



AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

Clifford Chanin, Executive Vice President and Deputy Director for Museum Programs at the 9/11 Memorial Museum: Al-Qaeda was a product of poor environments, that poverty was a guiding factor in this.

Peter Bergen: Yeah.

Clifford Chanin: But that, in a number of studies including what you've undertaken, turns out not to be the case.

Peter Bergen: Yeah. I mean, anybody involved in revolutionary violence, particularly terrorism, is often not themselves disempowered. They are sort of acting on the behalf of people that they think are disempowered. And that was true with the Baader-Meinhof Gang in the '70s in Germany. They were basically middle-class kids, white—you know, middle class German kids. That was true of the Russian anarchists in the late 19th century. It's true of a lot of these terrorist organizations. And so, what the—when we looked at this, we found the average age was twenty-eight, a third married, a third kids, have same average education as most Americans—i.e., fifty percent attended high school, ten percent graduate study—attended and graduated high school. We found the rate of mental illness was below the rate of the general population. We found they were not career criminals. You know, they were about—they were incarcerated at about the same rate as the average male American, which is about nine percent. So, you end up with this picture of ordinary Americans, and we came up with this profile, myself and my research team at New America. And then the San Bernardino attack happened. And it was like these were exactly the people that we were—they were married, they had a kid. He was making \$70,000 a year. They both had college degrees.