

9/11 and the War on Terror

Written by Stephen McGlinchey

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STEPHEN MCGLINCHEY, MAR 28 2022

This feature is part of the online resources to accompany the textbook *Foundations of International Relations*.

On 11 September 2001, al-Qaeda – a terrorist group opposed to Western (chiefly American) dominance in the global system – attacked the United States by hijacking four commercial airliners and crashing two of them into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York and a third into the Pentagon (the headquarters of the US Military in Arlington, Virginia). The fourth plane crashed before hitting its target, which was presumed to be a political building in Washington, DC. The event, often referred to as ‘9/11’ led to the United States starting its ‘War on Terror’, seeking to rid the world of terrorists and governments that supported or enabled them. United States actions – together with further operations by al-Qaeda and similar terrorist groups – shaped the first two decades of the twenty-first century and led to material changes in the nature of both domestic, and international, politics. In a darker sense than with human rights (for example), 9/11 reinforced the growing importance over time of the actions of individuals – this time manifested through non-state terrorist groups. Text adapted from McGlinchey, Stephen. 2022. *Foundations of International Relations*. London: Bloomsbury.

Below is a collection of multimedia resources that help unpack, and explain the importance of 9/11 and the US-led War on Terror.

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Academic debates about the War on Terror

About the author:

Dr Stephen McGlinchey is the Editor-in-Chief and Publisher of E-International Relations and Senior Lecturer of International Relations at UWE Bristol. His publications include *Foundations of International Relations* (Bloomsbury 2022), *International Relations* (2017), *International Relations Theory* (2017) and *US Arms Policies Towards the Shah's Iran* (Routledge 2021, 2014). You can find him on twitter @mcglincheyst or LinkedIn.