feet;
- b. Videotaping and photographing naked male and female detainees;
- c. Forcibly arranging detainees in various sexually explicit positions for photographing;

- d. Forcing detainees to remove their clothing and keeping them naked for several days at a time;
- e. Forcing naked male detainees to wear women's underwear;
- f. Forcing groups of male detainees to masturbate themselves while being photographed and videotaped;
- g. Arranging naked male detainees in a pile and then jumping on them;
- h. Positioning a naked detainee on a MRE Box, with a sandbag on his head, and attaching wires to his fingers, toes, and penis to simulate electric torture;
- i. Writing "I am a Rapest" (sic) on the leg of a detainee alleged to have forcibly raped a 15-year old fellow detainee, and then photographing him naked;
- j. Placing a dog chain or strap around a naked detainee's neck and having a female Soldier pose for a picture;
- k. A male MP guard having sex with a female detainee;
- l. Using military working dogs (without muzzles) to intimidate and frighten detainees, and in at least one case biting and severely injuring a detainee;
- m. Taking photographs of dead Iraqi detainees.

The Department of Defense subsequently dishonorably discharged and prosecuted seventeen of the soldiers and officers who had participated in the abuse. Participants from various government agencies also resigned.

The rhetoric of the 1980s regarding torture faded away during the 2000s, when American conservatives and exceptionalists alleged that the United States had a right to torture—the practice was already a normalized facet of US foreign policy. The Pentagon conceded in 1996 that the School of the Americas used training manuals on torture based on the methods utilized during the Vietnam War. In addition, various cases during the twentieth century demonstrated US-sponsored torture and abuse, such as the civil war in El Salvador (1979-92). Public opinion polls of the 2000s revealed that over half of the US population believed torture should be used in certain situations.

The Abu Ghraib torture scandal was therefore in line with the policies embraced by the US government since the Cold War, while it also resulted from the culmination of various policies approved by President Bush that allowed for US aggression during the War on Terrorism. The United States deployed a systematic chain of abuse of

foreign detainees at various sites: Afghanistan, Iraq, Guantanamo Bay, and other US-sponsored foreign autocracies.

Cultural Implications, Political Crisis, and Public Opinion

The political scandal that emerged in light of the Abu Ghraib prison scandal reflected US sociocultural attitudes after the September 11 attacks to people of Middle Eastern descent. Abu Ghraib became emblematic of a salient American attitude of superiority that rendered Arabs as violent terrorists whose cultural practices were inferior to those of the United States. The dehumanization of the prisoners was particularly humiliating and denigrating because homosexuality in the Arab world violates Islamic law.

Critics of US foreign policy viewed such behavior as illustrative of the United States' disregard toward non-Westerners. The scandal worsened with the Bush administration's response to the crisis as they tried to lessen the damage to America's reputation both at home and abroad. Bush's official apology deflected responsibility for the acts, asserting that such treatment was not indicative of the US Army's protocol abroad and was reprehensible. He did so to buttress the credibility of the United States in foreign affairs; the nation's position within the international community was already tenuous because of the War on Terrorism. Bush's apology created a chasm between US forces in Iraq and the Iraqi people, which heightened the brutality of attacks on US forces during the Iraq War. There were mixed reactions to Bush's apology from the American public, as it both repaired his public image at home and further destroyed his credibility.

Impact

International outrage at the treatment of Iraqi prisoners held at Abu Ghraib led to institutional changes within the US military prison system in Iraq. The scandal was also indicative of broader problems with the US campaign in Iraq and exacerbated negative public opinion about the nature of the war itself. White House officials acknowledged the consequences of the scandal as other countries perceived the United States as dedicated to denigrating Islam and the Arab world. The Abu Ghraib torture scandal soiled the already tenuous relationship between the Middle East and the United States and forced the United States to revive its

public image within the international community with regard to the War on Terrorism.

Most significant of all, and in stark contrast to the official responses which included the punishment of those involved, Abu Ghraib marked a sea-shift in public attitudes. It revealed widespread acceptance of the legitimacy of torture among Americans, and it brought support for torture into everyday political discourse, so that, by 2016, for example, Donald Trump was campaigning on an explicit promise to bring back waterboarding and other banned techniques of torture.

When the United States was engaged in the Cold War, a key differentiating factor between the Soviet Union and the West was the commitment of the West to human rights. The Geneva Conventions of 1949, updated in 1977, contain provisions that absolutely prohibit torture and other cruel or inhuman treatment of detainees, and the United States—at least publicly—uniformly upheld the Geneva Conventions. Following the Abu Ghraib torture scandal, it became clear that, for many Americans, torture was deemed acceptable. This was reflected in an international poll conducted by the Red Cross, called the “People on War” poll, released in 2016. The poll found that nearly half of Americans believed it was acceptable to torture enemy combatants, and less than a third were opposed to the practice. (By contrast, in 1999, when the Red Cross had last conducted the same poll, two-thirds of Americans opposed torture.) The Red Cross found that the enthusiasm for torture in the United States was only surpassed by two nations, Israel and Nigeria.

—Maddie Weissman

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AIDS Blood Test

Categories: Health Care; Science

Date: Became available 1985

The first AIDS blood test to determine if a person has antibodies against HIV in his or her blood became available in 1985. It was designed by Robert Charles Gallo, one of the scientists responsible for identifying the human immunodeficiency virus. Once Gallo and his colleagues had isolated HIV, they were able to grow the virus en masse and isolate external proteins that the immune system would construct antibodies against. Next, they used these viral proteins in an enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay, or ELISA. ELISAs use small vials that have been coated with the viral proteins that the immune system is likely to make antibodies against.

Next, a patient’s blood serum is applied to the vial. If anti-HIV antibodies are present in the patient’s serum, they will bind to the viral proteins that have been immobilized on the surface of the glass vial. After the serum is removed, a second round of special antibodies called secondary antibodies is applied to the vial, and these bind to the immobilized antibodies. The secondary antibodies have an enzyme linked to them that can take a chemical substrate and convert it into something colored. The more secondary antibodies are bound, the darker the color; the darker the color, the more antibodies are bound to the vial surface. The color made by the secondary antibodies is detected by a spectrophotometer.

Today, the entire test is mechanized and is simple and fast. Large numbers of blood samples can be processed in a relatively short period of time at a relatively low cost.

History and Development

In 1965, Gallo went to work as a clinical associate at the National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland. Since he chose leukemia as his research subject, Gallo spent much of his time caring for cancer patients. Promoted to a full-time research position in 1966, Gallo was made an associate of Seymour Perry, head of the medicine department. Perry studied the nature of white blood cell growth in leukemia patients, and Gallo examined the enzymes that synthesized deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) in leukemia cells. The passage of the National Cancer Act in 1971 led to the creation of a new Laboratory of Tumor Cell Biology at the NIH, and Gallo was appointed head of this new laboratory.

Intrigued by the possibility that viruses could cause cancer, Gallo studied retroviruses. Retroviruses are ribonucleic acid (RNA) viruses that possess an enzyme called reverse transcriptase, which synthesizes a DNA copy of the RNA genome of the virus. This is the reverse of what occurs in cells, since DNA is used to store genetic information in cells, and an RNA copy of the DNA is used for gene expression. Retroviruses are unusual in this regard because RNA is the molecule used to store genetic information in the virus particle, but upon entry into the cell, a DNA copy is made from the RNA template. Even though many animal retroviruses were known, no human retroviruses had yet to be identified.

In 1976, Gallo and his lab discovered a protein called interleukin-2. Interleukin-2 stimulates a group of white blood cells (called T lymphocytes, or T cells) to grow. T lymphocytes help fight viral infections and stimulate B lymphocytes to synthesize antibodies. More important, T lymphocytes can also be infected by viruses, causing them to become cancerous. With interleukin-2 in hand, Gallo and his coworkers could grow T lymphocytes outside the body in culture and hunt for human T-lymphocyte-specific viruses. This strategy paid off in 1980, when Gallo and his colleagues announced the isolation of a human retrovirus from a leukemia patient that could convert cultured T lymphocytes into cancer cells. He named this virus human T-cell leukemia virus, or HTLV. A second type of HTLV, termed HTLV-2, was isolated from a T-lymphocyte hairy cell leukemia in 1982.

In 1981, clinical descriptions of a new disease among sexually active, gay men, blood transfusion recipients, and intravenous drug abusers appeared. This disease was characterized by a complete breakdown of the immune system and was named acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, or AIDS. In 1981, Gallo attended a seminar by Centers for Disease Control epidemiologist Jim Curran, who spoke about the advancing AIDS epidemic and asked the audience, "Where are the virologists?" Curran was convinced



Robert Charles Gallo. (National Cancer Institute)

that AIDS was an infectious disease that was probably caused by a new virus. Gallo's work with HTLV-1 and HTLV-2 positioned him to investigate AIDS. Max Essex from the Harvard School of Public Health reminded Gallo that an animal retrovirus called feline leukemia virus could not only cause leukemia but also destroy the immune system. Other work with HTLV-1 showed that it could be transmitted by breast-feeding, sexual intercourse, and blood transfusions, which was very similar to the manner in which AIDS was transmitted. Therefore, Gallo hypothesized that AIDS was caused by a retrovirus.

Throughout 1983, Gallo and his coworkers attempted to isolate the AIDS virus by adding blood from infected patients to cultured T lymphocytes, as he had done with HTLV. This approach did not work, but a member of Gallo's research group named Mikulas Popovic developed a technique that grew multiple samples from several patients on a cultured T-lymphocyte line. An unidentified retrovirus grew in these cultures, and Gallo initially called it HTLV-3. HTLV-3 turned out to be virtually identical to a virus that Luc Montagnier isolated from an AIDS patient in 1983 at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, termed lymphadenopathy-associated virus, or LAV.

Even though they were the first to isolate the virus, Montagnier and his group were unable to determine if LAV was the cause of AIDS. However, in 1984, Gallo and his colleagues demonstrated that HTLV-3/LAV (which was later renamed human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV) is the cause of AIDS. Gallo went one step further and created a blood test that could identify antibodies specific to HIV.

The U.S. Patent Office awarded the patent for the AIDS blood test to Gallo even though Montagnier had applied for a patent on an AIDS blood test seven months earlier. The French government sued the U.S. government over the rights to the AIDS blood test, and a war of words broke out between Gallo and Montagnier. This controversy was settled in 1987, when Gallo and Montagnier agreed to share credit for the discovery.

The controversy was rekindled in 1989 when journalist John Crewdson published a lengthy exposé in the *Chicago Tribune* that accused Gallo of stealing Montagnier's work. This led to an investigation by the Office of Research Integrity at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which found Gallo and his colleague Popovic guilty of scientific misconduct. Upon appeal, Gallo and Popovic were cleared of all charges in December, 1993. In 1994, the United States and France renegotiated their agreement that covered the AIDS blood test in order to make the distribution of royalties more equitable.

Impact

The discovery of HIV by Gallo and Montagnier was the critical first step in identifying the cause of AIDS. The earlier discovery of interleukin-2 by Gallo allowed the growth of cultured T cells that were used to grow the virus and make large quantities of it to develop the blood test. The blood test that resulted from this work convincingly demonstrated that HIV causes AIDS. Even more important, the blood

test provided the means to test the blood supply for HIV-contaminated blood and therefore saved untold millions of people from contracting AIDS through the transfusion of HIV-tainted blood. Once the HIV blood test became commercially available, the transmission of AIDS through blood transfusion dropped to almost zero.

In 1985, the cloning and sequencing of the HIV genome identified many potential drug targets. AIDS drug treatments have targeted HIV components and the biological processes they execute. Without the isolation and characterization of this virus, the ability to design such drugs would not exist. Gallo and Montagnier's discovery served

ROBERT CHARLES GALLO

Robert Charles Gallo was born to Francis Anton Gallo, a metallurgist, and Louise Mary (Ciancuilli) Gallo. His grandparents were Italian immigrants. In 1948, when Robert was eleven years old, his only sibling, Judy, was diagnosed with childhood leukemia. Even though Judy received treatment and her leukemia went into remission, she died in March, 1949. The loss of his sister would influence Gallo's future career choice. The pathologist who had diagnosed Judy's disease, Marcus Cox, became a family friend and mentor to the young Gallo.

Gallo attended Sacred Heart High School, where he was an avid basketball player. After suffering an injury that prevented him from playing, Gallo spent more time at the hospital with Dr. Cox. This inspired Gallo to become a physician.

Gallo received his undergraduate education from Providence College in Rhode Island, earning a B.S. in biology in 1959. Gallo then attended Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia and received his medical degree in 1963. Afterward, he completed his internship and medical residency at the University of Chicago, where he worked on the synthesis of hemoglobin.

In 1995, Gallo left the NIH to become the director of the Human Virology Institute at the University of Maryland. That same year, Gallo discovered that chemokines, which occur naturally in the body, can block HIV replication and halt the progression of AIDS. This discovery was the impetus for the development of a class of anti-HIV drugs called the chemokine antagonists/entry inhibitors. In 2001, Gallo announced the development of an HIV vaccine that worked in monkeys.

In 2005, Gallo co-founded Profectus BioSciences, Inc., a biotechnology company. Profectus develops technologies to reduce the morbidity and mortality caused by human viral diseases, including HIV.

In March 2011, Gallo founded the Global Virus Network along with William Hall of University College Dublin and Reinhard Kurth of the Robert Koch Institute. The network's goals include increasing collaboration among virus scholars, expanding virologist training programs, and overcoming gaps in research, especially during the early stages of viral epidemics.

as a stimulus that accelerated HIV research and made HIV one of the most heavily studied viruses known to science.

On the downside, the conflict between Gallo and Montagnier dampened the enthusiasm and optimism that surrounded HIV research. Many were appalled that science was subject to human frailties and that scientists could seem so petty. The feud severely undercut the public confidence in science, strained ties between scientists and the AIDS community, and cultivated distrust between many scientists and the press.

—Michael A. Buratovich

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Al-Qaeda

Categories: Military; Homeland Security; Politics

Date: Became a threat 2001, which is ongoing

Al-Qaeda is the militant Islamist and terrorist organization founded by Osama bin Laden in the late 1980s. The name al-Qaeda is taken from the Arabic word meaning "the base." During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s, it referred to the camp that had been established for the training of the mujahideen, Islamic volunteers who joined the fight against the invading Soviet forces. The terrorist movement that uses the name was formed at that time by Osama bin Laden, who was the group's leader and figurehead, advised by a council of Islamic fundamentalist clerics and other supporters.

Al-Qaeda functions as a network of isolated cells that receive funding and direction from the organization. Funding has come from numerous sources around the world, including bin Laden's personal wealth, and is directed to different cells by various means. Each cell is

anonymous; within each cell no member knows all of the other members of the cell, nor do members know who is in other cells. Thus each cell is essentially an autonomous body that uses the name of al-Qaeda.

The principal goal of al-Qaeda, as stated by various members of the organization, is to end the involvement and influence of the United States and other Western countries in the Middle East and to establish a global Islamic state. Al-Qaeda operatives have stated they plan to accomplish these goals primarily through effecting the collapse of the United States and global economies. To achieve these goals, al-Qaeda's presumed strategy was to carry out an attack in the United States that would prompt the US military to invade a Middle Eastern country. Al-Qaeda operatives would then incite local resistance and expand the conflict into neighboring countries as a long war of attrition, while simultaneously carrying out attacks within allied nations so as to fragment international support for the United States. The purported belief then is that the ongoing economic strain of these accumulated factors would result in the collapse of the US and world economies, after which a fundamentalist Islamic state could be established throughout the world. While the strategy may seem to involve a rather large leap of faith in its last stage, it is worth noting that similar strategies were used during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and effectively destroyed the economy of the former Soviet Union, resulting in its eventual collapse.

World Trade Center Attack and Aftermath

Al-Qaeda carried out numerous actions during the 1990s, but the organization became the most notorious terrorist network in history with the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. Some three thousand people were killed in these attacks, which targeted the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, DC. Subsequently, the United States and allied nations launched the War on Terror that consumed trillions of dollars of the world economy throughout the 2000s and into the 2010s. The 2003 invasion of Iraq, ostensibly on the grounds that the country had become a stronghold of al-Qaeda, was preceded by the invasion of Afghanistan to root out al-Qaeda supporters there. US forces worked alongside forces from Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, and several other nations in Afghanistan to dismantle the Taliban, an alleged supporter of al-Qaeda, and to restore a stable democratic

government. The effort was equal in importance to the ongoing search for Osama bin Laden and the destruction of al-Qaeda.

Prior to the War on Terror, al-Qaeda had carried out attacks in countries allied with the United States and on US holdings. On February 26, 1993, a group of terrorists who had been trained at an al-Qaeda camp in Afghanistan bombed the World Trade Center in New York City, killing six people. On August 7, 1988, al-Qaeda operatives bombed the US embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya, killing more than two hundred people. On October 12, 2000, al-Qaeda operatives successfully exploded a bomb alongside the USS Cole as the ship refueled off-shore at a port in Aden, Yemen, killing seventeen American service members and severely damaging the ship itself. This attack was followed by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the launch of the War on Terror. Several bombings were also carried out in 2003 in Istanbul, Turkey, by a group with close ties to al-Qaeda; these attacks killed sixty-seven people and injured about seven hundred others. On March 11, 2004, al-Qaeda bombings in railway stations in Madrid, Spain, killed nearly two hundred people and injured more than one thousand others. The Spanish people reacted in outrage, with many Spanish citizens blaming the event on the Spanish government's support for the United States and their military presence in Iraq. When a similar subway bombing occurred in London on July 7, 2005, it was widely speculated that this attack was also the work of al-Qaeda; however, an inquiry carried out by MI5, MI6, and the London police found no evidence of an al-Qaeda or other foreign mastermind.

As the Taliban lost its stranglehold on major portions of Afghanistan, its fighters withdrew to the mountainous wilds in the borderlands with Pakistan, where the organization could regroup and mount an insurgency into Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden evaded capture in Afghanistan, and removed himself and much of the leadership of al-Qaeda to Pakistan. For some time, bin Laden and members of his family lived in seclusion in the city of Abbottabad, in a walled villa only a short distance from the



Osama bin Laden (left) and Ayman al-Zawahiri (right) photographed in 2001. (Hamid Mir via Wikimedia Commons)

Pakistan military academy. He was eventually traced to that location, where he was ultimately killed by US Navy Seals on May 2, 2011. His death, and the deaths of several other top-level al-Qaeda agents, severely disrupted al-Qaeda activities, though the al-Qaeda terror network continues to be a powerful presence in world affairs. Egyptian-born Ayman al-Zawahiri became the leader of al-Qaeda following bin Laden's death. After the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War, al-Qaeda operatives moved into that country, regaining a stronghold there and fighting against the government of Bashar al-Assad with the affiliated terrorist organization known as Jabhat al-Nusra or the Nusra Front. In July 2016, however, the Nusra Front formally split from al-Qaeda and became known as Jabhat Fateh al-Sham (Front for the Conquest of Syria), and it remains one of the most influential groups in the Syrian Civil War. In the years since bin Laden's death, al-Qaeda has become more locally focused and decentralized.

Al-Qaeda in Canada and the United States

Actions taken by the United States against al-Qaeda in the early twenty-first century had major and costly effects, such as the establishment of the US Department of Homeland Security and enactment of much stricter controls along the border between Canada and the United States. Tension between the two nations also arose over several issues involving border security and the disposition of in-

dividuals associated with al-Qaeda in Canada. These ranged in severity from the relatively minor inconvenience of requiring Canadian citizens to have a current passport in order to enter the United States, to the serious issues raised by the prolonged detention of Canadian citizens Maher Arar and Omar Khadr by the US government on terrorism charges. The refusal of the United States government to return Khadr to Canada for trial was a source of contention between the two nations, which was resolved in 2012 with the return of Khadr to Canada, where he would carry out the remainder of his sentence in a maximum-security Canadian prison.

One important aspect of the difference in constitutional jurisdiction that remained contentious for both Canada and the United States throughout the 2000s was the perceived ease with which terrorist agencies such as al-Qaeda seemed able to use Canada's immigration system and border crossings to enter the United States. In many areas, the border runs through wide-open spaces where it is possible to walk across from one nation into the other undetected, and this is in fact a method that has been used by terrorist agents on occasion to enter the United States from Canada. The dissension helped to promote the passing of new federal antiterrorism laws in Canada that would circumvent the difficulties in bringing terrorism suspects to trial in Canada, with regard to the protection of rights guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

OSAMA BIN LADEN

Osama bin Laden (oh-SAH-mah bihn LAH-dihn) was born the seventeenth son of a devout Yemeni peasant who rose to great wealth in Saudi Arabia through construction projects for the al-Saud royal family. After a period of youthful hedonism in cosmopolitan Beirut in the early to mid-1970s, bin Laden embraced fundamentalist Sunni convictions while studying engineering at King Abdul Aziz University.

Bin Laden added a militant dimension to his piety in Soviet-occupied Afghanistan, shortly after the invasion of that country in 1979. A multimillionaire, he recruited mujahideen—guerrilla fighters engaged in “jihad,” or crusade—to battle the infidel Soviets and their apostate Afghan allies. Bin Laden apparently fought himself in several engagements and organized the construction of camps, tunnels, and defensive structures.

While training Arab youth to seek martyrdom, bin Laden conceived of al-Qaeda, a multinational insurgent organization that would continue the jihad even after the conflict Afghanistan was over. The withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989 convinced bin Laden that religious fervor by the faithful could defeat even a powerful superpower.

Between 1991 and 2001, bin Laden and al-Qaeda were associated in direct and indirect ways with hundreds of bombings and assassinations across North Africa, the Middle East, the Balkans, Central Asia, and the Philippines. In 1992, in Aden, Yemen, jihadists attempted to kill U.S. forces in transit to Somalia by bombing two hotels mistakenly thought to billet troops. On June 25, 1996, in Saudi Arabia, a truck loaded with explosives killed nineteen Americans and wounded hundreds more residing in the U.S. military residence Khubar Towers. On August 7, 1998, the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam were attacked with car bombs, killing 12 Americans and 291 Africans; 500 others were wounded. On October 12, 2000, al-Qaeda terrorists rammed a boat loaded with explosives into the USS Cole while it was moored in Aden, killing seventeen sailors.

On September 11, 2001, some three thousand unsuspecting people were killed when pirated airliners crashed into each of the two World Trade Center towers, the Pentagon, and a field in rural Pennsylvania. The attack was carried out by nineteen al-Qaeda operatives who had lived undetected in the United States and learned to fly airplanes in American flight schools. On October 7, the United States began bombing Afghanistan, ultimately killing bin Laden's lieutenant Atef and dispersing al-Qaeda operations; however, the mission failed to kill bin Laden and his adviser Zawahiri.

On May 2, 2011, bin Laden was shot and killed by US Navy SEALs inside a private residential compound in Abbottabad, where he lived with a local family from Waziristan. The covert operation was conducted by members of the United States Naval Special Warfare Development Group (SEAL Team Six) and Central Intelligence Agency SAD/SOG operators on the orders of U.S. President Barack Obama.

—Bland Addison

Impact

The impact of al-Qaeda on the United States and Canada in the twenty-first century has been immense. The United States economy has been profoundly impacted by the costs associated with the War on Terrorism which have reached well in excess of \$2 trillion. The effort also cost the lives of several thousands of American, Canadian, and other allied soldiers, and untold numbers of civilian casualties abroad. The war in Afghanistan, in particular, has continued longer than other war in United States history and cost more than any other war. Al-Qaeda continues to be a presence in the Arab world and beyond, with extensive involvement in the conflict in Syria.

—Richard M. Renneboog

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Amazon.com

Categories: Business; Internet

Date: Founded July 5, 1994

Amazon.com, also known simply as Amazon, was founded as an online bookstore by Jeff Bezos in 1994. Bezos named the company after the Amazon river in South America—considered the biggest river in the world—to reflect his goal of creating the largest bookstore in the



Jeff Bezos. (Seattle City Council via Wikimedia Commons)

world. Within just 5 years, Amazon expanded into an online marketplace selling a vast array of products and services. Amazon is now known for its stunning stock inventory, bold creativity, and range of services. It is the largest internet retail, or e-commerce, company in the world and has transformed the way we shop. It has also had a profound impact on the publishing industry, on brick-and-mortar department stores, and on logistics—the efficient warehousing, shipping, and distribution of retail goods. Amazon's innovations have changed and continue to change industry standards for much of the retail market, above all in logistics.

Despite this resounding impact and high sales figures, the company posted quarterly losses for years. Bezos's strategy favored reinvestment into business growth over short-term profitability. This strategy led the company to develop several massive projects through the years, such as the Amazon Fire phone, Amazon Prime Instant Video, Amazon Cloud drive, and others.

Amazon also suffered several massive sell-offs in its financial history, such as when its stock fell 94 percent during the period of December 1999 to September 2001, also known as the dot-com bubble crash. Nevertheless, the overall stock trajectory of Amazon over the years is impressive. Amazon shares increased from \$1.50 in 1997 to over \$700 in 2016; that is a stunning return of 46,500 percent. It is difficult for analysts to calculate the company's annual sales, since Amazon rarely makes its sales figures public.

One of the key points for Amazon's success has been the relentless control of storage and delivery efficiency and cost. In the mid-2010s, Amazon experimented with the use of drones to control delivery speed. On December 7, 2014, Amazon made its first drone delivery, dropping off an Amazon Fire TV and a bag of popcorn to a customer in rural England. The delivery took thirteen minutes to arrive from a fulfillment center in Cambridge, England, after a customer placed the online order. Although headquartered in the United States, Amazon explained that its drone service was first tested in England because US regulations for drone testing are too strict.

History

The evolution of Amazon represented a fundamental change in the history of business worldwide. Amazon grew from its inception as a global bookstore to become a book publisher, a manufacturer, a video and music distributor, a production studio, and a tech industry giant, among many other roles.

In 1994, Jeff Bezos left his financial career in Wall Street to start an online bookstore in Seattle. Bezos was a visionary who recognized early the commercial potential of online markets, harnessing the huge selection of books made accessible by the internet. By 1997, it was calculated that Amazon's book stock could fill six entire football fields. Less than two decades later, the company was sell-

JEFF BEZOS

Jeff Bezos was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to Jacklyn Gise. Jacklyn's marriage to Jeff's birth father, Ted Jorgensen, lasted less than a year after Jeff was born, and when Bezos was five years old, his mother married Miguel Bezos, a Cuban refugee, and took his surname.

Bezos spent summers on his grandfather's twenty-five-thousand-acre cattle ranch in New Mexico and developed an appreciation for science and hard work. He showed an early interest in science and technology while tinkering in the family's garage in Houston where his stepfather worked as an executive for Exxon. As a teenager, Bezos wanted to be an astronaut or physicist. His family later moved to Miami, Florida, where Bezos attended high school and graduated at the top of his class. He attended Princeton University and graduated with high honors in 1986 with a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering and computer science. After graduating from college, Bezos accepted a position with Fitel, a high-tech start-up company where he created software to track international stock trades. In 1990, he took a position with the Wall Street firm D. E. Shaw, developing a technically sophisticated and successful quantitative hedge fund and becoming the company's youngest senior vice president in 1992. He then married novelist MacKenzie (Tuttle) Bezos.

Bezos is generally counted among the four or five richest people in the world. Amazon.com has changed how people shop and has led to major changes in the retail world, causing brick-and-mortar retail giants such as Barnes & Noble to rethink how it markets its products and forcing the Borders Group to go out of business in 2011. Many of Bezos's innovations have become standard practice in the world of e-commerce, including e-mail alert services, heavy advertising on popular websites, banner ads, e-cards, expedited shipping, and referring customers to products that match their buying patterns.

—Robert K. Flatley

ing a stunning array of products, from groceries to toys and electronic and technological equipment. In fact, according to some estimates, nationwide book sales make for only about 7 percent of the company's approximately \$75 billion in annual earnings.

In 1997, Amazon went public, although it did not post a profitable quarter until 2001. In 2002, Amazon opened Amazon Web Services, which offered cloud-based services such as storage, computer rental, and computation through Amazon Mechanical Turk. By 2008, Amazon was generating approximately \$20 billion a year in revenue, more than the combined sales of all other US bookstores, although it had started to lose market share in music and videos to its competition, mainly Netflix and Apple.

Amazon continued to expand into innovative technology services. In 2006, Amazon launched Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2), a web service to allow individuals and small