

118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers

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One of the greatest mysteries of September 11, 2001 is the collapse of the Twin Towers. Claims that explosions contributed to the collapses were made on 9/11 and have persisted, but studies supportive of the U.S. government's account of events have ignored or denied these claims. A great deal is at stake in this debate. If explosions were critical to the collapses, the official al Qaeda narrative may need to be radically altered or abandoned altogether.

In January, 2006 an article by David Ray Griffin appeared entitled, "Explosive Testimony: Revelations about the Twin Towers in the 9/11 Oral Histories." [1] Drawing on a collection of oral histories from the New York Fire Department (FDNY), Griffin argued the case for controlled demolition of the towers. I found myself intrigued by the data he had used and impressed by his method, but I decided there was room for further research. I wanted answers to two questions.

- (1) Are the roughly 31 witnesses to explosions quoted by Griffin the total of all witnesses to explosions in these sources, or are there others he does not mention?
- (2) Are there witnesses in these sources whose testimony supports the non-explosive collapse of the Towers—the U.S. government's perspective?

I decided to read the primary sources in order to answer these questions. This paper gives the results of my research.

I am interested, in this paper, in direct perception and immediate interpretation. I want to know what witnesses saw, heard and thought on 9/11 at the scene of the crime. Although I shall discuss briefly the fact that some witnesses later changed their minds about what they had experienced, this is not my central focus.

I do not claim to have proven that the Towers were brought down with explosives, but I believe the eyewitness testimony assembled and discussed here strengthens the argument that explosions were critical to the collapses.

The Appendices give the evidence I have culled from the oral histories and will allow the reader to form an independent judgment.

The Body of Evidence

According to Jim Dwyer of the New York Times, the FDNY oral histories were "originally gathered on the order of Thomas Von Essen, the city fire commissioner on Sept. 11, who said he wanted to preserve those accounts before they became reshaped by a collective memory." [2] The oral histories constitute about 12,000 pages of testimony by 503 FDNY firefighters, emergency medical technicians and paramedics collected from early October, 2001 to late January, 2002. Mr. Von Essen's prophetic act has given us a remarkably rich body of narrative material.

Initially, the city of New York refused to release this material, but after a lawsuit by the New York Times and some of the 9/11 victims' families the city was ordered to release them. The New York Times then posted them on its internet site, where they have been available (with some deletions) to the public since August, 2005.[3]

As we learn from the oral histories themselves, the interviews took place in various FDNY offices and were conducted by a variety of FDNY officers. Sometimes only the interviewer and the interviewee were present, while at other times additional persons were present. Locations, dates, times, and names of those present are all meticulously recorded.

It is impossible to tell simply by reading the recorded interviews if the atmosphere in which the interviews were conducted was coercive in any way, but I have found no evidence of this. In many cases the interviewer simply asks the interviewee to recount what he or she experienced on 9/11. Thereafter, some interviewers intervene frequently with questions, while others are largely silent. Interventions typically seek to establish details of times and locations, of the actions of various chiefs and firefighters, and of the progress of operations. Interviewers usually do not show any special interest in the topics central to my concerns—the collapses of the Towers and the use or non-use of explosions in these collapses—but their curiosity and attention are sometimes crucial to the eliciting of critical information.[4] There are very few cases where the interviewer may be said to have “led” the witness toward the explosion option.[5]

Most interviewees appear to have given their testimony spontaneously, although some obviously read from a report they had written.[6] For the most part, interviewees appear to have been given the opportunity to structure their narratives as they wished.

As we know, the New York firefighters were used by the U.S. government after 9/11 as symbols of heroism, but there are in this collection very few heroic narratives. Many accounts are actually structured as anti-heroic narratives--the firefighters arrive to save people and end up running for their lives as the Towers collapse.[7] Others are outright chaos narratives, where people mill around hopelessly with no plan and where their skills are useless.[8]

I find many of the stories powerfully told, with vulnerability and humanity. Patriotism is no more than an occasional flash in these accounts, and there are extremely few witnesses who try to use their experiences to advance the U.S. government's war on terror.

Despite variations in the stories, as a body of narrative the collection gives prominence to five perceptions that were shocking to the witnesses:

- (1) the perception of the Towers burning:[9]
- (2) the perception of body parts littering the streets as the firefighters and medics arrive on the scene:[10]
- (3) the perception of people in the Towers leaping to their deaths:[11]
- (4) the perception of the Towers collapsing, and, especially, the perception of the initiation of these collapses;
- (5) the perception of, and entrapment in, the cloud of pulverized building flowing down the streets after the collapses.[12]

It is the fourth of these shocking perceptions that is the focus of the present study.

The Surprising Collapses

Although the 9/11 Commission Report acknowledges that fire chiefs on the scene thought the collapse of the Towers was impossible,[13] it is worth emphasizing the unanimity of the FDNY personnel on this point. Here are typical comments:

“...it took me a long time before I could accept the fact that even after you could see that the tower wasn't there you said it had to be there somewhere. You couldn't believe that it had come down.” (Captain Michael Donovan, 9110205)

“I was kind of in disbelief that the building was actually collapsing. I kind of stopped to say, well, maybe that was a piece of the facade. I couldn't believe that the entire building was going to collapse in one heap.”(Captain Charles Clarke, 9110250)

“Once again, I'm doing this 23 years...This changed all the rules. This changed all the rules. This went from a structure to a wafer in seconds, in seconds. I couldn't believe the speed of that tower coming down. I heard the rumble, I looked up, debris was already 50 feet from the ground...” (Sergeant James Canham, 9110370)

“I've worked in Manhattan my whole career in high rises and everything else...you looked back, all you see--you know how fast those buildings came down...it just doesn't click that these buildings can come down...you just couldn't believe that those buildings could come down...there's no history of these buildings falling down.” (Lieutenant Warren Smith, 9110223)

“whoever in their right mind would have thought that the World Trade Center would ever fall down...Nobody in the world, nobody ever would ever have thought those buildings were coming down.” (EMS Captain Mark Stone, 9110076)

Hypotheses

Many hypotheses have been put forward to explain the collapse of the Twin Towers, but we can think of these hypotheses as falling into two sets, the set of hypotheses according to which explosions were a critical factor in the collapses (which I shall call the set of explosion hypotheses, or EH) and the set according to which explosions were not a critical factor in the collapses (non-explosion hypotheses, or NEH). EH would include, for example, suggestions of explosives on the planes, mini-nukes in the buildings, or multiple pre-positioned charges—the last suggestion being, for good reasons, the most popular—which cut the columns, pulverized the building, and so on. NEH would include various combinations of failed trusses, weakened core and perimeter columns, sagging floors and the like, typically said to have been caused by a combination of airplane impact and heat from burning jet fuel, which somehow resulted in progressive and total collapse of the buildings.[14]

Testing the Hypotheses through Observation

Let me begin by stressing that I am interested here only in how these sets of hypotheses are verified and falsified through *the direct accounts of witnesses*. I exclude all evidence, even where it is indirectly based on eyewitness accounts, that involves measurement, analysis of physical materials, or photographic or seismic records. Obviously, all these forms of evidence are valid, but they are not my focus in this paper.

(i) How, then, can EH be tested by the observations of those present at the scene? What, among such observations, will tend to verify EH and what will tend to falsify it?

If witnesses perceive or think they perceive explosions that they judge to be critical to the collapse of the towers,[15] this will constitute positive evidence in support of EH. All testimony that supports NEH will count against EH.

Whether or not silence on the part of witnesses—no mention of explosions--should count against EH is a difficult matter. Arguments from silence have many dangers. I am prepared to say this: the nature of observational evidence is such that the greater the number of witnesses, the richer the detail of their observations, and the more their testimonies complement each other, the stronger the case will be. I see no way to set a decisive boundary, a number of testimonies beneath which EH fails and beyond which it succeeds. There will be an irreducible degree of subjective judgment.

(ii) How can NEH be tested by the observations of those present at the scene? What will tend to verify and what will tend to falsify it?

We can divide non-explosion hypotheses into two main sub-sets, those that focus on the initial causes of structural failure of the Towers and those that focus on the progressive and total collapse of the Towers. The hypothesis of the National Institute of Standards and Technology is in the former class. NIST has a clear hypothesis concerning the initiation of the collapses of the upper stories of the Towers, but it has nothing of substance to say about progressive and total collapse.[16] Even if our main interest lay in the initiation of the collapse of top floors (which it does not), we would find that the evidence supporting this is, for the most part, hidden from observers and, where visible, is ambiguous and could easily support EH.[17] We therefore find that NIST's hypothesis, and similar hypotheses focusing on initial causes, offer us little that we can test through observation. This does not mean these hypotheses are false, it simply means we must pass over them in silence when we are looking for positive evidence from observers. The proponents of these hypotheses will have to look elsewhere for supporting evidence.

Of the second sub-set of NEH, the most common over the years since 9/11 has been the well-known "pancake" hypothesis.[18] Regardless of what the initiating causes of collapse may be, says this hypothesis, progressive and total collapse came about through successive, linked and cumulative falling or "pancaking" of floors.

The pancake hypothesis became very influential as an explanation of Tower collapse soon after 9/11. It was later adopted in the 9/11 Commission Report of 2004 [19] and it continues to be influential among those unfamiliar with research on the collapses. The evidence and argument assembled against this hypothesis seem to me, however, to be definitive, and it is not surprising that the 2005 NIST report avoids endorsing pancaking. I believe that this hypothesis is simply no longer viable.[20]

At the time the interviews with members of the FDNY were being conducted, the pancake hypothesis was well known and was felt by many people to have been proven correct. I have no doubt that this is why FDNY members make fairly common mention of pancaking. What are we to do with this testimony?

We notice, first of all, that not all witnesses regard pancaking and critical explosions as mutually exclusive. Williams Reynolds says:

“I was distracted by a large explosion from the south tower and it seemed like fire was shooting out a couple of hundred feet in each direction, then all of a sudden the top of the tower started coming down in a pancake...” [21]

Second, we can in most cases not tell for certain what witnesses mean when they speak of pancaking. Perhaps some of them simply mean that they saw progressive collapse of the building, starting near the top and continuing on down.

(This difficulty is not restricted to the term “pancaking:” it applies to several terms I have used in my research. When people speak of the buildings “imploding,” for example, they may merely mean that the buildings collapsed rapidly on themselves. But I believe most of the terms on which my research focuses, such as “explosion” and “bomb,” are less subject to ambiguity.)

I have decided that it is important, regardless of the status of the pancake hypothesis today, to record all those cases in the oral histories where witnesses appear to support this hypothesis. These cases are, at the very least, important as evidence of how theories about the collapses evolved among witnesses over time. The oral histories show that many people who originally thought they had witnessed critical explosions were later persuaded that they had not, and it appears that the pancake hypothesis was the main alternative they were offered.

In any case, I have been able to find only one other type of report in this material that clearly supports NEH, namely cases where witnesses directly deny that they witnessed explosions.

In short, support for NEH, for the purposes of this study, consists of testimony denying explosions and testimony supporting the pancake hypothesis.

Falsification of NEH is quite straightforward. NEH and EH cannot both be true, so all evidence that supports EH weakens NEH. Note that it weakens not only the pancake hypothesis but all non-explosion hypotheses. Where observational evidence is concerned, falsification should be thought of as a cumulative process, and we shall want to look at both the quantity and quality of our evidence.

Evidence Supporting Sets of Hypotheses

(i) I have established seven categories of evidence to help organize the cases that will count in favour of EH:

- (a) cases where witnesses use the words “explode,” “explosion” or variants to describe what they perceived;
- (b) cases where witnesses use the term “blast” to refer to what they saw or heard;
- (c) cases where witnesses use the terms “blew up,” “blew out” or variants to describe what they perceived;
- (d) cases where witnesses use the terms “bomb” or “secondary device” (a term for an explosive device timed to go off after care-givers have gathered to give aid) to describe what they perceived;

- (e) cases where witnesses use the terms “implode,” “implosion” or variants to describe what they perceived;
- (f) cases that I judge to be strongly suggestive of planned demolition;
- (g) other cases that are, in my judgment, suggestive of critical explosions.

I have decided on the following exclusions.

All cases will be excluded where sounds are described whose interpretation is ambiguous. Thus, “bang” and “boom” are excluded (though I have included “ba-ba-ba-boom”), unless accompanied by a more explicit term such as “explode,” since they might have non-explosive causes such as floors falling on other floors. The ubiquitous “rumble” is excluded, as is the very common “roar” and a host of similes and metaphors referring to freight trains, jet planes and the like. All these sounds might be expected to accompany a catastrophic collapse of a 110 story building, whatever the cause of the collapse.

Although I have accepted references to “volcano,” I have excluded “earthquake” and related metaphors and descriptions from my list, thereby excluding one of David Ray Griffin’s main categories.[22] I recognize that Griffin has good reasons for including selected cases of the shaking of the earth: when this shaking occurs very early in the sequence of events, and especially before there is any visible sign of collapse in the Towers, it suggests the shaking has an explosive origin and is not simply the expected accompaniment of a massive building collapse. But I have decided to err on the side of caution and exclude all such references, leaving it to other researchers to sort the wheat from the chaff.

I have included “blast” references only in selected cases, and especially when these appear to refer to what witnesses saw or heard, as opposed to what they felt. Many witnesses refer to feeling the massive pressure wave that accompanied or followed the collapse, and they sometimes use the term “blast” in this connection. But such a pressure wave would be expected to accompany the sudden collapse of large buildings and is freely described by the 9/11 Commission Report.[23] Again, as with the shaking of the earth, I have tried to err on the side of caution. A researcher more familiar than I with the signs of explosions and blast waves might be able to sort out these cases.

I have excluded all references to possible effects of explosions where the explosions themselves are not named or described. I therefore exclude descriptions of lobby damage found when the firefighters arrived, which may be evidence of early explosions low in the building, as well as the debris cloud resulting from the mid-air pulverization of the Towers. Throughout, I have tried to keep my focus on what the witnesses themselves *perceived or thought they were perceiving*.

When we apply the above criteria and restrictions we are left with 177 cases from 118 witnesses. (The former number is higher than the latter because a given witness may use more than one term or category in an account.) The cases are listed according to category in Appendix A and the testimony is given *in extenso*, in alphabetical order according to the names of the witnesses, in Appendix B.

(ii) I have found it sufficient to establish three categories of evidence for the much smaller number of cases offering evidence that supports NEH:

- (a) cases where witnesses deny perceiving explosions;

- (b) cases where witnesses use the words “pancake,” “pancaking” or variants to describe what they perceived, while omitting reference to explosions;
- (c) cases where, although they do not use the above words, witnesses describe processes that suggest pancaking in the absence of explosions.

Note that valid cases may not be retrospective (someone explicitly tells us that he or she decided *after the event* that what was seen was pancaking), nor may they be indirect (a person sees the event on television or passes on the opinion of a friend).

When we apply the above criteria and restrictions we are left with ten cases from ten witnesses. These are given, according to category, in Appendix C.

Failure to Mention Explosions: the Argument from Silence

If there were, in fact, explosions, why do the majority of FDNY witnesses whose testimony has been recorded not mention explosions? I believe that this argument from silence must be faced, despite its problematic nature. Let us consider the numbers. We have 118 witnesses out of a pool of 503. Over 23 per cent of our group are explosion witnesses. In my judgment, this is a very high percentage of witnesses, especially when we consider that:

- (a) Interviewers were typically not asked about explosions and, in most cases, were not even asked about the collapses of the towers. What testimony we have was volunteered, and it therefore represents not the maximum number of witnesses to explosions but the minimum number.
- (b) Some FDNY witnesses were not near the Towers when collapse occurred.[24]
- (c) Some witnesses were preoccupied with issues other than the collapses: their accounts reveal little interest in the events on which we are focusing.[25]
- (d) Some accounts are extremely succinct and include little detail.[26]
- (e) Many accounts include references that are, while ambiguous, not inconsistent with explosions. In this category I include “rumble,” “boom” and the like.

In my judgment, the lack of references to explosions among the majority of witnesses is easily explained and does little to weaken EH.

The Quality of the Cases

Since one of the main aims of my research has been to take seriously the perceptions and interpretations of FDNY witnesses (in a way that the 9/11 Commission Report and the NIST report do not), I find myself reluctant to “explain away” statements that these witnesses have made. I believe it is fair to say, however, that the cumulative impact of the NEH witnesses is weak not merely because of the paucity of these accounts but because most of them can, without difficulty, be accommodated within EH. Of the ten cases, I would say that Terranova’s (9110168) is the strongest. He hears the rumble and the succession of booms but interprets these within the pancake framework, because, he says, he directly saw this pancaking. Fair enough. The Sanchez account (9110128) I would rate a close second, but its reference to a shaking of the

earth early in the sequence of events could indicate explosion. Several other accounts include similar difficulties: in addition to the ambiguity already mentioned (what do they mean by “pancaking?”) we find references to “the earthquake feel” (Harris, 9110108); the odd expression “machine gun” to refer to pancaking (Salvador, 9110474); and reference to the pancaking starting much lower (70th floor of the South Tower) than it should have (Holowach, 9110114).

In my view, as evidence in support of the set of non-explosion hypotheses this list of cases is not strong. It can be accommodated by the alternative set of hypotheses.

What of the EH cases? Can they be accommodated by the set of non-explosion hypotheses? I do not believe so.

We begin by facing the simple number of individual witnesses (118) and the even greater number of references, direct or indirect, in their accounts to explosions.

We next have to deal with the rich, mutually supportive detail of these accounts. True, there are apparent inconsistencies: one person will refer to a single big explosion, another will say there were three explosions, while yet another will claim to have heard seven. I have made no attempt to sort out all these claims and cannot pretend to know if they are ultimately compatible. But, on the other hand, I cannot read this material without being struck by the ways in which the witnesses’ testimony is not merely cumulative but complementary and multidimensional.

Griffin has discussed this multidimensionality while making his case for planned demolition, and I direct the reader to his discussion.[27] Among the phenomena to which he draws our attention are: the horizontal ejection of debris early in the buildings’ collapses; the huge clouds of fine dust; the explicit discussion by the firefighters, in the midst of these events, of the possibility that they were witnessing planned demolition; and multiple, heard “pops” with apparently related, visually perceived “flashes,” which occur in patterns, temporally and spatially, in ways that suggest planned demolition. I fail to see how any of the non-explosion hypotheses put forward to date, including the pancake hypothesis, can accommodate all of these phenomena.

The Changing of Minds

As will be apparent to anyone who reads through Appendix B, many members of the FDNY came to believe, in the period between 9/11 and their interviews, that they had been mistaken in interpreting what they perceived as evidence of explosions. Some suggest in their interviews that they now (as of the interview date) realize they witnessed non-explosive collapse, with the implication that they face the task of fitting what they originally perceived into the new framework. A few adopt the new framework readily; others do so reluctantly; and still others are unwilling to do so at all. I have not attempted in Appendix B to delete references to change of mind: on the contrary, I have included them because I find them fascinating and instructive. In some cases we can almost feel the struggle of the interviewee to accept the new interpretive frame.

Charles Wells appears to be making a valiant effort to avoid mentioning explosions before he at last gives in:

“We got to the point of being in between the Vista Hotel and the World Trade Center, at which point we heard a -- we felt a loud -- a very strong vibration, shaking, and a loud noise like a

subway train coming through a station at speed, like a jet engine at full throttle. It was a roaring sound...

[then, later in the narrative]

Everybody's heads were all popping up now. Everybody is digging out, so I ran into a couple of firefighters and I said, 'Well, you know, what the hell happened?' Some kind of an explosion, he goes, and that's what I thought it was..."[28]

Maybe the non-explosion interpretation gained ground as the result of reflection, reading and a gradual maturing of judgement. In this case we might speak of a process of education. But maybe the change in interpretation resulted from an undercutting of witnesses' perception by the theories and claims of "experts," institutional superiors and government leaders, in which case we might prefer to speak of the "re-education" or indoctrination of the FDNY witnesses.

I mentioned earlier the concern of Mr. Von Essen that the oral histories be recorded "before they became reshaped by a collective memory." Now we see the soundness of his intuition. Early in 2004 Rodger Herbst suggested that, in explaining the collapse of the towers, explosion hypotheses came first and were only gradually supplanted by "politically correct revisionist theories." [29] We now have solid evidence suggesting that, for the FDNY, non-explosive collapse is, indeed, a revisionist theory.

The Oral Histories, the 9/11 Commission Report, and the NIST Report

The 9/11 Commission and NIST both resorted to legal threats against the city of New York in order to obtain the 503 oral histories.[30] They succeeded in gaining access to this material, and we would expect them to make use of it.

It appears (references are somewhat unclear) that the Commission did, in fact, make fairly extensive use of the oral histories in composing the crucial Chapter 9 of its 2004 Report, which deals with the crashing of the planes into the Towers and the subsequent collapse of these buildings.[31] The Report refers to the oral histories to verify the condition of civilians in the stairwells of the Towers, the nature of rescue actions taking place on various floors of the buildings, and so on. It appears to regard the oral narratives as trustworthy; establishes no critical distance from them; seems to consider them straightforward descriptions of the events of the day.

But what about all the references in the FDNY material to explosions? The Report makes no mention of them.

Chapter 9 contains the only reference to explosion hypotheses in the entire 9/11 Commission Report:

"When the South Tower collapsed, firefighters on upper floors of the North Tower heard a violent roar, and many were knocked off their feet...those firefighters not standing near windows facing south had no way of knowing that the South Tower had collapsed; many surmised that a bomb had exploded..."[32]

The note supporting this statement is to a body of later (2004) interviews of firefighters by the Commission, not to the 503 oral histories. Why is this? And what are we to make of the

paragraph? A reader unfamiliar with the evidence of the oral histories might conclude that the explosion hypothesis was restricted to a set of firefighters situated in the North Tower when the South Tower collapsed; that the firefighters holding this hypothesis were, moreover, a subset with impeded perception; and that these firefighters mistook the collapse of the South Tower for the explosion of a bomb. As the reader will discover from Appendix B, all three statements are extremely misleading as general indications of the nature of explosion testimony. FDNY members speaking of explosions were in a wide variety of locations; many were looking directly at the Towers when they felt they perceived explosions; and they were quite capable of distinguishing the collapse from the explosions they felt were associated with it.

How is it that oral histories worthy of reference one moment are completely ignored as soon as they challenge the official narrative?

And what about the NIST final report? NIST had the oral histories, but its report declines to describe the nature of the testimony therein. There is brief mention of “documents of investigative first-person interviews” obtained from the FDNY but we learn nothing about these documents.[33] When speaking of the FDNY, the report praises the quality of the judgments FDNY personnel made about the condition of the buildings on 9/11,[34] but we find not a single reference to FDNY testimony about explosions.

In the Report’s Executive Summary we read: “NIST found no corroborating evidence for alternative hypotheses suggesting that the WTC towers were brought down by controlled demolition using explosives planted prior to September 11, 2001.”[35] In support of this the Abstract says that the visual evidence from videos and photos “clearly showed that the collapse initiated at the fire and impact floors,”[36] as if this were an uncontroversial assertion and as if it settled the matter. If we expect a fuller discussion of the explosion hypothesis in the body of the text we will be disappointed. We find a simple repetition of these same few lines.[37]

Once again we discover that the testimony of the FDNY is quickly resorted to when it is helpful to the official narrative and is quietly pushed to one side when it threatens to disturb this narrative. We have known for some time that these reports silence the voices of direct witnesses; now we know they silenced 118 voices.

Conclusions

The two questions with which I began my research have now been answered:

- (1) Griffin’s 31 witnesses to explosions in the FDNY oral histories are a subset of a much larger body of witnesses, which I have estimated as having 118 members.**
- (2) Support for non-explosive collapse is present in this material but is scarce. I have found ten witnesses.**

I do not know whether the FDNY witnesses constitute a representative sample of 9/11 witnesses, but it is possible that they do. Certainly, there is no lack of testimony to explosions from those outside the FDNY,[38] and I see no obvious reason why firefighters and medics would be more prone than others to feel that they were witnessing explosions. If they constitute a representative sample, then a minimum of 23% of all witnesses to the Towers’ collapses appear to have perceived, or thought they perceived, explosions that brought down the Towers.

The implications of this for our understanding of September 11, 2001 are very, very serious.

NOTES

1. January 26, 2006.

<http://www.911truth.org/article.php?story=20060118104223192>

2. “City to Release Thousands of 9/11 Oral Histories Today.” August 12, 2005.

3.

http://graphics8.nytimes.com/packages/html/nyregion/20050812_WTC_GRAPHIC/met_WTC_histories_full_01.html

4. Note the role of the interviewer in the following exchange:

A. “...Then that’s when I kept on walking close to the south tower and that’s when that building collapsed.”

Q. “How did you know that it was coming down?”

A. “That noise. It was a noise.”

Q. “What did you hear? What did you see?”

A. “It was a frigging noise. At first I thought it was--do you ever see professional demolition where they set the charges on certain floors and then you hear ‘pop, pop, pop, pop, pop’?”

[Daniel Rivera, 9110035, p. 9]

5. The only obvious case of leading that I have found is the following:

Q. “What did you think you were responding to at that point?”

A. “Well, we knew we had fire. We knew we had partial collapse.”

Q. “From an explosion or --“

A. “Yes...” [William Ryan, 9110117, p. 3]

6. The clearest example of a written report is that of Hugh Mettham, 9110441.

7. E.g., Firefighter Myers, 9110052; EMT Rodriguez, 9110480.

8. E.g., EMT Longo, 9110059.

9. E.g., as in Paramedic Pierce, 9110485, p. 3.

10. E.g., as in EMT Penn, 9110203, p. 4.

11. E.g., as in Firefighter Myers, 9110052, pp. 5-6.

12. E.g., as in Deputy Chief Medical Officer Prezant, 9110212, pp. 8ff.

13. *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), pp. 291, 302, 320.

14. Two fairly recent articles arguing for the controlled demolition hypothesis are David Ray Griffin, “The Destruction of the World Trade Center: Why the Official Account Cannot Be True.”

<http://www.911review.com/articles/griffin/nyc1.html>

and Steven Jones, “Why Indeed Did the WTC Buildings Collapse?”

<http://www.physics.byu.edu/research/energy/htm7.html>

Non-explosion hypotheses were usefully summarized by Rodger Herbst in his May, 2004, “Mysteries of the Twin Towers.”

<http://www.septembereleventh.org/documents/rodgwtcpdf.pdf>

Of course, since Herbst’s article was written NIST’s final report has appeared:

National Institute of Standards and Technology, *Final Report on the Collapse of the World Trade Center Towers*. Department of Commerce, U.S.A., Sept. 2005.

15. EH is not concerned with minor electrical or gas explosions such as might accompany any major fire. It is concerned with explosions that directly contributed to the fall of two 110-story buildings. No single witness can establish such causation, but the accumulation of accounts where the explosion directly precedes the collapse and is held by witnesses to have caused it makes causation increasingly plausible. The accounts in Appendix B are of this sort.

16. NIST’s now famous “global collapse ensued” hides a multitude of academic sins. As the authors of the report must be aware, they have given no evidence to support their view that the collapse of upper floors led, or should have led, to progressive and total collapse. See *Final Report*, p. 146.

Jim Hoffman has written an excellent critique of the NIST report, “Building a Better Mirage: NIST’s 3-Year \$20,000,000 Cover-up of the Crime of the Century.” Version 1.0, Dec. 8, 2005.

<http://911research.wtc7.net/essays/nist/index.html>

17. This includes the buckling or bowing of perimeter columns described in the NIST report (p. 30 ff.), which could have had various causes.

18. See Herbst’s “Mysteries of the Twin Towers.”

19. P. 308.

20. See, e.g., Griffin's, "The Destruction of the World Trade Center." See also:

Kevin Ryan, "Propping Up the War on Terror: Lies about the WTC by NIST and Underwriters Laboratories."

http://www.scholarsfor911truth.org/RyanK_PostingVersion.htm

Nila Sagadevan, "Free-falling Bodies: Collapse Theory Fails Reality Check".

http://www.911blimp.net/prf_FreeFallPhysics.shtml

Judy Wood, "A Refutation of the Official Collapse Theory".

<http://janedoe0911.tripod.com/BilliardBalls.html>

21. 9110288, p. 3.

22. "Explosive Testimony," pp. 4-5.

23. "The building collapsed into itself, causing a ferocious windstorm." P. 305

24. E.g., as in Lieutenant Lowney, 9110468.

25. E.g., as in Firefighter Saracelli, 9110033.

26. E.g., as in Firefighter Winkler, 9110236.

27. "Explosive Testimony." See also his "The Destruction of the World Trade Center."

28. Charles Wells, 9110163, p. 8.

29. "Mysteries of the Twin Towers," pp. 1 ff.

30. Dwyer, "City to Release Thousands of 9/11 Oral Histories Today."

31. The Commission's notes do not always make it easy for us to identify its sources, but I assume that the "500 internal FDNY interview transcripts" referred to in note 209, p. 554 are our oral histories and that many of the notes to chapter 9 (99, 102, 109, 116, 117, 119 and so on) include references to this material.

32. 9/11 Commission Report, p. 306. I exclude the references to bomb threats aboard three of the four allegedly hijacked planes, which are discussed in the Report, pp. 6-13. Although there are materials here from which a form of EH could be constructed, the Report declines the opportunity to do so by accepting the FBI's conclusion that there was no evidence of explosives at the collapse site and that the bomb threat was therefore fake (p. 13).

33. Final Report, p. 163.
34. Final Report, p. pp. 166-167.
35. Final Report, p. xxxviii.
36. Final Report, p. xxxviii.
37. Final Report, pp. 146, 176.
38. See, e.g., Griffin, "Explosive Testimony" as well as video footage such as that in "9/11 Revisited: Were explosives used?"

<http://www.911revisited.com/video.html>

APPENDIX A: LIST OF EXPLOSION CASES BY CATEGORY

EXPLOSION CASES (TERM): 83 CASES

John Coyle, 9110406	Gregg Hansson, 9110017
Frank Cruthers, 9110179	Mala Harrilal, 9110186
Paul Curran, 9110369	Russell Harris, 9110015
Kevin Darnowski, 9110202	Timothy Hoppey, 9110229
John Delendick, 9110230	James Ippolito, 9110342
Richard Banaciski, 9110253	Timothy Julian, 9110386
Dominick DeRubbio, 9110064	Edward Kennedy, 9110502
Karin Deshore, 9110192	George Kozlowski, 9110308
George DeSimone, 9110129	John Lynn, 9110389
Brian Dixon, 9110166	Michael Macko, 9110506
Michael Donovan, 9110205	John Malley, 9110319
James Drury, 9110098	Julio Marrero, 9110162
Kevin Duggan, 9110345	Patrick Martin, 9110510
Christopher Fenyo, 9110295	Edward Martinez, 9110494
Brian Fitzpatrick, 9110256	Orlando Martinez, 9110183
Gary Gates, 9110065	Richard Boeri, 9110302
Kevin Gorman, 9110434	Linda McCarthy, 9110213
Steve Grabher, 9110241	James McKinley, 9110072
Stephen Gregory, 9110008	Craig Monahan, 9110016
Brian Becker, 9110019	Gregg Brady, 9110184

Murray Murad, 9110009
Keith Murphy, 9110323
Kevin Murray, 9110020
Robert Norris, 9110071
Michael Ober, 9110093
Janice Olszewski, 9110193
Joseph Patriciello, 9110378
Thomas Piambino, 9110493
Joseph Rae, 9110294
Gerard Reilly, 9110435
William Reynolds, 9110288
Juan Rios, 9119937
Angel Rivera, 9110489
Terence Rivera, 9110343
Kenneth Rogers, 9110290
William Ryan, 9110117
Stanley Rybak, 9110263
Patrick Scaringello, 9110030
Howie Scott, 9110365
Edward Sheehey, 9110226
Richard Skillington, 9110279
Richard Smiouskas, 9110210

Thomas Spinard, 9110445
Mark Steffens, 9110003
John Sudnik, 9110198
Jay Swithers, 9110172
David Timothy, 9110156
Albert Turi, 9110142
Thomas Turilli, 9110501
Timothy Burke, 9110488
Thomas Vallebuona, 9110418
Stephen Viola, 9110439
William Wall, 9110285
Charles Wells, 9110163
Daniel Williams, 9110289
Edward Cachia, 9110251
Fernando Camacho, 9110318
Frank Campagna, 9110224
Craig Carlsen, 9110505
Jason Charles, 9110486
Roy Chelsen, 9110475
John Citarelli, 9110264
Louis Cook, 9110103

BLAST CASES (TERM): 5 CASES

John Coyle, 9110406

Brian Dixon, 9110166

Patrick Richiusa, 9110305

William Simon, 9110115

Jay Swithers, 9110172

BLOW UP CASES (TERM): 19 CASES

Albert Turi, 9110142

Jason Charles, 9110486

Dean Coutsouros, 9110049

Kenneth Rogers, 9110290

Howie Scott, 9110365

Michael Ober, 9110093

Patricia Ondrovic, 9110048

Joseph Petrassi, 9110449

Stephen Gregory, 9110008

Paul Hyland, 9110374

Kirk Long, 9110509

Joseph Meola, 9110287

John Delendick, 9110230

Richard Banaciski, 9110253

Brian Dixon, 9110166

Michael Donovan, 9110205

Gary Gates, 9110065

Gerard Gorman, 9110420

James Curran, 9110412

BOMB CASES (TERM): 31 CASES

Stanley Trojanowski, 9110292

Albert Turi, 9110142

Thomas Turilli, 9110501

Timothy Burke, 9110488

Kenneth Rogers, 9110290

John Rothmund, 9110112

Richard Smiouskas, 9110210

Thomas Spinard, 9110445

Jay Swithers, 9110172

Janice Olszewski, 9110193

Richard Picciotto, 9110211

Gerard Reilly, 9110435

William Reynolds, 9110288

Angel Rivera, 9110489

Gregg Hansson, 9110017

Timothy Hoppey, 9110229

Timothy Julian, 9110386

Walter Kowalczyk, 9110095

John Malley, 9110319

Julio Marrero, 9110162

John McGimpsey, 9110477

Keith Murphy, 9110323

John Delendick 9110230

George DeSimone, 9110129

Michael Donovan 9110205

Robert Dorritie, 9110299

James Drury, 9110098

James Duffy, 9110444

Brian Fitzpatrick, 9110256

Gerard Gorman, 9110420

Alan Cooke, 9110040

IMPLOSION CASES (TERM): 10 CASES

James Walsh, 9110459
William Walsh, 9110442
Kevin Quinn, 9110339
Timothy Hoppeym, 9110229
David Loper, 9110349
Maureen McArdle-Schulman, 9110110
Michael Mejias, 9110149
Mary Merced, 9110144
Murray Murad, 9110009
Thomas Fitzpatrick (Deputy Commissioner),
9110001

DEMOLITION CASES (DESCRIPTION):
20 CASES

Albert Turi, 9110142
Timothy Burke, 9110488
Edward Cachia, 9110251
Kenneth Rogers, 9110290
Frank Sweeney, 9110113
Kevin Murray, 9110020
Daniel Rivera, 9110035
Steve Grabher, 9110241
Stephen Gregory, 9110008
Maureen McArdle-Schulman, 9110110
Michael Mejias, 9110149
Joseph Meola, 9110287
Richard Banaciski, 9110253
Dominick DeRubbio, 9110064
Karin Deshore, 9110192
Brian Dixon, 9110166
James Drury, 9110098
Christopher Fenyo, 9110295
Thomas Fitzpatrick, 9110001
James Curran, 9110412

OTHER CASES (DESCRIPTION): 10 CASES

Dean Coutsouros, 9110049

Frank Sweeney, 9110113

John Picarello, 9110240

Barrett Hirsch, 9110336

Paul Mallery, 9110312

Maureen McArdle-Schulman, 9110110

David Moriarty, 9110228

John Murray, 9110407

Gary Gates, 9110065

Jerry Gombo, 9110100

APPENDIX B: EXPLOSION CASES, ALPHABETICAL: TEXT AND CONTEXT

Richard Banaciski, 9110253

South Tower:

We were there I don't know, maybe 10, 15 minutes and then I just remember there was just an explosion. It seemed like on television they blow up these buildings. It seemed like it was going all the way around like a belt, all these explosions...Not thinking that this building is coming down. We just thought there was going to be a big explosion, stuff was going to come down. [pp. 3-4]

Brian Becker, 9110019

South Tower [As experienced from inside NT.]

I'd say we were in the 30th or 31st, 32nd Floor, or something like that, and a few of the guys were lying wiped out on the floor, you know, taking a break with their masks off and lying in the hallway when there was a very loud roaring sound and a very loud explosion, and the--it felt like there was an explosion above us... [p. 12]

...

[Again on the subject of the collapse of S T as experienced in NT]

Q. What did you hear when the building starting collapsing the second time? Did you feel -- just started coming down? You didn't hear anything, feel anything?

A. We felt -- our whole building that we were in, when World Trade Center 2 collapsed, that was the first one to collapse. We were in World Trade Center 1. It was a tremendous explosion and tremendous shaking of our building. [p. 20]

North Tower:

So we just ran as a unit to the overpass again, and we took a look up, and it was like one -- it was like, holy shit. It was like -- because it was like -- I guess the building was kind of -- I don't remember specifically, but I remember it was, like, we got to get out of here. So I think that the building was really kind of starting to melt. We were -- like, the melt down was beginning. The collapse hadn't begun, but it was not a fire any more up there. It was like -- it was like that -- like smoke explosion on a tremendous scale going on up there.[p. 17]

Richard Boeri, 9110302

South Tower:

We had our backs to the tower and under that pedestrian bridge walking south, myself, Eddie Kennedy and the officer, when you heard the crackling. You looked up and you saw the one floor explode on itself and the top start to slide. [p. 4]

Gregg Brady, 9110184

North Tower:

We were standing underneath and Captain Stone was speaking again. We heard -- I heard 3 loud explosions. I look up and the north tower is coming down now, 1 World Trade Center.

...

At that time, when I heard the 3 loud explosions, I started running west on Vesey Street towards the water. [p. 7]

Timothy Burke, 9110488

South Tower:

Then the building popped, lower than the fire, which I learned was I guess, the aviation fuel fell into the pit, and whatever floor it fell on heated up really bad and that's why it popped at that floor. That's the rumor I heard. But it seemed like I was going oh, my god, there is a secondary device because the way the building popped I thought it was an explosion. [p. 8]

Edward Cachia, 9110251

South Tower:

As my officer and I were looking at the south tower, it just gave. It actually gave at a lower floor, not the floor where the plane hit, because we originally had thought there was like an internal detonation explosives because it went in succession, boom, boom, boom, boom, and then the tower came down. [p. 5]

Fernando Camacho, 9110318

South Tower:

As we came in through the revolving doors, the lights went out. A second or two later everything started to shake. You could hear explosions. We didn't know what it was. We thought it was just a small collapse. As I looked straight ahead of me, I saw total darkness. Everything was coming our way like a wave. [p. 4]

Frank Campagna, 9110224

North Tower:

That's when it went. I looked back. You see three explosions and then the whole thing coming down. I turned my head and everybody was scattering. [p. 8]

Craig Carlsen, 9110505

South Tower:

I guess about three minutes later you just heard explosions coming from building two, the south tower. It seemed like it took forever, but there were about ten explosions. At the time I didn't realize what it was. We realized later after talking and finding out that it was the floors collapsing to where the plane had hit.

We then realized the building started to come down. [p. 6]

North Tower:

The second one coming down, you knew the explosions. Now you're very familiar with it. [p. 10]

Jason Charles, 9110486

South Tower:

...we start walking over slowly to the curb, and then I heard an explosion from up, from up above, and froze and was like, oh shit, I'm dead because I thought debris was going to hit me in the head and that was it.

Then everybody stops and looks at the building and then they take off. [p. 14]

North Tower:

...we don't even get to the back of the building. We start walking back there and then I heard a ground level explosion and I'm like holy shit, and then you heard that twisting metal wreckage again. Then I said shit and everybody started running... [p. 29]

[After both towers have fallen he's in another building trying to evacuate it when he sees the television.]

Those guys had a TV set and that's when I found out we were under attack, because prior to that I thought Tower 2 blew up because the engine from the plane hit Tower 2 and exploded inside. It was like stupid, but that's what I thought. [p. 35]

Roy Chelsen, 9110475

North Tower: [He gets out of the NT and then this happens.]

All of a sudden we heard this huge explosion, and that's when the tower started coming down. We all started running. [pp. 8-9]

John Citarelli, 9110264

South Tower:

Right as he said that, I heard a loud roar, "boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom," and it was getting louder. I looked around, and we were looking at each other. What is that noise? I just looked out the window of the lobby. I could see stuff out of the window of the lobby hitting the street, and I just dove into the corner of the wall. [pp. 4-5]

North Tower:

I turned, I took maybe a couple more steps, and then I heard another explosion, it sounded like. I looked up, and the north tower was starting to come down. [p. 11]

Louis Cook, 9110103

North Tower:

I made it up onto the -- I guess you call it the concourse level, the mezzanine level, and onto the foot bridge when I started to hear -- I thought I heard an explosion of some sort, but I kind of dismissed it. I figured, ah, it's just something burning upstairs...and then I just remember feeling a rumble and hearing this rumbling sound that was really intense. It actually shook my bones...So I ran. [pp. 6-7]

Alan Cooke, 9110040

...what happened at that time, it seemed like an explosion was coming from there. I thought an explosion was coming from there. That's when everybody started running... [p. 5]

...

...I thought I was going to die. I really did. I thought what happened was that there was an explosion at the World Trade Center. Then I thought there was another one at the Seaport. I thought that was a secondary... [p. 6]

Dean Coutsouros, 9110049

North Tower:

I happened to be looking up at it, and from the fire floor down, it was just like a really loud crackling noise, it sounded like a million firecrackers, and just a wave, right from the fire floor down, just a wave that started to come down. [p. 3]

John Coyle, 9110406

South Tower:

I started running after him and looking over my shoulder.

The tower was--it looked to me--I thought it was exploding, actually. That's what I thought for hours afterwards, that it had exploded or the plane or there had been some device on the plane that had exploded, because the debris from the tower had shot out far over our heads. [pp. 7-8]

...

But nobody knew what had happened. I still thought it had exploded, something had exploded.

...

At that point I had no idea what had happened. It seemed that the thing had blown up. [p. 10]

North Tower:

Everybody I think at that point still thought these things were blown up. So I was fully expecting anything else to blow up. [p. 12]

[After being near WTC 7's collapse he's speaking to his family on the phone.]

While I was down at Battery Park I finally got through on my phone to my father and said, 'I'm alive. I just wanted to tell you, go to church, I'm alive. I just so narrowly escaped this thing.' He said, 'Where were you? You were there?' I said, 'Yeah, I was right there when it blew up.' He

said, 'You were there when the planes hit?' I said, 'No, I was there when it exploded, the building exploded.' He said, 'You mean when it fell down?' I said, 'No, when it exploded.'

I still didn't realized what had happened. I totally thought it had been blown up. That's just the perspective of looking up at it, it seemed to have exploded out. But that I guess was the force of the upper stories collapsing down. [pp. 15-16]

Frank Cruthers, 9110179

And while I was still in that immediate area, the south tower, 2 World Trade Center, there was what appeared to be at first an explosion. It appeared at the very top, simultaneously from all four sides, materials shot out horizontally. And then there seemed to be a momentary delay before you could see the beginning of the collapse. [p. 4]

James Curran, 9110412

North Tower:

We started filing out and following the line of the building. I got just to underneath the north walkway. A guy started screaming to run. When I got underneath the north bridge I looked back and you heard it, I heard like every floor went chu-chu-chu. Looked back and from the pressure everything was getting blown out of the floors before it actually collapsed. [pp. 10-11]

Paul Curran, 9110369

South Tower [Experienced while low in the NT.]:

With that, all a sudden the tower went completely -- a horrendous noise, a very, very tremendous explosion, and a very heavy wind came through the tower. The wind almost knocked you down. [p. 5]

Kevin Darnowski, 9110202

South Tower:

At that time I started walking back up towards Vesey Street. I heard three explosions, and then we heard like groaning and grinding, and tower two started to come down. [p. 8]

John Delendick, 9110230

South Tower:

We heard a rumbling noise, and it appeared that that first tower, the south tower, had exploded, the top of it. That's what I saw, what a lot of us saw. [p. 5]

...

I remember asking Ray Downey was it the jet fuel that blew up. He said at that point he thought there were bombs up there because it was too even. As we've since learned, it was the jet fuel that was dropping down that caused all this. But he said it was too even.

Q. Symmetrical?

A. So his original thought was that he thought it was a bomb up there as well. [pp. 5-6]

...

We didn't know the building came down. We just knew the top of the building exploded and didn't know what happened to the rest of the building. You just couldn't see anything. [p. 7]

Dominick DeRubbio, 9110064

South Tower:

After a while we were looking up at the tower, and all of a sudden someone said it's starting to come down.

Q. This would be the north tower coming down?

A. This would be the first one.

Q. Or the south tower?

A. This one here. It was weird how it started to come down. It looked like it was a timed explosion, but I guess it was just the floors starting to pancake one on top of the other. [p. 5]

Karin Deshore, 9110192

South Tower:

I had no clue what was going on. I never turned around because a sound came from somewhere that I never heard before. Some people compared it with an airplane. It was the worst sound of

rolling sound, not a thunder. I can't explain it, what it was. All I know is--and a force started to come hit me in my back. I can't explain it. You had to be there. All I know is I had to run because I thought there was an explosion.

I was unaware what was happening. I thought it was just a major explosion. I didn't know the building was collapsing...I just felt like the darkness the loneliness and being alone was the worst thing I ever experienced in my life and not being able to breathe. There was no air. Whatever this explosion was simply sucked all the oxygen out of the air. You couldn't breathe and the feeling of suffocation... [pp. 10-11]

North Tower:

Somewhere around the middle of the World Trade Center, there was this orange and red flash coming out. Initially it was just one flash. Then this flash just kept popping all the way around the building and that building had started to explode. The popping sound, and with each popping sound it was initially an orange and then red flash came out of the building and then it would just go all around the building on both sides as far as I could see. These popping sounds and the explosions were getting bigger, going both up and down and then all around the building.

I went inside and told everybody that the other building or there was an explosion occurring up there and I said I think we have another major explosion... [p. 15]

...

So here these explosions are getting bigger and louder and bigger and louder and I told everybody if this building totally explodes, still unaware that the other building had collapsed, I'm going in the water. [p. 16]

...

I'm still standing there trying to figure out what my next move should be, when the same sergeant says fucking shit, it's coming at us, and that's a quote.

Again I didn't see what was happening behind me, but knowing of all the explosions I thought here was another explosion coming and this sound again and this wave of this force again. [pp. 17-18]

George DeSimone, 9110129

South Tower:

The next thing I know, we heard a little bit of a rumbling, and then white powder came from the first collapsed building. I thought it was an explosion initially. We got hit with the powder. We tried to run. [p. 6]

North Tower:

After that, I still thought it was an explosion. I thought it was some kind of thermal explosion where I'm either going to get burnt -- and I had kind of ideas that it was going to be something like Hiroshima where all this heat was coming at me and we were going to get burnt -- or if the heat didn't burn me, I thought that all the parts coming out of this building, the windows, metal, all the things like that, that I might be severed in half. [p. 7]

...

I don't think we understood the magnitude of what was going on. I was fearful that there were bombs in the building. That was my first thought, being the military kind of guy that I am. [p. 10]

Brian Dixon, 9110166

South Tower:

I was watching the fire, watching the people jump and hearing a noise and looking up and seeing -- it actually looked -- the lowest floor of fire in the south tower actually looked like someone had planted explosives around it because the whole bottom I could see -- I could see two sides of it and the other side -- it just looked like that floor blew out.

I looked up and you could actually see everything blew out on the one floor. I thought, geez, this looks like an explosion up there, it blew out. Then I guess in some sense of time we looked at it and realized, no, actually it just collapsed. That's what blew out the windows, not that there was an explosion there but that windows blew out. [p. 15]

...

As I just got in under the entrance there, I got just a little ways back and it was just like -- you hear the noise, a boom, and then a blast of air. [p. 16]

Michael Donovan, 9110205

South Tower:

I got up, I got into the parking garages, was knocked down by the percussion. I thought there had been an explosion or a bomb that they had blown up there. The Vista International Hotel was my first impression, that they had blown it up. [pp. 13-14]

...

Q. So you knew the south tower came down? You knew it collapsed?

A. No, you couldn't see it. I thought the Millennium Hotel had been blown up. [p. 17]

Robert Dorritie, 9110299

South Tower:

I guess we got about three-quarters of the way across when we were deciding which way to go into the south tower.

That's when I looked up, and the tower started coming down, which at the time I said I thought it was a secondary device. I had warned the guys about secondary devices on the way down... [p. 4]

James Drury, 9110098

South Tower:

We were in the process of getting some rigs moved when I turned, as I heard a tremendous roar, explosion, and saw that the first of the two towers was starting to come down. [p. 6]

North Tower:

...we started to hear the second roar. That was the north tower now coming down. I should say that people in the street and myself included thought that the roar was so loud that the explosive - bombs were going off inside the building. Obviously we were later proved wrong. [p. 7]

...

...seeing that first tower come down was unbelievable. The sound it made. As I said I thought the terrorists planted explosives somewhere in the building. That's how loud it was, crackling explosive, a wall. [p. 12]

James Duffy, 9110444

North Tower

Q. When either tower came down, did you have any advanced warning?

A. Oh, no. I didn't know what it was when we were inside. I didn't know the building had collapsed, actually. I thought it was a bomb. I thought a bomb had gone off. That's why I really didn't know until after.

Q. Afterwards?

A. Yeah, that that's when it came down. I wasn't expecting that. I thought it was a bomb or something that went off. [pp. 9-10]

Kevin Duggan, 9110345

South Tower:

...we were standing there, and then we just heard this real loud roar. We looked up and we could see the south tower.

Looked like the middle of it was just exploding out, and at that point, one of the officers just said, "Run"... [p. 7]

Christopher Fenyo, 9110295

South Tower:

About a couple minutes after George came back to me is when the south tower from our perspective exploded from about midway up the building. We all turned and ran... [p. 5]

...

At that point a debate began to rage because the perception was that the building looked like it had been taken out with charges. We had really no concept of the damage on the east side of 2 World Trade Center at that point, and at that point many people had felt that possibly explosives had taken out 2 World Trade, and officers were gathering companies together and the officers were debating whether or not to go immediately back in or to see what was going to happen with 1 World Trade at that point. The debate ended pretty quickly because 1 World Trade came down. [pp. 6-7]

North Tower

There was an explosion at the top of the Trade Center and a piece of Trade Center flew across the West Side Highway and hit the Financial Center... [p. 3]

Brian Fitzpatrick, 9110256

North Tower:

...that's when we heard a tremendous noise and it was coming from the south tower, and we looked up and it was coming down...

I remember making it into the tunnel and it was this incredible amount of wind, debris, heat. I remember falling down, getting back up, and the guys were just falling all over each other. [pp. 3-4]

Then we exited out by the marina, the North Cove Yacht Harbor, where we all basically just took a knee and we waited a couple of minutes. Everybody was in shock. We didn't know what happened. We just thought it was debris or an explosion or a secondary explosion or another bomb inside the building or another plane. [p. 5]

Thomas Fitzpatrick, 9110001

South Tower:

All we saw was a puff of smoke coming from about 2 thirds of the way up. Some people thought it was an explosion. I don't think I remember that. I remember seeing, it looked like sparkling around one specific layer of the building. I assume now that that was either windows starting to collapse like tinsel or something. Then the building started to come down. My initial reaction was that this was exactly the way it looks when they show you those implosions on TV. I would have to say for three or four seconds anyway, maybe longer. I was just watching. [pp. 13-14]

Gary Gates, 9110065

South Tower:

I looked up, and the building exploded, the building that we were very close to, which was one tower. The whole top came off like a volcano. [p. 6]

...

So the explosion, what I realized later, had to be the start of the collapse. It was the way the building appeared to blowout from both sides. I'm looking at the face of it, and all we see is the two sides of the building just blowing out and coming apart like this, as I said, like the top of a volcano. [pp. 6-7]

Jerry Gombo, 9110100

South Tower: collapse:

...it felt sort of like an earthquake. The sky darkened and you heard this thunderous roar. It was like a volcano, if you will, not that I ever experienced a volcano, but I guess that's the way I could describe it, and this cloud just coming down. The ground was shaking and this roar... [p. 12]

North Tower:

No sooner did we get, I would say, several yards down Vesey Street heading east to west when the second tower came down, and once again this huge mushroom cloud... [pp. 18-19]

Gerard Gorman, 9110420

[After both towers have collapsed.]

...at that point I did not know the first building collapsed still. Didn't know. We thought it was a missile attack or something like that. We thought we were under attack. They didn't have any idea that this building could collapse. [p. 21]

...

[A couple of minutes before the NT collapse he's trying to figure out what the earthquake was that he just felt.]

So on the overhang I remember seeing a frigging Bomb Squad cop and I asked him, what the hell blew up? [p. 23]

Kevin Gorman, 9110434

North Tower:

...and as I was looking at him I heard the explosion, looked up, and saw like three floors explode, saw the antenna coming down, and turned around and ran north. [p. 6]

Steve Grabher, 9110241

South Tower:

I looked over my shoulder and you could see the whole top of the south tower leaning towards us. It looked like it was coming over. You could see the windows pop out just like in the picture, looked like a movie. I saw one floor of windows pop out, like poof, poof. I saw one and a half floors pop out. It looked almost like an explosion. [pp. 10-11]

Stephen Gregory, 9110008

South Tower:

At that point in time I called Manhattan. I was answered. I asked them if they were aware of an explosion at the World Trade Center. I told them basically what I thought had happened... [pp. 8-9]

...

...I thought that when I looked in the direction of the Trade Center before it came down, before No. 2 came down, that I saw low-level flashes.

In my conversation with Lieutenant Evangelista, never mentioning this to him, he questioned me and asked me if I saw low-level flashes in front of the building, and I agreed with him because I thought -- at that time I didn't know what it was. I mean, it could have been as a result of the building collapsing, things exploding, but I saw a flash flash flash and then it looked like the building came down.

Q. Was that on the lower level of the building or up where the fire was?

A. No, the lower level of the building. You know like when they demolish a building, how when they blow up a building, when it falls down? That's what I thought I saw. And I didn't broach the topic to him, but he asked me. He said I don't know if I'm crazy, but I just wanted to ask you because you were standing right next to me. He said did you see anything by the building? And I said what do you mean by see anything? He said did you see any flashes? I said, yes, well, I thought it was just me. He said no, I saw them, too.

I don't know if that means anything. I mean, I equate it to the building coming down and pushing things down, it could have been electrical explosions, it could have been whatever. But it's just strange that two people sort of say the same thing and neither one of us talked to each other about it. I mean, I don't know this guy from a hole in the wall. I was just standing next to him...

Q. On the television pictures it appeared as well, before the first collapse, that there was an explosion up on the upper floors.

A. I know about the explosion on the upper floors. This was like eye level. I didn't have to go like this. Because I was looking this way. I'm not going to say it was on the first floor or the second floor, but somewhere in that area I saw to me what appeared to be flashes. [pp. 14-16]

Gregg Hansson, 9110017

North Tower:

Then a large explosion took place. In my estimation that was the tower coming down, but at that time I did not know what that was. I thought some type of bomb had gone off. [p. 15]

Mala Harrilal, 9110186

North Tower: [He's out in a boat by now, quite far from the scene.]

Q. But you weren't involved with that part, because you were already out of the area, you were by the boat loading people?

A. Right, because we heard the explosion. [p. 7]

Russell Harris, 9110015

South Tower:

I was on the side of the church. I looked and all this debris just started exploding everywhere, and I turned around to run... [p. 7]

Barrett Hirsch, 9110336

North Tower:

Then I noticed, like, the top of the tower seemed to shoot up a little bit and start to fall down a little bit, and that's when Bill Simon and I, who was my partner, just bolted... [p. 4]

Timothy Hoppey, 9110229

South Tower:

...that's when we heard the rumble. I looked up, and it was just a black cloud directly overhead. At that point I was thinking it was a secondary explosion. It looked to me like it was much lower than where the planes had gone in. [p. 5]

...

I thought the top half of the building was falling off, and I was thinking of it falling outward, not really imploding upon itself like it did. [p. 6]

Paul Hyland, 9110374

North Tower:

I just saw the top half of the north tower sink and sort of just sat down on itself, sat down, and then just started shattering and just blowing out like a Christmas tree. [pp. 11-12]

James Ippolito, 9110342

South Tower [As experienced from within the NT.]

...we were taking a break on 30, and that's when we heard a rumble, outside explosion, and I think that was the other building coming down... [p. 5]

North Tower:

Started to walk towards it, and that's when the building came down. I heard an explosion and turned around and the building was coming down. [p. 8]

Timothy Julian, 9110386

South Tower:

...that's when I heard the building collapse.

First I thought it was an explosion. I thought maybe there was bomb on the plane, but delayed type of thing, you know, secondary device.

Q. I was convinced for a week it was secondary devices.

A. You know, and I just heard like an explosion and a then a cracking type of noise, and then it sounded like a freight train, rumbling and picking up speed, and I remember I looked up, and I saw it coming... [p. 10]

Edward Kennedy, 9110502

South Tower:

We took two steps, there was a tremendous boom, explosion, we both turned around, and the top of the building was coming down at us. With this I just turned to Richie and said run. [p. 7]

...

When the building exploded, they ran down Liberty towards the water... [p. 9]

Stephen Klee, 9110300

South Tower:

A. No, I was just trying to find out -- no, there was no -- it was still dusty out there, and you really couldn't see. I didn't even realize that two came down. I thought another bomb or a plane hit the building. That's what I thought it was. [p. 7]

George Kozlowski, 9110308

North Tower:

As we were walking, we heard--we thought it was another plane coming. It was like a big shhhhh. A thousand times louder than that. It sounded like a missile coming and we just started booking. We took off like bats out of hell.

We made it around the corner and that's when the shit hit the fan right then and there. We heard that loud and then ba boom. I just--it was like an earthquake or whatever. A giant. giant explosion. [p. 8]

...

Then this big gust came and I just went flying, maybe 30, 40 feet. Tumbling.

I got up, got on my hands and knees because all of the white shit was all over me. I just kept crawling. My ears were like deaf, you know, when you hear a giant firecracker or something. [p. 9]

Kirk Long, 9110509

South Tower: [The collapse is experienced from inside the NT.]

When the building shook, I was right next to an elevator shaft with Andy, crawling down the hallway. I was waiting for a flame to come up from the basement because I believed something in the basement blew up. Nothing like that happened, so I was waiting for a flame to come down from a plane. Nothing like that happened. Still at that time I never knew that the south tower had gone down. [pp. 4-5]

David Loper, 9110349

South Tower:

Then all of a sudden there was like a loud -- almost like a rushing sound, a roar, and we looked up and we could see it looked like an implosion and the building kind of went in and out and kind of like shook...We were looking up and then this thing started coming down... [p. 10]

John Lynn, 9110389

South Tower:

...our attention was drawn to the south tower. There was some kind of explosion, you might say, up in the area where the fire was. Actually, in hindsight, that was the start of the collapse. [p. 3]

Michael Macko, 9110506

South Tower:

We were making our way down West Street. We got just about south of the north overpass, about 50 feet past that, when the first collapse occurred. I looked up. I was awed by--I thought it exploded at the top. Everybody I guess at that point started running... [p. 4]

Paul Mallery, 9110312

South Tower

I said it sounds just like this, this is exactly what it sounds like, here's another one, thinking it was a third plane. Meanwhile the sound to me was four distinct events. They all sounded the same. The two plane crashes and the two collapses, except the collapses lasted longer. [p. 8]

..

I don't know if this is nuclear attack. I don't know what this is any more. [p. 9]

John Malley, 9110319

South Tower:

As we walked through those revolving doors, that's when we felt the rumble. I felt the rumbling, and then I felt the force coming at me. I was like, what the hell is that? In my mind it was a bomb going off.

The pressure got so great, I stepped back behind the columns separating the revolving doors. Then the force just blew past me. It blew past me it seemed for a long time. In my mind I was saying what the hell is this and when is it going to stop? Then it finally stopped, that pressure which I thought was a concussion of an explosion. It turns out it was the down pressure wind of the floors collapsing on top of each other. [p. 5]

North Tower:

At that point I didn't know the building came down. I thought I was still in the explosion. I didn't know the whole building had come down. [p. 9]

Julio Marrero, 9110162

South Tower:

...I heard a loud bang. We looked up, and we just saw the building starting to collapse. I looked over and started to scream at my partner, which he was inside the vehicle...

...

I was screaming from the top of my lungs, and I must have been about ten feet away from her and she couldn't even hear me, because the building was so loud, the explosion, that she couldn't even hear me. [pp. 4-5]

North Tower

That's when I just broke down and cried at Bellevue Hospital, because it was just so overwhelming. I just knew that what happened was horrific. It was a bombing. [pp. 15-16]

Patrick Martin, 9110510

South Tower:

...it was right then that we heard the noise.

My lieutenant said he looked down at the first floor, and he auto [?] see the first floor of the south tower like exploding out. I looked up. I looked up, and the sky was filled with that debris cloud. You could see the debris coming down, pretty much toward us. [p. 5]

Edward Martinez, 9110494

South Tower:

...because of the fog that was there, you couldn't see above. Your distance was limited. Once I heard that, I heard like a big explosion, a tremendous explosion, let me put it that way and rumbling sound.

At that time I started seeing things coming down. [pp. 4-5]

Orlando Martinez, 9110183

South Tower:

Q. This is the first building collapsing?

A. Right. There was an explosion and after we started running... [p. 9]

Maureen McArdle-Schulman, 9110110

South Tower:

And the building had red fire, a ring of fire. They started pumping and bouncing and I'm standing there staring. Finally somebody yelled "run." [p. 7]

...

I just called him [her husband] and told him I was going in the tower. The tower just imploded. [p. 11]

North Tower:

We're standing there and I look up. The second tower starts with the ring of fire. Some puffing and bouncing. [p. 12]

Linda McCarthy, 9110213

South Tower:

A. So when that one went down. I thought the plane was exploding, or another plane hit. I had no idea it was coming down. But I couldn't see it gone, because I couldn't see it really in the first place with all the smoke...So I didn't know what it was. I heard like an earthquake. I said run for your lives, run. [pp. 6-7]

John McGimpsey, 9110477

South Tower: [From inside Marriott Hotel.]

We didn't know actually what was going on. We weren't sure if those noises were--sounded like another plane, bomb, something like that... [p. 5]

James McKinley, 9110072

South Tower:

Then all of a sudden I heard this huge explosion, I didn't know what it was cause nobody was telling me anything...I was this close to it, and I didn't know what was going on. After that I heard this huge explosion, I thought it was a boiler exploding or something. Next thing you know this huge cloud of smoke is coming at us, so we're running. [p. 4]

Michael Mejias, 9110149

South Tower: [Apparently he is confusing it with the NT.]

The building started collapsing, the north tower started collapsing. It tipped down first and then the thing fell within itself. It was an amazing sight to see. It was really unbelievable. I thought I was watching a movie with special effects...

But it didn't really -- we were safe because we were surrounded by other buildings. If the tower would have fell towards West Street instead of imploding on itself, we would have had a problem, but, you know, it just came within itself, just tipped. [p. 8]

Joseph Meola, 9110287

South Tower:

As we are looking up at the building, what I saw was, it looked like the building was blowing out on all four sides. We actually heard the pops. Didn't realize it was the falling -- you know, you heard the pops of the building. You thought it was just blowing out. [p. 5]

Mary Merced, 9110144

South Tower:

So I'm running, and I'm worried about the chief, that he's there. Nobody expected those buildings to implode. They were thinking, it's going to topple. [p. 12]

North Tower:

Then everybody is going to run, because we didn't see where the building toppled because we didn't know it imploded because you couldn't see anything. [p. 16]

Craig Monahan, 9110016

South Tower:

When it sounded like the explosion stopped, the steel hitting, when it all seemed to stop, this just like a fire storm of wind and material, a sandstorm kind of, just came and wailed by, really flew past us quick. [p. 8]

David Moriarty, 9110228

North Tower:

I looked up, and it appeared as if the north tower -- it almost appeared to be liquefied. The very top of it began to cascade out and down, almost in a rolling motion. [p. 7]

Murray Murad, 9110009

South Tower:

Then it came down. From the implosion, we all got thrown and all that stuff came in the house... [p. 9]

...

I didn't want to take one because they had a couple of firetrucks that were hanging out right in front of him. I don't know what firetrucks they were, but they looked kind of beaten up from the explosion. [p. 10]

North Tower:

A. All the debris from the collapse of--

Q. So it was outside?

A. It was inside. From the implosion, everything just came inside. [p. 13]

Keith Murphy, 9110323

South Tower: [As experienced from the ground floor of the NT.]

I had heard right before the lights went out, I had heard a distant boom boom boom, sounded like three explosions. I don't know what it was. At the time, I would have said they sounded like bombs, but it was boom boom boom and then the lights all go out. I hear someone say oh, shit, that was just for the lights out. I would say about 3, 4 seconds, all of a sudden this tremendous roar. It sounded like being in a tunnel with the train coming at you. It sounded like nothing I had ever heard in my life, but it didn't sound good. All of a sudden I could feel the floor started to shake and sway. We were being thrown like literally off our feet, side to side, getting banged around and then a tremendous wind started to happen. It probably lasted maybe 15 seconds, 10 to 15 seconds. It seemed like a hurricane force wind. It would blow you off your feet... [pp. 19-20]

John Murray, 9110407

South Tower:

...we were standing there watching the north tower and not even paying attention to the south tower.

Then you look up and it's like holy shit, the building didn't come down, it shot straight out over our heads, like straight across West Street. Holy shit, there is no fucking way we are going to out run this thing. [p. 6]

Kevin Murray, 9110020

North Tower:

When the tower started -- there was a big explosion that I heard and someone screamed that it was coming down and I looked away and I saw all the windows domino -- you know, dominoeing up and then come down. We were right in front of 6, so we started running... [p. 15]

Robert Norris, 9110071

South Tower: [He hears what he thinks is a third plane, but it is actually the collapse of the ST.]

...I heard what was a third plane coming in. I heard the propulsion of an engine and then an explosion.

We looked up and saw these huge chunks. There's one particular piece of this building that fell in its entirety that I'll never forget... [p. 11]

North Tower: [He describes the NT collapse in a similar manner.]

I remember being over there, and did I hear yet another--what I thought was a propulsion of a plane, and then an explosion, and then we all dove to the floor. [pp. 17-18]

Michael Ober, 9110093

South Tower:

Then we heard a rumble, some twisting metal, we looked up in the air, and to be totally honest, at first, I don't know exactly...but it looked to me just like an explosion. It didn't look like the building was coming down, it looked like just one floor had blown completely outside of it...

...

After hearing this and looking up and seeing the building, what I thought was an explosion, everyone was running... [pp. 4-5]

Janice Olszewski, 9110193

South Tower:

I didn't think it was safe. I didn't know what was going on. I thought more could be happening down there. I didn't know if it was an explosion. I didn't know it was collapse at that point. I thought it was an explosion or secondary device, a bomb, the jet-plane exploding, whatever. [p. 7]

Patricia Ondrovic, 9110048

South Tower:

My partner and I grabbed our stretcher, went to put it in the back of our vehicle, and at that time, I think it was the lobby of the building behind us blew out. Everybody started running, I didn't see him again that day. He got thrown one way, I got thrown the other way.

...I was still on Vesey, cause the building that blew up on me was on Vesey.

...There was no where safe to go...I thought that they blew up our triage sector...The paramedic from Cabrini, that's where he was. I was just talking to him 20 minutes before everything blew up. [pp. 4-7]

...

At that point I got really upset. I said, do you realize they just blew up our triage sector? Everybody back there is dead, everybody back there is gone. [p. 9]

Joseph Patriciello, 9110378

South Tower:

...I happened to be looking up and saw the explosion or the building fail with the ensuing fireball and cloud. It didn't appear to me at that moment the building was coming down. But when the noise level began to pick up, it was obvious that something wrong was going on. We all proceeded to run... [p. 4]

Joseph Petrassi, 9110449

North Tower:

We came out of the building and we were looking up and the tower seemed to blow out...You could feel the stuff hitting you on the back as you were running. [p. 3]

Thomas Piambino, 9110493

South Tower:

The south tower had fallen, but at that time I didn't know what it was. All I heard was a tremendous explosion. The tower I was in shook really bad. [p. 5]

North Tower:

...and then the north tower started to fall, and my perception was that when I looked back at the tower as it was starting to come down -- I was booking -- was that there was -- I thought it exploded, and I didn't realize it had collapsed. It looked to me like an explosion...I wound up taking refuge behind an ESU truck, I believe it was, a Police Department ESU truck, I think, and I just rode it out until first there was the explosion or the concussion, and then there was very, very strong wind, and then there was the black... [pp. 9-10]

John Picarello, 9110240

South Tower:

In about a second or two, you just heard like a ba-ba-ba-boom, and everything just came down and everything was pitch-black. [p. 6]

Richard Picciotto, 9110211

South Tower: [As heard from inside the NT.]

...drop your tools, drop your masks, drop everything, get out, get out, get out. My thinking was either--I thought a bomb hit the other building and brought it down, and if there's a bomb in that one, there's a bomb in this one. [p. 6]

Kevin Quinn, 9110339

South Tower:

Looking up at the towers and it looked like it just basically imploded. [p. 2]

Joseph Rae, 9110294

South Tower:

We started walking north to just about the second footbridge, which would be 6 World Trade, and all of a sudden we heard the explosion and the building started to come down and I ran... [p. 3]

Gerard Reilly, 9110435

South Tower:

So we probably were in the building maybe a minute in the lobby of the tower, whichever one we were in, and that's when it came down. But I thought it was an explosion in the hotel, because all the debris came down, it was pitch-black, the whole building shook. [p. 4]

...

I told him I thought it was a bomb in the hotel, because nobody said the building collapsed. [p. 5]

William Reynolds, 9110288

South Tower:

After a while, and I don't know how long it was, I was distracted by a large explosion from the south tower and it seemed like fire was shooting out a couple of hundred feet in each direction, then all of a sudden the top of the tower started coming down in a pancake... [p. 3]

...

Q. Bill, just one question. The fire that you saw, where was the fire? Like up at the upper levels where it started collapsing?

A. It appeared somewhere below that. Maybe twenty floors below the impact area of the plane.
[p. 4]

...

Q. You're talking about the north tower now; right?

A. Before the north tower fell. He said, 'No.' I said, 'Why not? They blew up the other one.' I thought they blew it up with a bomb. I said, 'If they blew up the one, you know they're gonna blow up the other one.' [p. 8]

Patrick Richiusa, 9110305

North Tower:

...then it was dead silent. There was no noise after 1 Trade Center fell. It was like something out of a movie. It was really loud and then it was -- maybe it was just my hearing from the blast. [p. 10]

Juan Rios, 9119937

South Tower:

...I was hooking up the regulator to the O-2, when I hear people screaming and a loud explosion...So I just started to run... [p. 3]

Angel Rivera, 9110489

South Tower: [The collapse is experienced from inside the Marriott hotel.]

...when we hit the 19th floor, something horrendous happened. It was like a bomb went off. We thought we were dead. The whole building shook. The brick coming out of -- the door to the hallway into the hotel blew off like somebody had thrown it all over the place. It shook all over the place. We were thrown on the floor...The building was still shaking and we're still hearing explosions going on everywhere, so we decided let's get out of here. [pp. 4-5]

North Tower: [Again from inside the Marriott.]

Mike Mullan walked one flight up, and then the most horrendous thing happened. That's when hell came down. It was like a huge, enormous explosion. I still can hear it.

Everything shook. Everything went black. The wind rushed, very slowly [sound], all the dust, all the -- and everything went dark. We were rolling all over the floor, banging against the walls... [p. 7]

...

When the second tower came down, we had no idea what was going on. We thought another plane, another bomb, another as a second device. [p. 9]

Daniel Rivera, 9110035

South Tower: [This witness is very close to ST when it collapses.]

Then that's when I kept on walking close to the south tower and that's when that building collapsed.

Q. How did you know that it was coming down?

A. That noise. It was a noise.

Q. What did you hear? What did you see?

A. It was a frigging noise. At first I thought it was--do you ever see professional demolition where they set the charges on certain floors and then you hear 'pop, pop, pop, pop, pop'? That's exactly what--because I thought it was that. When I heard that frigging noise, that's when I saw the building coming down. [p. 9]

Terence Rivera, 9110343

South Tower:

As I run towards it, I know that I'm not going to escape the -- escape it, so I dive under -- I don't know even know which rig it was. I dive under a rig. At the same time it felt like an explosion. I got bounced around underneath the rig. [p. 7]

Kenneth Rogers, 9110290

South Tower:

...we were standing there with about five companies and we were just waiting for our assignment and then there was an explosion in the south tower, which according to this map, this exposure just blew out in flames. A lot of guys left at that point. I kept watching. Floor after floor after floor. One floor under another after another and when it hit about the fifth floor, I figured it was a bomb, because it looked like a synchronized deliberate kind of thing. [pp. 3-4]

John Rothmund, 9110112

South Tower:

At that time we were looking at the top of the towers and all the rubble and people coming off, and all of a sudden you heard -- it sounded like another airplane, or a missile. It was like a slow shake. The whole ground just vibrated and shook. [pp. 5-6]

North Tower:

Again, we didn't know what was going on. We thought it was a bomb, you know, like planes were dropping from the sky or missiles were hitting. We didn't know what the hell was going on. [p. 14]

William Ryan, 9110117

[Seems to be after both collapses.]

Q. What did you think you were responding to at that point?

A. Well, we knew we had fire. We knew we had partial collapse.

Q. From an explosion or --

A. Yes. Well, we heard a loud boom when we were getting ready to dock the ferry. Probably the jet fuel igniting, I assume. [p. 3]

Stanley Rybak, 9110263

South Tower:

...then the -- then everything just came right through. The dust and the explosion knocked the windows out, and so I was momentarily on the ground. [p. 5]

Anthony Salerno, 9110309

North Tower:

Putting out all those fires, in that interim, the second building had come down. I remember hearing a lot of explosions, the street turning completely gray, gray clouds of smoke all over the place. Everybody had stopped what they were doing and ran back up the block. [p. 4]

Patrick Scaringello, 9110030

South Tower:

I started to treat patients on my own when I heard the explosion from up above. I looked up, I saw smoke and flame and then I saw the top tower tilt, start to twist and lean. [p. 4]

North Tower:

I was assisting in pulling more people out from debris, when I heard the second tower explode. [p. 5]

Howie Scott, 9110365

South Tower:

We just made our turn to go in towards the lobby of tower two. For whatever reason, I just happened to look up and saw the whole thing coming down, pancaking down, and the explosion, blowing out about halfway up. [p. 6]

Edward Sheehey, 9110226

South Tower:

We were probably just at West Street, just at the street. Then the south tower -- we heard an explosion, looked up, and the building started to collapse. [p. 3]

William Simon, 9110115

North Tower:

Then we hear a rumble, and we see a blast of smoke and a slight ball of flame coming out from the silhouette of the building, and we watched the antenna collapse into the building. [p. 9]

Richard Skillington, 9110279

North Tower:

I looked up. I saw a helicopter, and I was trying to figure out what he was doing. Then the second tower exploded and started coming down. [p. 4]

Richard Smiouskas, 9110210

South Tower:

All of a sudden there was this groaning sound like a roar, grrrr. The ground started to shake....It looked like an earthquake. The ground was shaking. I fell to the floor. My camera bag opened up. The cameras went skidding across the floor. The windows started exploding in. [pp. 8-9]

...

...I didn't know exactly what was going on outside. I'm thinking maybe the building snapped in half. I'm thinking maybe a bomb blew up. I'm thinking it could have been a nuclear. [p. 9]

Thomas Spina, 9110445

South Tower:

I don't know what time later a loud rumble -- it sounded like an explosion. We thought it was a bomb... and number two tower comes down... [p. 9]

Mark Steffens, 9110003

South Tower:

We got to maybe one block north of where the Battery Tunnel exits onto West Street there, and then, boom, a massive explosion. Right in front of us we saw what looked like a fireball and smoke. It was rolling this way. [p. 5]

North Tower:

Then there was another it sounded like an explosion and heavy white powder, papers, flying everywhere. [pp. 6-7]

John Sudnik, 9110198

South Tower:

The best I can remember, we were just operating there, trying to help out and do the best we could. Then we heard a loud explosion or what sounded like a loud explosion and looked up and I saw tower two start coming down.

Frank Sweeney, 9110113

South Tower:

I bent over to pick up the hose, and I hear what sounded like firecrackers and a low rumble. I look up, and the south tower -- I could see the top part of the siding overlapping the bottom side of the siding...I ran... [p. 9]

Jay Swithers, 9110172

South Tower:

I took a quick glance at the building and while I didn't see it falling, I saw a large section of it blasting out, which led me to believe it was just an explosion. I thought it was a secondary device, but I knew that we had to go. [p. 5]

...

So I assumed that the vehicle had not been in the - what I thought was an explosion at the time, but was the first collapse. [p. 9]

David Timothy, 9110156

North Tower:

The next thing I knew, you started hearing more explosions. I guess this is when the second tower started coming down. [p. 12]

Stanley Trojanowski, 9110292

South Tower:

After the collapse of number Two World Trade Center, which I actually thought was a bomb that went off because the north tower was blocking my view, debris and everything started falling, people were running... [p. 3]

...

I made my way underneath the scaffolding again and just tried to outlast the collapse, which I thought was just another bomb going off. [p. 4]

Albert Turi, 9110142

South Tower:

The next thing I heard was Pete say what the fuck is this? And as my eyes traveled up the building, and I was looking at the south tower, somewhere about halfway up, my initial reaction was there was a secondary explosion, and the entire floor area, a ring right around the building blew out. I later realized that the building had started to collapse already and this was the air being compressed and that is the floor that let go. [p. 14]

Thomas Turilli, 9110501

South Tower: [This appears to be at, or just before, the collapse of the ST. They are in the NT and have just sent some men up in the elevator.]

The door closed, they went up, and it just seemed a couple seconds and all of a sudden you just heard like it almost actually that day sounded like bombs going off, like boom, boom, boom, like seven or eight, and then just a huge wind... [p. 4]

[They get down the stairs.]

At that point we were kind of standing on the street and I looked to my left and actually I noticed the tower was down. I didn't even know what it was when we were in there. It just seemed like a huge explosion. [p. 6]

Thomas Vallebuona, 9110418

South Tower:

...I heard 'boom', an exploding sound, a real loud bang. I looked up, and I could see the Trade Center starting to come down, the south tower, which I guess I was about a block away from. [p. 5]

North Tower:

And 'ba-boom' again, the same sound, the same noise, the same shuddering, shrilling noise of the metal falling as it cascades down. [p. 9]

Stephen Viola, 9110439

South Tower: [Collapse experienced from inside NT.]

Our guy went in with 13 truck, and he was coming down with the guy from 13 truck to bring the elevator to us, and when he was either going up or coming down the elevator, that's when the south tower collapsed, and it sounded like a bunch of explosions.

You heard like loud booms, but I guess it was all just stuff coming down... [p. 3]

William Wall, 9110285

North Tower:

At that time we heard an explosion. We looked up and the building was coming down right on top of us... [p. 9]

James Walsh, 9110459

North Tower:

The building didn't fall the way you would think tall buildings would fall. Pretty much it looked like it imploded on itself. [p. 10]

William Walsh, 9110442

North Tower:

I just remembered seeing two floors of heavy fire from the north side of World Trade Center one and the West side of World Trade Center one. All of a sudden things collapsed one Floor, and then within a second or so it just imploded. [p. 28]

Charles Wells, 9110163

South Tower:

We got to the point of being in between the Vista Hotel and the World Trade Center, at which point we heard a -- we felt a loud -- a very strong vibration, shaking, and a loud noise like a subway train coming through a station at speed, like a jet engine at full throttle. It was a roaring sound... [p. 6]

[After digging himself out of the collapse rubble.]

Everybody's heads were all popping up now. Everybody is digging out, so I ran into a couple of firefighters and I said, "Well, you know, what the hell happened?" Some kind of an explosion, he goes, and that's what I thought it was... [p. 8]

Daniel Williams, 9110289

South Tower:

I turned my face back towards the buildings as -- looking up at the south tower. It seemed like the one floor exploded, but in retrospect I'm thinking that was the compressive force of the building coming down that blew it out. I remember yelling, "Run." [p. 4]

**APPENDIX C: NON-EXPLOSION CASES BY CATEGORY:
TEXT AND CONTEXT: 10 CASES**

1. DENIAL OF EXPLOSION: 2 CASES

James Murphy, 9110323

South Tower: [This is the sound as heard from around the ground floor of the NT.]

I was looking down towards West Street, because that's where it seemed that it was coming from. You just heard -- I thought it was a third plane that hit, because when we were going in there was a couple of cops. When we made the right onto Liberty, they said, "Be careful, guys, there's a third plane heading in." So that's what I thought it was.

It just seemed like a long time that it was -- it didn't seem like an explosion. It was like boom, boom, and then just got louder and louder. It got louder and louder, and then all of a sudden I was looking out onto West Street and the whole area turned from gray to black in a hurry.

Glen Rohan, 9110404

North Tower:

We got approximately to Vesey, a little further past Vesey, I would say about 200 feet from the tower, when we heard a noise. I wouldn't even call it an explosion, but it was enough to make you look up. When we looked up, you could see things coming off the sides of the building of what was then number One World Trade Center. We looked at it for probably about five seconds before I realized that this building is coming down.

2. PANCAKING (TERM): 7 CASES

Craig Dunne, 9110490

North Tower:

I believe we were there maybe two minutes, two and a half minutes. We heard the rumble, looked up, and the antenna started leaning and the whole building started pancaking towards us, coming down.

Dennis Fischer, 9110402

North Tower:

...we heard the rumbling. We looked up, that I remember as plain as day. I looked up and I saw from the top, I actually watched it with my own eyes, I saw the top start to pancake down. I remember looking at the proby I was with. We looked at each other in amazement. The time seemed to like stand still for a second. We looked at each other. We looked back up. We looked back at each other. It seemed like a bunch of time went by. It was probably like a fraction of a second. Everybody started just running the other way.

Sammuel Harris, 9110108

South Tower:

As I related back to Chief Gombo – or I was getting ready to walk out and tell Chief Gombo what I was told, that's when tower one started to pancake and collapse. The only thing that I remember was the guy in front of me who was standing there in awe of just the earthquake feel, for myself as well.

Scott Holowach, 9110114

South Tower:

Shortly after that, sure enough, I heard – I don't know even -- I guess a rumbling sound. I looked up and I see the whole 70th floor basically like buckle out and start crumbling down the outside of the building. At the time I grabbed two other guys and said let's get the hell out of here. We dove into the building and after the rumbling stopped --

Q. Would have been south tower collapsing?

A. The south tower.

Q. You could see it from your position?

A. Yes. I visually watched the 70 floor. It looked like almost it was buckling outwards and then it just went down the outside of the building, just like scaled the outside of the building and it just started pancaking...

Robert Salvador, 9110474

North Tower:

...and then the north tower started coming down. I heard the same -- same pancaking, like a machine gun coming and glass flying, so I closed -- shut the door, got out of the rig, and ran -- started running across the street.

Tiernach Cassidy, 9110413

North Tower:

We start walking down Cortlandt Street from Broadway, going west, and we're carrying the stokes basket, myself and the team I was with, the other four guys. We started hearing the pancaking of the north tower now.

I looked at the officer I was with. We both looked at each other like what's that? Not thinking the second one would be coming down.

Q. What did it sound like?

A. It sounded like a plane just getting ready to land, just getting closer, coming in; a bowling ball getting closer when it's ready to hit that sweet spot, you know. But it didn't take us long to realize what it was. We didn't look up. We just ran ...

Rosario Terranova, 9110168

South Tower:

While we were discussing this, I remember hearing Chief Ganci say, "Oh, shit," you know, so we all looked up, and you could hear this rumble coming. We looked up at the south tower, which is the No. 2 tower, and all of a sudden we began to see like a pancake. I mean, it's as simple as that. If you could imagine you had two cards in your hand, and you just clapped your hands, and they just closed on each other. That's what it looked like, like a toy, and we began to see the pancake, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, one floor after another, as quick as you can imagine it.

3. PANCAKING (DESCRIPTION): 1 CASE

Luis Sanchez, 9110128

South Tower:

Five minutes later I just heard this loud noise. It was like an earthquake. It was shaking, and things was going down. I looked everywhere. There was nothing going on. I looked to the side, looked to my friend. There was nothing going on. When I looked up, I saw the top of the building floor by floor was coming down, collapsing. I was oh. (Inaudible.)