

The Terrorism Lottery

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In 1948, *The New Yorker* published what would become one of the most famous short stories in American literature. This was [The Lottery, by Shirley Jackson](#), which told the tale of a community that, once every year, selected a citizen to be stoned to death in order to ensure a good harvest.

Jackson was flooded with hate mail after her story was published. Some readers thought the story represented a real situation and others were offended that anyone could imagine such a scenario. Although the story was meant to depict only the idea of mindless violence and apathy in human society, in the 21st century it has become a reflection of the general attitude toward terrorism.

Consider the crimes of 9/11. As in *The Lottery*, on a bright, summer day, people were selected to die by means of their presence at the World Trade Center, at the Pentagon, and on the hijacked flights. They weren't stoned to death but they were killed by willful ignorance. That's because much of the public never wanted to know the truth about previous terrorist incidents and simply accepted dubious government accounts.

For example, neither the 1995 [Oklahoma City bombing](#) nor the [tragedy of the USS Cole](#) in October 2000 have been examined closely by most people. The mindless acceptance of the official accounts for these events led to the crimes of 9/11, after which the indifference to facts was taken to the next level. What facts were ignored after 9/11? The list would be endless but here are a few examples.

1. Insider trading related to 9/11 was ignored and the suspects were [not even questioned](#) by the FBI or the 9/11 Commission.
2. The third skyscraper that fell that day, in an obvious demolition event ([WTC Building 7](#)), was simply not mentioned in the *9/11 Commission Report*.
3. Eyewitness testimony was hidden from the public for years and later ignored. This included the [testimony of firefighters](#) who said that explosives were going off throughout the WTC towers.
4. Building construction [codes were not changed](#) as a result of the root causes cited by the government for destruction of the WTC buildings, meaning the government explanation was effectively ignored by the building construction community.
5. Everyone agrees that the public was lied to about the failure of the national air defenses that day. The question avoided is whether to believe the government story that the U.S. military lied [repeatedly for years](#) to make itself look bad, or the much simpler explanation that the 9/11 Commission lied in its final report to divert attention away from the whole matter.
6. The government reports on the destruction of the WTC buildings [ignored basic](#)

[laws](#) of science and would have failed peer review. Meanwhile the only actual peer-reviewed science on the subject, for example [this](#), and [this](#), and [this](#), and [this](#), went unheeded.

By ignoring the facts related to 9/11, the public has prepared itself to be terrorized on a regular basis. Recurring acts of terrorism [follow a formula](#) that is transparent to anyone who cares to examine the evidence beyond simply accepting corporate media reports.

An outstanding example is the San Bernardino shooting of December 2015. The *Los Angeles Times* [reported that](#), a year after the San Bernardino shooting, “federal officials acknowledge they still don’t have answers to some of the critical questions.” San Bernardino Police Chief Jarrod Burguan said, “We never established the motive. The best we can do is theorize.”

A year after the San Bernardino terror attack, the FBI is still struggling to answer key questions



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This was a mass shooting in which most of the evidence was ignored in favor of an official account that accused a brown-skinned, Muslim husband and wife. Contrary to the unchallenged accusation, the evidence suggests that the attackers were three white men who appeared to be special operations soldiers.

At the time of the attack, a [Los Angeles television](#) station stated: “Police looking for 3 white males dressed in military gear.” The only eyewitness to the shootings said the perpetrators were [three tall, athletic, white men](#) in combat-style gear. The witnesses to the getaway said they saw [three men in black masks](#) fleeing the scene with rifles in hand. Another said it was three [white men in military gear](#). The attackers got into a black SUV with tinted windows and “calmly” left the scene.

Although a black SUV was later found shot up badly, no convincing evidence was ever produced showing how the accused were driving or shooting from the SUV. Moreover, the [attorney representing](#) the family said the accused appear to have been handcuffed and lying face down in the vehicle when found. As with 9/11, the accused were conveniently dead.

The fourteen people killed in San Bernardino were just like the nearly 3,000 killed on 9/11. They were sacrificial lottery winners, murdered not simply by the perpetrators of the crime but by fellow citizens who continue to ignore the facts about terrorist events. The lack of objective examination of terrorist acts suggests that we might as well stone to death future victims because it is the public’s apathy that allows terrorism to continue.

Who will be next? As with Shirley Jackson’s novel we are all in the lottery of terrorism. Unless we take action to investigate and communicate the facts about terrorist events our names will remain in the pool to be selected at random. Only a concerted and persistent effort to question each new terrorist act, as well as those of the last few decades, will remove our names from the list.

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