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THE STORY OF ZIAD JARRAH

Ziad Samir Jarrah, suspected of piloting United Airlines flight 93 that crashed in Pennsylvania, was born on May 11, 1975 in Mazraa, Lebanon a suburb of Beirut.

His father, Samir is a civil servant, and his mother Nasisa, a school teacher.

An only son, he had a privileged upbringing. Ziad Jarrah was sent to a Catholic school in Beirut, where his parents believed he would get a superior education.

As a young man he rarely attended mosque on Fridays and was indifferent to politics. He graduated in 1996. His uncle, banker Jamal Jarrah had difficulty believing that his social and worldly nephew was responsible for the atrocities in the U.S.

Watch our [entire interview](#) with Ziad Jarrah's uncle, Jamal Jarrah  (22 minutes)



The family also had a home in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, near the town of Al Marj.



Jarrah (right) and his cousin, Salim, moved to Greifswald, Germany, in 1996.

Ziad Jarrah and his cousin, Salim, moved to Greifswald, Germany in April 1996.

He initially studied German language courses at the University of Greifswald, and after completing two semesters was able to qualify for other studies at German universities.

Jarrah also met a young Turkish woman named Aysel Senguen, and they began to date. Attractive, intelligent and westernized, she was studying to be a doctor.

Jarrah showed little interest in religion. His friend, Abdul Rahman Al-Makkadi recalls leading him to the mosque and considered him a 'weak' Muslim.

In 1997 Jarrah registered at the University of Applied Sciences in Hamburg to study aeronautical engineering, and aircraft construction and design.

In mid-1997, he became a tenant in a house owned by Rosemarie Canel. She checked him out carefully and was reassured by the fact he had a cousin in business in Greifswald. She quickly found she liked the young man, and as an artist felt moved to paint a portrait of him.



Jarrah's girlfriend, Aysel Senguen. They met while Jarrah was studying German at the University of Greifswald.

"*He was interesting to paint, with the black beard and all*", she said. He took the portrait home to Lebanon as a Christmas gift for his mother.

For two years his grades were above average and he showed every indication of being dedicated to a career in aviation. Professor Wolfram Dietrich remembers him as being cheerful and helpful to other students.



Rosemarie Canel's portrait of Jarrah.

In September of 1999, Jarrah registered for the semester at the University but disappeared after only one class. Aysel had already begun noticing changes Jarrah. He had begun to nag her about her smoking and drinking. He didn't approve of her choice of clothing. And from time to time, he'd disappear. In one e-mail exchange she challenged his beliefs and asked him to be

honest.

Read a [translated version](#) of Aysel's e-mail. View the [original](#) in German. (.pdf)

According to his landlady, he was spending time with friends in nearby Harburg.

Harburg also happens to be the location of the Technical University where others implicated in the U.S. suicide missions were living and studying at the time.

Mohamed Atta, an Egyptian national, whom investigators say was a key organizer of the 9/11 attacks, was studying urban planning at the Technical University. He lived at 54 Marienstrasse with his cousin Marwin Al-Shehhi.

Neighbours recall that young men would gather in the Marienstrasse apartment for discussion and prayer.

Atta was the pilot who flew American Airlines flight 11 into the North Tower of the World Trade Center and Al-Shehhi was the pilot on United Air Lines flight 175 which flew into the South Tower of the World Trade Center.

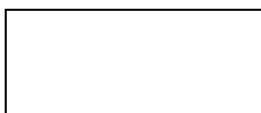


Mohamed Atta was a key organizer of the attacks, was studying urban planning at the Technical University.

Although Jarrah's relationship with Aysel grew tense, she agreed to an Islamic religious ceremony to sanction their union. She traveled with him to Lebanon to meet his family. They began to make plans to marry.

But he was leading a parallel life. Among Jarrah's new friends was a radical Islamist named Ramzi Binalshibh, a key organizer in the attacks.

Jarrah even traveled to Afghanistan and swore a blood oath of loyalty to Osama bin Laden in late 1999.



In the summer of 2000 Jarrah moved to the U.S. to learn to fly at the Florida Flight Training Centre in Venice, Florida. Just down



Jarrah's uncle says Ziad was planning to marry his girlfriend soon. A new car (an early wedding present) sat in the driveway of his family's house after the attack.

Jarrah's student visa (close up) - click to see the document issued to Jarrah on May 21, 2000.

the road, Marwan Al-Shehhi studied flying at Huffman Aviation.

In August 2000, Aysel visited Jarrah's family in Lebanon. He was said to be in the U.S. and too busy with his studies to join her.

Watch a **clip from a wedding video** showing Ziad Jarrah celebrating at his father's house in the summer of 2000 📺 (30 seconds)

By November 2000, Jarrah had earned a pilot's license. Thorsten Beirman, another student at the flight school, recalls:

"He was not at all an aggressive person but when flying he seemed to change and he would brook no other opinions. I didn't feel safe and I decided that I would never fly with him again".

Beirman recalls that Jarrah didn't seem to have any plans for his future as a pilot.

Jarrah was about 5' 11" and weighed about 175. He was strong, muscular and well coordinated, according to Bert Rodriguez, the owner and martial arts instructor at "1 US Fitness" in Dania Beach.

Jarrah had a membership and was learning street-fighting techniques from Rodriguez. *"He wanted to learn about fighting and control, about being in control and how to control somebody,"* Rodriguez said.



By November 2000, Jarrah had earned his pilot's license at the Florida Flight Training Centre in Venice.



Bert Rodriguez, Jarrah's instructor at "1 US Fitness", says he liked Jarrah. "He was very humble, very quiet."

"I liked the guy. He was very humble, very quiet ... and he didn't want to be in a situation where he would get picked on." On his application, he indicated that he was eventually "headed back to Deutschland."

Jarrah continued his relationship with Aysel making hundreds of phone calls to her. She came to visit him in Florida in early 2001 where she took snapshots of his pilot training in a flight simulator.

Jarrah returned to Lebanon for the last time to be with his father during open heart surgery in February 2001.

He re-entered the U.S. April 13 and rented an apartment at 1816 Harding in Hollywood, Florida on April 23.

On June 22, he moved to an apartment at 4641 Bougainvillea in Lauderdale-by-the-Sea where his roommate was Ahmed Al-Haznawi, another of the hijackers.

According to the commission looking into events around 9/11, at

this time Jarrah came close to abandoning his role in the hijacking plot. He argued with Mohammed Atta. A coded message described the two as an unhappy couple on the cusp of divorce.

Jarrah wanted to return to Germany to be with Aysel and in July 2001, Atta took Jarrah to the Miami airport with a one-way ticket to Germany. But, after what was described as an emotional conversation with Ramzi Binalshibh, the plot's Germany coordinator, Jarrah returned to the United States the following month.

On August 27, Jarrah registered at the Pin-Del Motel in Laurel, Maryland. Nawaq Alhamzi, (who was aboard flight 77, which hit the Pentagon), paid cash for a one-night stay at the same motel on September 1.

The Pin-Del Motel is about a mile from the Valencia Motel where at least 2 other hijackers stayed between August 23 and 30.

On September 4, his family sent Jarrah \$700 in addition to his regular monthly stipend of \$2,000. According to his uncle, Jamal Jarrah, he told his family it was for "fun". But the next day he and his roommate booked one-way flights to Newark, New Jersey for September 7.



Receipt from the Del-Mar Motel, signed by Jarrah.

[close-up of the receipt](#)

On September 9 he made his final phone call to his family. He confirmed receipt of the money sent on the 4th. The family reported he was cheerful and normal and said he'd see them Sept. 22 for a family wedding. According to them, everything seemed normal.



Photo of Ziad Samir Jarrah, released by the FBI on September 27, 2001.

Jarrah spent the last evening of his life writing a letter to Aysel, the woman he had made marriage plans with. Early the next morning he called and told her that he loved her three times and then hung up.

Read a [translated version](#) of Jarrah's final letter to Aysel, written September 10th. View the [original](#) in German. (.pdf)

On September 11, Jarrah boarded UA Flight 93 from Newark to San Francisco. Shortly after take-off the hijackers, took control of the plane and changed flight path, possibly heading for Washington DC.

Jarrah took the controls of the airplane and instructed passengers to remain calm. Cell phone conversations from terrified passengers reveal the plane had been taken over by a group of hijackers.

A group of passengers attempted to overpower the hijackers and rushed towards the cockpit. Jarrah waggled the wings and pitched the nose of the plane to keep them at bay. He instructed one of the other hijackers to block the door of the cockpit.

Cockpit recordings revealed that one of the hi-jackers screamed "*Allah is the greatest.*" Another said "*put it in the ground, put it in the ground.*" Shortly afterwards the plane crashed into the

Pennsylvania countryside at 580 miles an hour.