

CASE STUDY

SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, VICTIMS

On September 11, 2001, there were a total of 3,047 victims from the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and Somerset County, Pennsylvania. In the 2001 report, *Crime in the United States*, it was decided that the victims of 9/11 would not be included in the general report as victims of murder. Rather, the Federal Bureau of Investigation provided a special report that focused on the terrorist attacks. This special report included summaries of the victims, including their race/ethnicity, sex, age, and location (i.e., the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, or Somerset County, Pennsylvania). Included with these victims were the 71 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty:

- 37 officers with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Police Department
- 23 officers with the New York Police Department
- 5 officers with the New York Office of Tax Enforcement
- 3 officers with the State of New York Unified Court System
- 1 fire marshal with the New York City Fire Department
- 1 agent with the U.S. Secret Service
- 1 agent with the FBI¹

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the reason for not including these victims was, in part, as follows:

The statistics of September 11 are not a part of the traditional *Crime in the United*

States publication because they are different from the day-to-day crimes committed in this country. Additionally, combining these statistics with our regular crime report would create many difficulties in defining and analyzing crime as we know it.²

ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, THERE WERE A TOTAL OF 3,047 VICTIMS FROM THE WORLD TRADE CENTER, THE PENTAGON, AND SOMERSET COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA.

Further, it was argued that the murder count was so large that if one were to combine this with what is considered *traditional crime statistics*, it would have what is called an outlier effect. An outlier is an extreme value that significantly differs from the rest of the distribution.

Some have argued that this was not an appropriate decision. In 2002, Dr. Paul Leighton, a professor of criminology, argued that "mass murder is still murder." He maintains that while it was reported that homicide increased just 3% from 2000 to 2001, it actually increased by 26%. Dr. Leighton contends that if the FBI had chosen to include the victims of 9/11, the various people who refer to the Uniform Crime Reports (e.g., bureaucrats, students, reporters) would have a visual reminder of the impact those terrorist attacks had on the country. Interestingly, the FBI had previously included the victims of other terrorist attacks (e.g., the first World Trade Center bombing and the bombing of Oklahoma City's Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building).³

THINK ABOUT IT:

Do you think that the victims of 9/11 should have been include in the *Crime in the United States* report?