

Evolution of the 9/11 Controversy: From Conspiracy Theories to Conspiracy Photographs: An Ekphrastic Examination



Donald E. Stahl

“Just as *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* brought home to millions a secret hiding in plain sight, photography changed the course of history by peeling away veils obscuring shameful facts. Photos undermined power and, as with the advent of the printing press centuries earlier, power responded by seeking to shutter information. Presidents across the political spectrum from Ronald Reagan to Barack Obama have, on occasion, used their power to control what pictures the public could see.

“A single photograph can expose broad truths the powerful hoped would stay hidden. A picture can indeed be worth a thousand words. Photography often challenges power by providing a clearer, sharper perspective, and by making a much larger portion of the public care about wrongs previously known only by a limited elite.”ⁱ

Introducing the concepts of an interested public and an attentive public, Jon D. Miller says:

“For any citizen, the number of areas of possible interest is vast. One of the characteristics of modern society is that the volume of information is overwhelming and no single individual can become knowledgeable or remain current in more than a relatively narrow range of topics. . . .

“The result of this specialization process is that even those citizens interested in political affairs are able to follow only two or three major issues at any given time. . . .

“For example, only a small proportion of the adult population follows foreign policy developments among the nations of the world and even fewer understand the symbolic exchange of words and actions that lead to the formulation of foreign policy. . . .

“Given the apparent contradiction between the expectations of democratic theory and low levels of citizen interest in, and understanding of, foreign policy, Gabriel Almond, in 1950, published a basic analysis in his *The American People and Foreign Policy*. Almond argued that the majority of the adult population was generally uninterested in foreign policy matters, becoming interested only in times of war or the activation of the military draft. In more normal times, the public monitoring of foreign policy is conducted by a small portion of the population, that Almond termed an ‘attentive public’ . . . There are attentive publics for most low-salience issues.

“An attentive public is a self-selected group that has a high level of interest in, and a functional level of knowledge about, a given issue area.”ⁱⁱ

Almond might as well have argued not only that the majority of the adult population was generally uninterested in foreign affairs, but generally uninterested in politics,ⁱⁱⁱ developing an interest only around presidential election times (and even then approximately half do not vote).^{iv} When war comes, the public formerly uninterested in foreign affairs becomes an interested public, but still not an attentive public.

Since September 11, 2001, as well as the (then-) universally (but today less-) interested public, there has been an attentive public devoted to the events of that day, which is not only attentive, but controversial in an unusual way. Within any politically attentive public one might expect to find a miscellany of minor disagreements, but the 9/11 attentive public has always been clearly divided into two major, opposed camps. Why should that be? The suggestion here is that it is due to features of the mass media’s account of those events. In any case, the controversial features of, and the controversial matters broached by, that attentive public form the subject of this paper.

On January 17, 1961 that old conspiracy theorist, President Dwight David Eisenhower, said,

“Our military organization today bears little relation to that known of [sic] any of my predecessors in peacetime, or indeed by the fighting men of World War II or Korea. . . . In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists, and will persist.”^v

He was right.

Time, as Westbrook Van Voorhis said in the midst of his manifestly military milieu, marches on, and today we no longer have a military-industrial complex, but something else, variously called a military-industrial-media-academic complex: MIMAC; or a “MITLAMP (military-industrial-technological-labor-academic-managerial-political) complex.”^{vi} (We no longer have such a thing as peacetime either.^{vii}) Everything is bigger, and 9/11 is a paradigm example. On March 6, 2010 the reporter Russ Baker said that 9/11 was “a story too big to cover.”^{viii} He was right too.

The size of the 9/11 literature now permits us to see some patterns with which to characterize, and thereby simplify it. First it will be well to distinguish, within the 9/11 attentive public, the 9/11 controversy and the 9/11 pseudo-controversy.

Part of the reason that the subject is so large is the amalgamation of the media and academe.^{ix} Formerly it was the case that the (professed) aim of academia was the discovery and communication of truth,^x and the aim of the media was to attract, or appropriate, attention and then sell it.^{xi} The social sciences are now ingesting “cultural studies,” and completing the merger.

Associated with this academic amalgamation is what is perhaps best called the pseudo-controversy concerning 9/11. This is a body of literature (however recorded) ostensibly having to do with the events of 9/11, but actually not. It is concerned instead with the psychological, sociological, demographic and other characteristics of those who do not believe the government account. Typically it omits any mention of reasons for this disbelief, contenting itself with discussion of and unfavorable reference to those persons, as perhaps carriers of a contagion of unknown origin, conceivably fatal to the body politic. Advertised as it usually is, it may seem to be about the subject of 9/11, but this is an illusion: nor is it really a controversy, since those discussed do not reciprocate.

The pseudo-controversy characteristically touches on 9/11 as only part of a larger controverted subject, that of the truthfulness of the “public information”^{xii} that “public reason” relies upon; within which 9/11 may be considered a paradigm case. The University of Winchester, *e.g.*, has a “Centre for Conspiracy Culture,” and The University of Kent’s Psychology Department’s search engine lists 504 sources of information on this international “pathology of public reason.”^{xiii}

The Leverhulme-funded Conspiracy and Democracy Project at Cambridge University

“... sets out ... to provide a ‘natural history’ of conspiracy theorising. To do that, the project combines the perspectives, investigative methods and insights of historians, political theorists, network engineers and other disciplines to produce what we hope will be a deeper and richer understanding of a fascinating and puzzling phenomenon.”^{xiv}

There is considerable activity within pseudo-controversy circles. The Centre for Conspiracy Culture had a Conspiracy Culture Conference in 1998 in Winchester, and

from March 12 through 14 of this year the University of Miami's Department of Political Science had a Conference on Conspiracy Theories. Of course, the intent of the conferences was not to investigate the truth of such theories.^{xv} That is a job for the conspiracy theorists themselves, who in this respect may be considered more conventionally and traditionally academic than the academicians.^{xvi}

In their online discussion of online discussion of conspiracy theories, Michael J. Wood and Karen M. Douglas find that "conspiracist commenters were more likely to argue against the opposing interpretation and less likely to argue in favor of their own interpretation, while the opposite was true of conventionalist commenters."^{xvii}

There is an effortless explanation for this. What is common to those "conspiracist commenters" is the contention that the government descriptions of various significant events strain credulity, and in some cases describe impossibilities. Such false accounts could not be presented by accident, and therefore their ubiquity must result from the conspiracy and connivance of many persons. The motives for and the methods of doing this vary widely in the opinions of those beginning from this common skeptical starting point, as one might expect.

In fact, the work of the 9/11 Consensus Panel^{xviii} and that of Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth^{xix} is entirely *limited* to demonstrating the falsity of the official account. The Consensus Panel has "developed 44 Consensus Points of 'best evidence' opposing the official account of 9/11" using a "simplified Delphi Method," the approach adopted by evidence-based medicine. Rather than attempt to deal in a rational manner with anything said skeptically about the government narrative, pseudo-controversialists attempt to explain the puzzling phenomenon consisting of the fact that people raise such questions.

Pseudo-controversy can be quite rewarding.

"Professor Quassim Cassam has been awarded £250,000 [currently, \$3,800,750] by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to study what he calls 'intellectual vices'. The title of his project is 'Vice Epistemology'. He believes his research could help to explain how certain claims – for example that 9/11 was masterminded by the US government – are able to gain so much traction."^{xx}

Throughout MIMAC (including *Wikipedia*), the standard approach to 9/11, as to other matters, is to report holders of beliefs and omit the reasons they hold them.^{xxi} One can read three-hundred-page tomes of vulgar twaddle and come away with no better idea of why the people under discussion say what they say than the presumption that they're all nutters. Some used to be architects and engineers, but now they wear tinfoil hats: all 2,353 of them.^{xxii} There seems to be disagreement between philosophy departments and law schools (and indeed whole universities) as to whether *ad hominem* is a fallacy.

Here is Professor Mark Fenster, J.D.:

“Most 9/11 conspiracy theories contest every point of the official account. They base this refutation [*sic*] on their interpretation of both forensic anomalies at the accident [*sic*] sites whose existence the official account concedes and attempts to explain, and of evidence whose existence and trustworthiness the official account either rejects or ignores. Their interpretive practice, in other words, both reinterprets and finds conspiratorial details, ripping them out of their place within the official account’s framework and inserting them into a conspiratorial one. The conspiracy theorists assert that any unexplained anomaly, or any anomaly for which they can provide a better explanation than the official account offers, causes the official account to fail, because each of the government’s assertions requires and builds upon the truth of others. If some of the hijackers are still alive, they argue, or if the towers’ collapse was not caused by the plane collision, or if something other than American Flight 77 hit the Pentagon, then the entire official account would be revealed as a series of lies.” xxiii

The last statement is quite correct. It would be.xxiv

Just as one man’s terrorist may be another man’s freedom fighter, so one man’s anomaly may be another man’s epiphany.xxv A coin is flipped. When it lands, it presents Professor Fenster with a forensic anomaly, because it landed heads, but it looks like a tail. That is an anomaly.

9/11 discussion is certainly too voluminous to cover in sixty or even ninety minutes, and continues to grow. We shall from this point on disregard the pseudo-controversial part of it—but hope nevertheless to shed some indirect (but deep and rich) light on the fascinating phenomenon it is concerned with.

We distinguish the U.S. government account, and an account which denies it, thereby creating the controversy. Both of these accounts stipulate that the phenomena of 9/11 were due to a conspiracy. Whether or not it was an inside job, *no one* thinks it was a one-man job. But, strangely, only the theory which disagrees with the government is known as a conspiracy theory; suggesting that the term is being used as an alternative name for thoughtcrime, *i.e.*, thinking ill of the government.xxvi The government account was of course presented to the public first, and in it many of the phenomena of that day were advanced merely as horrifying (such as the incineration and disappearance of an immense, inhabited building). Only later were they recognized, by the nongovernmental side, as “anomalous.”

Within both these sides we find three distinctions to be drawn in approaches to the subject: expert and nonexpert, physical and psychological, and observationalxxvii and testimonial. Of these, it will probably be agreed that, generally speaking, expert assertions outweigh nonexpert, physical considerations outweigh psychological, and observations outweigh testimony; even, at times, expert testimony. Of course experts sometimes disagree, and in that case the nonexpert must do the best she can. Coin flipping, which is both physical and observational, requires no expertise.

On the government side we distinguish the statements of government officials from others in MIMAC who engage in defense of the official account. We will confine our attention to the statements of government officials, speaking *ex cathedra*. Of those, only some are reputed experts on the physical aspects of what they claim.

The governmental side has explicitly refused to respond to physical questions raised by the nongovernmental side in any forum which it does not (directly) control. All physical questions about 9/11 are the province of NIST, which nows responds to the public solely through its Director of Media Relations, Michael E. Newman. On June 25, 2006 Mr. Newman responded to Edward F. Haas:

“The members of the NIST WTC Investigation Team has [sic] respectfully declined your invitation to participate in the National 9/11 Debate. A change in venue or date will not alter that decision...” xxviii

Once in a while, unpredictably, some substantively new element will be added to the nongovernmental account, but the governmental side adds only new scholarly, or unscholarly, *ad hominem*s; while the executive branch advocates infiltrating, or criminalizing, dissent; and, according to MIMAC, the nongovernment side is old news.^{xxix}

On the nongovernment side, as well as nonexperts we likewise find experts speaking on their subjects (architects, engineers, physicists, demolition contractors, airplane pilots, former spies, O-8 Grade military officers, firefighters, and others).

What is the best part of the actual 9/11 controversy to examine within a few minutes? The 9/11 Consensus Panel does not rank its Points in order of weight or strength. For the period of time available today, we need a single issue to discuss.

We will use as the epitome of the 9/11 controversy a single physical contention, and discuss it from an observational perspective, speaking from a nonexpert standpoint. The contention is that the Twin Towers were blown up, or exploded, in controlled demolition. (This contention does *not* contradict the contention that other things were also done to them.)

Roughly speaking, the government account of the Towers is that an airplane struck each of them and so enervated them (concrete and steel though they were) that they suddenly disappeared an hour later. But what is the government account (and correlatively, what is the nongovernmental account) *precisely*? Determining this can be hampered by a loose or colloquial use of language.

For instance, it is often said that the Twin Towers “fell.” Strictly speaking, such a thing is impossible. The Twin Towers could not fall, because there was nowhere for them to go. They were already sitting on the ground. Consequent on their disintegration, their *parts* fell. Saying simply that the Twin Towers “fell” obscures the fact that they had been deconstructed, had been taken to tiny pieces, had been turned into dark talcum powder^{xxx} in a matter of seconds (approximately ten seconds each, three times faster than the hydrogen in the *Hindenburg* burned up). If there is a sense in which the Towers fell, they fell apart.



In fact, rather than falling, quite a bit of them went into the stratosphere.

Shortly we will pay attention to two other words, ‘collapse’ and ‘explode’.

On May 10, 2009 Richard Bruce Cheney told CBS that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed “blew up the World Trade Center.”^{xxxii} However, since he was out of office when he said it we will not count it as an official government pronouncement.

The government’s official position is that no explosions occurred.

“Within days of the attacks, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) began organizing an assessment of why the towers collapsed, to be led by W. Gene Corley, a Chicago structural engineer. Corley had led the investigation of the truck bombing and collapse of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995. . . .

“Although the ASCE was providing much of the expertise, the investigation was financed and given its authority by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) . . .

“For months after September 11, the investigators—twenty-six of the nation’s most respected engineers—were unable to persuade FEMA to obtain basic data like detailed blueprints of the buildings that collapsed. “Bureaucratic restrictions often kept the engineers from interviewing witnesses to the disaster, making forensic inspections at ground zero, or getting crucial information like recorded distress calls from people trapped in the buildings. *For reasons that would remain known only to FEMA, the agency refused to let the team appeal to the public for photographs and videos of the towers that could help with the investigation.*

“Not surprisingly given the barriers the investigators had faced, the report ended with many unresolved questions. . . .

“Sherwood Boehlert, an . . . upstate New York Republican . . . shepherded through Congress a bill that would allow the federal government, through the National Institute of Standards and Technology—an agency in the Commerce Department—to investigate building catastrophes much as the National

Transportation Safety Board dissects any major plane crash. The legislation . . . was signed into law in October 2002 as the National Construction Safety Team Act . . .” xxxii

However, the National Institute of Standards and Technology was already allowed “to investigate building catastrophes.” NIST had conducted investigations of disasters at least since the 1967 collapse of the Silver Bridge in Point Pleasant, W.VA with no specifically authorizing legislation. In 1985, when it was still known as the National Bureau of Standards, it was “authorized” to “initiate and conduct investigations to determine the causes of structural failures in structures which are used or occupied by the general public,” but without the legal responsibility for its reports that it had had.

PUBLIC LAW 99-73—JULY 29, 1985

“SEC. 7. The National Bureau of Standards, on its own initiative but only after consultation with local authorities, may initiate and conduct investigations to determine the causes of structural failures in structures which are used or occupied by the general public. *No part of any report resulting from such investigation shall be admitted as evidence or used in any suit or action for damages arising out of any matter mentioned in such report.*” xxxiii

If no information discovered by the agency could be used in a court of law, the agency is apparently protected from suit, and its information is protected from judicial examination.^{xxxiv} However, in 2001 agency information was still subject to the 1966 Freedom of Information Act.

The National Construction Safety Team Act which Representative Boehlert introduced into Congress on May 9, 2002 (H.R.4687.IH) in part reads:

“(d) PUBLIC SAFETY INFORMATION- A National Construction Safety Team and the National Institute of Standards and Technology shall not publicly release any information it receives in the course of an investigation under this Act if the Director finds that the disclosure of that information might jeopardize public safety.”

Such a bill was obviously unnecessary to permit NIST to investigate 9/11, but it began its investigation only on August 21, 2002 (nearly a year later), three months after this secrecy legislation was introduced. The above bill specifically authorizing secrecy at the discretion of a single person on extremely vague grounds became law on October 1, 2002, less than two months after NIST began its investigation and five months after being introduced. NIST’s statements and proceedings were then protected both from judicial discovery and examination, and, if need be, the Freedom of Information Act.

NIST then became the government’s official locus of information on the physics of 9/11. Its latest statement on whether explosions occurred is dated September 19, 2011. It reads:

“In summary, NIST found no corroborating evidence for alternative hypotheses suggesting that the WTC towers were brought down by controlled demolition using explosives.” ^{xxxv}

The contention that the Twin Towers were blown up, or exploded, captures the essential opposition between the governmental and nongovernmental accounts in the following

way:

If demolition could be arranged, there would be no need for airplanes. Why train scarce suicide warriors so intensively and then risk losing them at the airport if you can accomplish their task in some other way? Why have airplanes strike the buildings and *then* blow them up, wasting the pilots? That thought indeed is *prima facie* incoherent. It leaves one with the stark realization that *if* the buildings were blown up, then the reason for the airplanes was to camouflage precisely the fact that they were blown up. Suicide missions leave no one to apprehend and question, but controlled demolitions do. A few suicide pilots are long gone, but many highly trained demolition workers and enablers remain, with their countless connections to secret sponsors. Had they been discovered, had they been so much as looked for, justice could have been sought from individuals, possibly instead of from countries. Parties to such camouflage share the guilt, and possibly the profit of the action itself, and would be expected to maintain indurate denial that the buildings were blown up, and vigorous opposition to any discussion of the matter.

Demolition of the sort interrogated here would require state-of-the-art expertise and equipment, considerable access to the premises,^{xxxvi} and months if not years of preparation; all of which we must suppose were unavailable to “al Qaeda,” but not to people with connections to some state or states, to the security company of the World Trade Center, or to the proprietor (until six weeks before the event) of that unprofitable piece of property, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. As Dr. Alan Sabrosky has observed, if Islamic terrorists had had the ability to blow up the World Trade Center in the heart of New York City in 2001, the “Green Zone” in the heart of Baghdad would be a pile of rubble today.

The question of demolition or no demolition decides the question of government truth or Truther truth, of “conspiracy theory” as regards 9/11; in other words, it determines whether 9/11 was the reason for war or war was the reason for 9/11.^{xxxvii}

If facts are deliberately kept secret, obviously they are dangerous to someone. But if facts about building construction could jeopardize public safety, wouldn’t they be dangerous to the public only if they *weren’t* known? Why keep them secret from the building industry? NIST is not an intelligence-gathering agency, confronting foreign adversaries and protecting its “sources and methods.” Why would it need to classify information? On July 9, 2009 Dr. Patrick Gallagher, acting as Director of NIST,^{xxxviii} used Rep. Boehlert’s secrecy legislation.

“The goals of the investigation of the WTC disaster were:

“To investigate the building construction, the materials used, and the technical conditions that contributed to the outcome of the WTC disaster.

“To serve as the basis for:

“—Improvements in the way buildings are designed, constructed, maintained, and used . . .

“ The specific objectives were:

“1. Determine why and how WTC 1 and WTC 2 collapsed following the initial impacts of the aircraft . . .”
xxxix

We see from this that NIST’s plan was never to investigate what happened. The stated purpose of the investigation was not to determine whether the buildings collapsed or not. It was to determine how they collapsed. With regard to the question of what happened to the buildings, this is called *petitio principii*. Begging the question.

“The focus of the Investigation was on the sequence of events from the instant of aircraft impact to the initiation of collapse for each tower. For brevity in this report, this sequence is referred to as the ‘probable collapse sequence,’ although it includes little analysis of the structural behavior of the tower after the conditions for collapse initiation were reached and collapse became inevitable.” xl

The original version of this footnotexli said that *no* analysis was included, and in a subsequent letter to Dr. Judy Wood NIST says:

“To facilitate communication, the term ‘collapse’ as used in this letter and in NCSTAR 1 means a falling in, loss of shape, or reduction to flattened form or rubble of a structure. As stated in NCSTAR 1, NIST only investigated the factors leading to the initiation of the collapses of the WTC towers, not the collapses themselves.” xlii

Ladies and gentlemen, these statements make no sense. If you do not investigate the effect, how can you find out what caused it? How can you “determine how the collapses occurred” if you do not look at them? How do you determine the cause of an event, if you do not look at the event? If you do not investigate the so-called collapse, you do not know what “factors” led to it, and you do not even know whether it was a collapse. If nevertheless you write a lengthy report on those “factors,” you have not investigated anything. You have made it all up. These are simply facts about the word ‘investigate’.

Dr. Gallagher’s “finding” reads:

“ . . . Therefore, NIST shall not release the following information: 1. All input and results files of the ANSYS 16-story collapse initiation model with detailed connection models that were used to analyze the structural response to thermal loads [the load on a structure induced by change in temperature], break element [an HTML feature] source code, ANSYS script files for the break elements, custom executable ANSYS file, and all Excel spreadsheets and other supporting calculations used to develop floor connection failure modes and capacities. 2. All input files with connection material properties and all results files of the LS-DYNA 47-story global collapse model that were used to simulate sequential structural failures leading to collapse, and all Excel spreadsheets and other supporting calculations used to develop floor connection failure modes and capacities.” xliii

Dr. Gallagher found that all the information put into and gotten out of the collapse models and connection models, and all the calculations used to model floor connection failure—in other words, everything that NIST did—might jeopardize public safety if the public knew about it. The information obtained is supposed to be precisely the information which would enable those “improvements in the way buildings are designed, constructed, maintained, and used” which were the reason for the investigation.xliv It cannot be introduced in court, and cannot be accessed with a FOIA

request. If there are facts about construction which “might jeopardize public safety,” shouldn’t the building trades be made aware of them? NIST was investigating office buildings, not atom bombs. Why go looking for information to make improvements with if such information is itself somehow dangerous . . . unless it was all theater to begin with?

Kevin Ryan was an employee of Underwriters Laboratory with access to NIST’s tests and computer models. According to him in the documentary *Zero*,^{xlvi} NIST falsified both input and output for their models, doubling some experimental quantities and halving others, and still could not achieve their desired results.

We ask, “Why model anything?” Why not simply look at what happened—if you are being honest?

Time now to simplify matters, as promised. To do that we utilize a new resource, the gift of time and industry: the conspiracy photograph.^{xlvi} According to Dr. Cass Sunstein, “Those who subscribe to conspiracy theories may create serious risks, including risks of violence, and the existence of such theories raises significant challenges for policy and law.”^{xlvi} Perhaps transferring the attention of such subscribers from dubious theories to undoubted photographs may mitigate the seriousness of the risks. Adopting the unusual usage of the term “conspiracy” which has been noted, conspiracy photographs are not photos of the airplane strikes. They are the ones taken an hour later, after the “collapse initiation” beyond which NIST’s investigation did not go. You have already seen two. They explain, wordlessly, a great deal about NIST’s failure to examine the “collapses,” and refusal to reveal what it did do.^{xlvi} As Dr. Sivaraj Shyam-Sunder, Director of NIST’s Engineering Laboratory, told the Associated Press, “The obvious stares you in the face.”^{xlix}

If the term “collapse” (as used in Ms. Fletcher’s letter to Dr. Wood and in NCSTAR 1) meant *only* a reduction to flattened form or rubble, then we could speak of the collapse of Hiroshima. It must mean more.

What does ‘collapse’ mean in English? Here are some facts about it, according to the OED:

“1. *intr.* To fall together, as the sides of a hollow body, or the body itself, by external pressure or withdrawal of the contents, as when an inflated bladder is pierced; to fall into a confused mass or into a flattened form by loss of rigidity or support; to break down, give way, fall in, cave in; to shrink suddenly into a smaller volume, contract.”¹

Here are some collapsed buildings:



These buildings have changed their shape by breaking down, but they have not lost shape (all shape) or been reduced to flattened form or rubble; they have not undergone a process of granulation.

The buildings look less fallen in than fallen over, but, assuming with Ms. Fletcher that a collapse is a falling in, is this a collapse?li



Are the sides of this body falling together, by external pressure? Does in mean out?



Is this building shrinking suddenly into a smaller volume? Contracting?

Here is the demolition of the Blanchette Bridge in St. Charles, Missouri on December 4, 2012:



Is there any resemblance between the controlled demolition of the bridge, and this building?

Is the building perhaps “falling apart?”



Now, what does ‘explode’ mean? Here is the relevant OED definition:

“5. *intr.* To ‘go off’ with a loud noise. Of gas, gunpowder, etc.: To expand violently with a loud report under the influence of suddenly developed internal energy; hence, of a charged jar, mine, etc. Of a boiler, gun, etc.: To fly in pieces, burst, from a similar cause.”

Collapses and explosions are alike in that both involve “loss of rigidity or support,” but collapses are down and in, and explosions are up and out. They are like the head and the tail of “loss of rigidity or support.” In fact, collapses are *implosions*.

Were these buildings falling in or flying in pieces? Were they shrinking suddenly into a smaller volume, or expanding violently? Bursting?

Here is the friable fabric of a steel skyscraper—in process of disappearing:



Has there ever before been anything like this on Earth? What should it be called? An eruption? A skyscraper has turned into a dust fountain. (Who would have guessed that it would be so fragile, so brittle?) This dust is not obscuring a building behind it. When it blows away, there is no building there. The dust *is* the building. Not only the gigantic bolts and welds which gave the building the strength^{lii} to resist one-hundred-mile-per-hour winds, but the very molecular bonds which give ordinary objects their shape and identity have been broken.^{liii} What has not become a cloud has become a “one-hoss shay.”^{liv} Steel beams have changed into ropes of sand, and the edifice has become a sandcastle. As to rigidity or support, the thing might as well be cotton candy, or Alka-Seltzer. No wonder NIST did not “analyse” its “structural behavior.” Plop Plop, Fizz Fizz.

Paedagogically speaking, here is my favorite photograph. It is a moment taken from a video.^{lv} Much can be learned from it.



Note the object in the upper right quadrant, at the mouth of the wedge formed by the dust, high in splendid isolation against the azure sky. It is one of the sections of anodized aluminum cladding bonded to the steel grillages which formed the exterior walls of the building. What is the most reasonable explanation of how it got there?^{lvi}

The distance between where it came from and where it is could be called a “credibility gap.”

Does shrink mean expand? Does in mean out? Does down mean up? Ike’s farewell warned us about a disaster, but did not tell us how to recognize it. Washington’s farewell had done that; and Orwell had described its linguistic signs. How many fingers is O’Brien holding up?lvii

Experience suggests that the only sort of answer to what has just been presented is, immediately to begin talking about something else, to introduce as many other subjects as possible, and to repeat oneself as many times as necessary,lviii emphasizing the unimportance, indeed the triviality,lix of what the photographs show. Claim that everything said and shown here has all been disproven—somewhere. Defame, insult and threaten the person presenting the information. The more often such an answer appears in the media, the more cogent it will be.lx There are those who brag about being impossible to convince.lxi

Such answers address, and proceed from, a different part of the brain or mind than the part I have been addressing. But more effective than any answer is the simple expedient of ignoring the whole thing; of becoming again (at least ostensibly) part of the uninterested public.lxii Repression may be diagnosed both in the individual patient, and in society.

When NIST said that it found no corroborating evidence for controlled demolition using explosives, it lied.

I have adverted to the concepts of public reason and of public information. I must now add the concept of the public lie, found both in Plato and in Dr. Karen Dawisha’s new examination of Russia,lxiii where less money is spent to convince and to appear honest. It is advanced in the confidence that, if not believed, it will nevertheless be accepted.

On September 11, 2001 George W. Bush stated that, “Freedom itself was attacked this morning . . .” Forty-five days later he and his legislative assistants concretized this rather abstract metaphor by enacting the P.A.T.R.I.O.T. Act.lxiv (According to Thomas Drake he had already begun the President’s Surveillance Program on October 4.lxv)

In 1986 historian Richard Rhodes wrote of “a separate, secret state with separate sovereignty linked to the public state through the person and by the sole authority of the President,” lxvi and two years later McGeorge Bundy said that, “Secrecy had become a state of mind with a life and meaning of its own.” lxvii

In 1906 Georg Simmel noted that, “Sociological structures are most characteristically differentiated by the measure of mendacity that is operative in them.”lxviii Ninety years later W. Peter Robinson elaborated somewhat:

“Societies that purport to function under democratic rules will encourage and discourage different kinds of political falsifications and deceptions from those societies that are totalitarian in the exercise of combinations of military, monarchic, and tyrannical power.” lxxix

Government-produced information is protected from examination in court.lxx In the sole discretion of one person, facts may be hidden from the public on grounds so vague as to be meaningless. Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech, except for National Security Letters, whose recipients must keep them secret. The salary of a CIA Information Management Officer ranges from \$59,689 to \$118,069. The National Institute of Standards and Technology announces and maintains for years, as publicly as possible, that it has found no evidence suggesting that the WTC towers were brought down by controlled demolition, while such evidence, both visible and audible, remains available to anyone with access to the Internet.

On January 11, 2011, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied since 1967, Richard Falk, said online:

“If we want to be responsible in our assessments, we must restrain our political predispositions, and get the evidence. Let us remember that what seems most disturbing about the 9/11 controversy is the widespread aversion by government and media to the evidence that suggests, at the very least, the need for an independent investigation that proceeds with no holds barred.” lxxxi

But in fact, more than evidence is available.

I flip a coin, catch it, slap it on the back of my hand, and tell you that it is a tail. If you do not believe me, I can prove to you that it is simply by uncovering it. If you say that that is not proof, then you have no concept of proof—or at least not one that would be recognized as legitimate by any judge or jury.lxxii If the photographs above are not proof that the Towers were blown up, what would be?

The degradation of language we have witnessed bespeaks an evolving information asymmetry, or asymmetries, which constitute an emerging—global—sociological structure of some interest. With Robinson, let us celebrate and attempt to utilize what remains of the difference between our own and the totalitarian kinds of political falsification and deception.

In the Nineteenth and much of the Twentieth Century three subjects were understood as not to be introduced in polite conversation: sex, religion and politics. Every child must endure what Freud called a sexual enlightenment. During the long Eighteenth Century the West underwent its religious Enlightenment—not without resistance, some of which persists today. September 11, 2001, amidst the substantial and growing literature on state crime and corruption,lxxiii marks the beginning of its political Enlightenment.

The obvious stares you in the face.

ⁱ Frederick A.O. Schwartz Jr., *Democracy in the Dark: The Seduction of Government Secrecy*, (New York: 2015), p. 88. Note omitted.

ⁱⁱ Jon D. Miller, *The American People and Science Policy: The Role of Public Attitudes in the Policy Process*, (New York: 1983), pp. 22 f.

ⁱⁱⁱ See Michael X. Delli Carpini and Scott Keeter, *What Americans Know about Politics and Why It Matters*, (New Haven: 1989), pp. 73 ff. and James Bovard, *Attention Deficit Democracy*, (New York: 2005), pp. 1 ff. What people know is obviously a function of what they are told. However, cf. also Michael J. Glennon, *National Security and Double Government*, (New York: 2015), pp. 8 f.

^{iv} Perhaps their lack of interest should not be surprising. “When all senators were invited to a classified briefing by senior national security officials to explain the NSA’s surveillance programs, fewer than half attended.”---Glennon, p. 70. <http://www.thewire.com/national/2013/06/majority-senate-skipped-classified-prism-briefing/66273/>.

^v

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWiIYW_fBfY&list=PLW8_3hYnyDARFCtH_gz9_4Bzkx24Lqwl8.

^{vi} David R. Simon and D. Stanley Eitzen, *Elite Deviance*, 4th ed., (Needham Heights, MA: 1993), p. 167. I prefer MIMAC because MITLAMP omits the media. It’s shorter too. See Paul H. Weaver, *News and the Culture of Lying*, (New York: 1994), Chapter Two; and Roger Fowler, *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press*, (New York: 1991). As Weaver points out, “the press” became “the media.” See also Edward Wasserman, “Protecting News in the Era of Disruptive Sources,” in Ronald Goldfarb, (ed.), *After Snowden: Privacy, Secrecy, and Security in the Information Age*, (New York: 2015), pp. 79-120.

^{vii} “A key change within the 1998 FM 100-5 is that it offers a more comprehensive approach to doctrine than its antecedents. The 1998 FM 100-5 folds the concepts of war and operations other than war (OOTW) into one—Operations,” —Major Michael McCormick, *The New FM 100-5: A Return to Operational Art: A Monograph*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: 1997), p. 1,

<http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a331274.pdf>. See, e.g., Steven Emerson, *Secret Warriors: Inside the Covert Military Operations of the Reagan Era*, (New York: 1988); Michael McClintock, *Instruments of Statecraft: U.S. Guerrilla Warfare, Counter-insurgency, and Counter-terrorism, 1940-1990*, (New York: 1992); George Friedman, *America’s Secret War: Inside the Hidden Worldwide Struggle Between America and Its Enemies*, (New York: 2004); John Prados, *Safe for Democracy: The Secret Wars of the CIA*, (Chicago: 2006); Andrew J. Bacevich, *Washington Rules: America’s Path to Permanent War*, (New York: 2010); “. . . a wholly permanent state of martial life hidden in fine print, secrecy, fear, and the dream of guaranteed physical protection,” “. . . technically there is no peacetime anymore.”—William M. Arkin, *American Coup: How A Terrified Government is Destroying the Constitution*, (New York: 2013), pp. 4 and 6.

^{viii} <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5APMGiTBnCK>.

^{ix} See Janine R. Wedel, *Unaccountable: How Elite Power Brokers Corrupt Our Finances, Freedom and Security*, (New York: 2014), pp. 16 and 55 f., and Chapter 8.

^x But professors of business, economics, and finance have no obligation to disclose what they are paid for consulting, making speeches, writing papers advocating certain positions, or serving on boards. Boards are commonly picked by CEOs. See the documentary *Inside Job*, available online, 1:22:40. Cf. Catherine Weaver, *Hypocrisy Trap: The World Bank and the Poverty of Reform*, (Princeton, NJ: 2008), esp. pp. 26 ff.

^{xi} Thus determining the proportions in which things will be talked about, and possibly constructing a spectrum within a tiny span. Attention is limited (after all, it is something we “pay;” and when we accept or believe a proposition we are said to “buy” it. The most informative account of the “news” function of the mass media is Weaver. “On February 14, [2003] a Florida Appeals court ruled there is absolutely nothing illegal about lying, concealing or distorting information by a major press organization.” <http://www.ronpaulforums.com/showthread.php?348825-News-orgs-CAN-distort-and-or-lie-per-FL-Appeals-court-decision-2003>. See Bovard, Chapter Five. The Internet is somewhat interfering with these functions. See Sharyl Attkisson, “Astroturf and Manipulation of Media Messages,” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bYAQ-ZZtEU>, especially on Wikipedia.

xii “. . . the massive public information and public relations apparatus maintained by government at all levels at a cost to taxpayers of billions of dollars a year.”—Weaver, p. 212.

xiii <http://talks.cam.ac.uk/talk/index/47487> .

xiv <http://www.conspiracyanddemocracy.org/about/> .

xv In the early days of 9/11 discussion the suggestion that such things should be investigated was vigorously denounced and said to be “an affront to the memory of the more than 3,000 people who died in the attack.” This aspect of the discussion is less prominent since the appearance of the 9/11 pseudo-controversy. In United States law, conspiracy is a crime separate from and in addition to the crime or crimes which the conspiracy conspires to commit. 18 U.S. Code § 371: “If two or more persons conspire either to commit any offense against the United States, or to defraud the United States, or any agency thereof in any manner or for any purpose, and one or more of such persons do any act to effect the object of the conspiracy, each shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both. “If, however, the offense, the commission of which is the object of the conspiracy, is a misdemeanor only, the punishment for such conspiracy shall not exceed the maximum punishment provided for such misdemeanor.”

Timothy Melley says: “It is worth noting that conspiracy statutes in the United States were developed in order to suppress labor activism in the late-nineteenth century,”—*Empire of Conspiracy: The Culture of Paranoia in Postwar America*, (Ithaca, NY: 2000), p. 204, n. 11.

xvi “In disparaging speculation about possible elite criminality, the conspiracy theory label posits as given what actually needs to be falsified empirically, namely, whether democratic processes are being improperly and systematically manipulated by strategically placed insiders.”—Lance deHaven-Smith, “Beyond Conspiracy Theory: Patterns of High Crime in American Government,” *American Behavioral Scientist*, 53, (2010), pp. 795-825, 799.

xvii Michael J. Wood and Karen M. Douglas, “‘What About Building 7?’ A Social Psychological Study of Online Discussion of 9/11 Conspiracy Theories,” *Frontiers in Psychology*, 4, (2013), <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3703523/> .

xviii <http://www.consensus911.org/> .

xix <http://www.ae911truth.org/> .

xx <http://scoopfeed.net/2015/08/23/professor-awarded-250000-to-study-vice-epistemology-why-people-think-911-was-an-inside-job/> . Professor Quassim Cassam is available for interviews. Contact Lee Page, Communications Manager at The University of Warwick. Tel: +44 (0)2476 574 255. Mob: +44 (0)7920 531 221. Email: l.page@warwick.ac.uk. He presented a paper on epistemic vices at a conference on that subject, held at Durham on 2-3 September 2015. See *The Reasoner* for October 2015, <http://www.thereasoner.org/> . Whether *ad hominem* was explicitly touched upon is not reported.

xxi An unfortunate manifestation of the fundamental attribution error, identified by Lee Ross in “The Intuitive Psychologist and His Shortcomings: Distortions in the Attribution Process,” in L. Berkowitz, (ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, v. 10, (New York: 1977), pp. 173-220; online at: [http://web.mit.edu/curhan/www/docs/Articles/15341_Readings/Social_Cognition/Ross_Intuitive Psychologist in Adv Experiment Soc Psych vol10 p173.pdf](http://web.mit.edu/curhan/www/docs/Articles/15341_Readings/Social_Cognition/Ross_Intuitive_Psychologist_in_Adv_Experiment_Soc_Psych_vol10_p173.pdf) . See also Richard E. Nisbett and Lee Ross, *Human Inference: Strategies and Shortcomings of Social Judgment*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: 1980).

xxii On July 2, 2015 Wayne Coste, Professional Engineer, and Mike Smith, Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering Technology, presented “The World Trade Center Analyses: Case Study of Ethics, Public Policy and the Engineering Profession” to the European Society for Engineering Education in Orléans, France. (The oral presentation of the paper is now available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UylPLHWDnMQ> .)

xxiii Mark Fenster, *Conspiracy Theories: Secrecy and Power in American Culture*, Revised and Updated Edition, (Minneapolis: 2008), p. 239. Cf. Nils J. Nilsson, *Understanding Beliefs*, (Cambridge, MA: 2014), Chapter 4.

xxiv “Justification is holistic. Support for a conclusion comes not from a single line of argument but from a host of considerations of varying degrees of strength and relevance. Indirect evidence and weak arguments, which alone would bear little weight, may be interwoven into a fabric that strongly supports a conclusion. Each element derives warrant from its place in the whole.”—Catherine Z. Elgin,

Considered Judgment, (Princeton: 1996), p. 130. “In forging connections among initially tenable claims, we integrate them into a mutually supportive network. This enhances their tenability, each being more reasonable in light of the others than it was alone. It also confers tenability on the sentences we annex, transforming initially doubtful claims into integral parts of an acceptable system of thought.” — *Op. cit.*, p. 104.

^{xxv} “Anomalies remain always a potential threat to the taxonomic structures under which they are marginalized, for in the very fact of their existence they reveal the shortcomings, inadequacies, contradictions, and arbitrary nature of such structures. A paradoxical relation and a dialectic tension thus exist between taxonomy and anomaly: The latter, called into existence by the former, can prove its genitor’s undoing. What is more, and this is the central point, it is not simply a matter of logical structures because just as taxonomy can encode and legitimate, indeed, help construct sociopolitical and economic orders, so conversely can anomaly be used to delegitimize and deconstruct those same sociotaxonomic orders.” — Bruce Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification*, (New York: 1989), p. 166. Aside from obvious political factors, understanding the phenomenon of the 9/11 pseudo-controversy may be aided by considering it in the light of sacred value protection theory. See Philip E. Tetlock, Orie V. Kristel, S. Beth Elson, Jennifer S. Lerner and Melanie C. Green, “The Psychology of the Unthinkable: Taboo Trade-Offs, Forbidden Base Rates, and Heretical Counterfactuals,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78, 2000, pp. 853-870, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.126.6275&rep=rep1&type=pdf> ; and Philip E. Tetlock, “Thinking the Unthinkable: Sacred Values and Taboo Cognitions,” *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 7, (2003), pp. 320-324, <http://www.tomstafford.staff.shef.ac.uk/docs/tetlock03.pdf> . It seems that only sacred values could explain willingness to deny what one knows simultaneously and immediately by perception. See William Hirstein, *Brain Fiction: Self-Deception and the Riddle of Confabulation*, (Cambridge, MA: 2005), reviewed by Robyn Langdon, “Confabulation and Delusion: A Review of Hirstein’s *Brain Fiction*,” *Philosophical Psychology*, 22, (2009), pp. 785-802, and Barry Stroud, “Perceptual Knowledge and the Primacy of Judgment,” *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, 1, (2015), pp. 385-395.

^{xxvi} David Coady calls this “The political use of the expression ‘conspiracy theory’,” in David Coady, “An Introduction to the Philosophical Debate about Conspiracy Theories,” in David Coady, (ed.), *Conspiracy Theories: The Philosophical Debate*, (Burlington, VT: 2006). p. 3. This is perhaps the use attempted by Pipes. “A *conspiracy theory* is the fear of a nonexistent conspiracy.” — Daniel Pipes, *Conspiracy: How the Paranoid Style Flourishes and Where It Comes From*, (New York: 1997), p. 21. Italics original. A two-hour video has now been made about the term, *The Conspiracy “Theory” Conspiracy*, <http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/conspiracy-theory/> . “Conspiracy theorist” can profitably be considered in the light of Chomsky’s remarks on the term ‘terrorist’, in Noam Chomsky, *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New: International Terrorism in the Real World*, (Cambridge, MA: 2002). Cf. the discussion of the definition of ‘crime’ in Dawn L. Rothe and David O. Friedrichs, *Crimes of Globalization*, (New York: 2015), pp. 14-18, which provides references to previous discussions.

^{xxvii} What Clifford Geertz and Heinz Kohut (Geertz, (*Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*, (New York: 2000), p. 57)) call “experience-near.”

^{xxviii} <http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20070912220103AAb8Nnm> .

^{xxix} Although we will never forget.

^{xxx} See Paul J. Lioy, *Dust: The Inside Story of Its Role in the September 11th Aftermath*, (New York: 2010), esp. pp. 98 ff.



Dust covers an abandoned produce stand in lower Manhattan.

Photo © Aris Economopoulos / The Star-Ledger

- xxxv <http://www.cbsnews.com/videos/cheney-speaks-out/> , 7 :50. He is not alone among government actors in the events. “If this were some kind of a coordinated effort to destroy the city, the terrorists might wait till nightfall to blow up more buildings.”—Rudolph W. Giuliani with Ken Kurson, *Leadership*, (NY : 2002), p. 25.
- xxxvi James Glanz and Eric Lipton, *City in the Sky: The Rise and Fall of the World Trade Center*, (NY: 2003), pp. 329 ff. Italics added.
- xxxvii <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-99/pdf/STATUTE-99-Pg171.pdf> . Italics added.
- xxxviii Since the National Bureau of Standards already had the ability to initiate and conduct investigations, this legislative sequestering of information from the judicial branch appears to be the only genuine reason for the legislation.
- xxxix (Found at Question 8, *Questions and Answers about the NIST WTC Towers Investigation*, http://www.nist.gov/el/disasterstudies/wtc/faqs_wtctowers.cfm , no page.)
- xl See <http://www.veteranstoday.com/2011/08/01/127327/>.
- xli See *Hubris: Selling the Iraq War*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5FaMbnINwc> .
- xlii He was then deputy director. He was confirmed director on November 5, 2009.
- xliiii NIST NCSTAR 1: Federal Building and Fire Safety Investigation of the World Trade Center Disaster, *Final Report on the Collapse of the World Trade Center Towers*, (September 2005), http://www.nist.gov/customcf/get_pdf.cfm?pub_id=909017 , p. xxix.
- xliv *Op. cit.*, http://www.nist.gov/customcf/get_pdf.cfm?pub_id=909017 , p. xxxvii, Note 2.
- xlv “The focus of the Investigation was on the sequence of events from the instant of aircraft impact to the initiation of collapse for each tower. For brevity in this report, this sequence is referred to as the ‘probable collapse sequence,’ although it does not actually include the structural behavior of the tower after the conditions for collapse initiation were reached and collapse became inevitable.”—*Final Report* (Draft Version), http://www.nist.gov/customcf/get_pdf.cfm?pub_id=909236 p. xliii, n. 2 .
- xlvii Catherine S. Fletcher, Chief, Management and Organization Division, NIST, July 27, 2007. Online at: http://drjudywood.com/pdf/070727_PROD01_003222.pdf . Ms. Fletcher does not explain why NIST named “the factors leading to the initiation of the collapses” the “probable collapse sequence.” The factors leading to a thing are obviously not the thing itself, and it is misleading to call them that. The “initiation of the collapse” in each case is treated by NIST as a sort of Big Bang in reverse. Just as one presumably has no way of knowing what if anything happened before the Big Bang, so one has no way of knowing, from NIST, what happened after the “collapses initiated.” The “collapse” itself is treated as a black box, i.e., “a device, system or object which can be viewed in terms of its inputs and outputs (or transfer characteristics), without any knowledge of its internal workings” (Wikipedia), and it is its mere and uncharacterized “initiation” which is the subject of NIST’s remarks.
- xlviii <http://cryptome.org/nisto70709.pdf> .
- xlix This availability of information for precisely this purpose was the concern of Representatives Anthony Weiner, Joseph Crowley and Sherwood Boehlert on March 6, 2002;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klaLuk1Aq-M#t=57> . “The report concludes with a list of 30 recommendations for action in the areas of increased structural integrity, enhanced fire resistance of structures, new methods for fire resistance design of structures, enhanced active fire protection, improved building evacuation, improved emergency response, improved procedures and practices, and continuing education and training.”—*Final Report*, p. xiii.

http://www.nist.gov/customcf/get_pdf.cfm?pub_id=909236 . The recommendations are platitudes requiring no investigation.

^{xlv} <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWiusdy1miI> .

^{xlvi} The authenticity of the photographs used here has never been questioned in fourteen years of controversy. “The visual evidence was the most abundant and the most detailed. The destruction of the WTC towers was the most heavily photographed disaster in history.”—*Final Report*, p. 83.

There were numerous reports of NYPD officers confiscating people’s cameras.

“I noticed a disturbing phenomenon—hundreds of people carrying disposable cameras and handheld video cameras. I understood the impulse—this was a historic event, and experiencing it up close had enormous impact. At the same time, this was a crime scene, and a dangerous one. I did not want anyone to get hurt, or to damage evidence as they scouted out the best angle for their snapshots.

“If we didn’t do something about it immediately, it would soon be out of control, a voyeur’s paradise, and we risked the site developing a distasteful freak show aspect. There had been incidents in which tourists snapped photos of relatives grieving for lost loved ones, and there were reports of people selling artifacts and photographs from the site.

“Credentials were already being checked around the perimeter of the disaster site, but with so many different agencies involved in the cleanup, when someone did slip through there was no procedure for asking who they were or what they were doing there. At the morning meeting that same Monday, September 17, I asked Richie Sheirer to assemble a team specifically to inspect credentials. They would patrol the site and explain to people—including those who were there to do legitimate recovery work—that use of cameras should be confined to those who had permission.”—Rudolph W. Giuliani with Ken Kurson, *op. cit.*, pp. 49 f. For perspective on Mr. Giuliani’s remarks see Kevin Ryan, “An unprecedented destruction of evidence,” at:

http://www.911review.com/articles/ryan/demolition_access_p4.html#unprecedented . “Editor of *Fire Engineering Magazine* Bill Manning . . . indicated that the destruction of the steel was illegal, based on his review of the national standard for fire investigation, NFPA 921, which provides no exemption to the requirement that evidence be saved in cases of fires in buildings over 10 stories tall.” — <http://911research.wtc7.net/wtc/groundzero/restrictions.html> .

Randall Collins (*Interactional Ritual Chains*, (Princeton: 2004), p. 92) says: “The image of the towers burning and collapsing is an ephemeral event in time, but it was recorded and repetitively displayed on television and in news photos during the subsequent hours and days.” This statement is unequivocally and simply false. The images of the airplane impacts were shown repetitively. After 9/11 itself the “collapsing” was not shown on television again for many years. The photographs remain scarce outside “conspiracy” venues. In Arkin’s figure, they are “X-rays, revealing the internal organs hidden by the corpulent flesh of federal bureaucracy and pronouncement.” (Arkin, p. 15). The concept of the conspiracy photograph is perhaps the obverse of Trevor Paglen’s concept of the classified landscape. See Trevor Paglen, *Invisible: Covert Operations and Classified Landscapes*, with an Essay by Rebecca Solnit, (New York: 2010).

^{xlvii} Cass R. Sunstein and Adrian Vermeule, “Conspiracy Theories,” Harvard Public Law Working Paper No. 08-03, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1084585 . Although the allegation might be characterized as “paranoid,” it is self-evidently true. Those who wish to criminalize thought are *ipso facto* ready to apply the violence of the state to it. Those who see “conspiracy theorists” as likely conspirators thereby become conspiracy theorists themselves. To date, however, it is only those who side with Dr. Sunstein who have advocated violence. The comedic magician Penn Jillette, describing Eric Hufschmid, says: “He wrote a book, called *Painful Questions: An Analysis of the September 11 Attack*. We show you the cover because if you ever see anyone carrying this book [displaying a copy and a photo of the author] push them down a flight of stairs.” He is heard saying it in the video portion: <https://www.facebook.com/nwabliyaava/videos/1416561711891350/?fref=nf> after 8:20 . (The full video is

at: <https://socioecohistory.wordpress.com/2015/09/11/911-painful-deceptions-full-documentary-2/> .)

xlvi "Investigation staff contacted each of the sources, requested the material, made arrangements for its transfer, and addressed copyright and privacy issues. . . . The assembled collection included: 6,977 segments of video footage, totaling in excess of 300 hours. The media videos included both broadcast material and outtakes. Additionally, NIST received videotapes recorded by more than 20 individuals. 6,899 photographs from at least 200 photographers. As with the videos, many of the photographs were unpublished."—*Final Report*, p. 83. They remain unpublished. Having amassed all 9/11 information it became aware of, NIST refused to release any of it to the public and ignored FOIA requests until a lawsuit was filed.

xlvi http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-08-21-wtc-nist_N.htm .

l *The Oxford English Dictionary*, (New York: 1971).

li "The floors weakened and sagged from the fires, pulling inward on the exterior columns. Floor sagging and exposure to high temperatures caused the exterior columns to bow inward and buckle—a process that spread across the faces of the buildings. Collapse then ensued."—*Final Report*, pp. 179 f. Sagging floors would not weigh any more than they did before they sagged. The floors were four inch thick reinforced concrete resting in metal pans upheld by trusses. See Anthony W. Robins, *The World Trade Center: Classics of American Architecture*, 2nd ed., (New York: 2011), pp. 141 f (the drawings however omit the corrugated metal pans in which the concrete rested). How the concrete sagged is not explained, nor the disappearance of the core. Does the building in the photograph look as if something were pulling its exterior columns inward?

lii See the National Fire Academy's brief explanation of strength and stiffness at: https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/coffee-break/cb_fp_2010_31.pdf .

liii "Binding energy is the mechanical energy required to disassemble a whole into separate parts. A bound system has a lower potential energy than its constituent parts; this is what keeps the system together. The usual convention is that this corresponds to a *positive* binding energy. "In general, binding energy represents the mechanical work which must be done in acting against the forces which hold an object together, while disassembling the object into component parts separated by sufficient distance that further separation requires negligible additional work."—Wikipedia.

liv As firefighter Joe Casaliggi says, "The building collapsed *to dust*."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KloqlR5w9s> .

lv See *9/11 Exposed*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=4974&v=bxSkZjrbi4c> , 1:23:00; for the same event seen by a different camera see: <http://911research.wtc7.net/wtc/evidence/videos/index.html> , at "Distant view of North Tower collapse from north-northeast."

lvi See Nick Chater and Paul M. B. Vitányi, "Simplicity: A Unifying Principle in Cognitive Science?," *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 7, pp. 19-22.

lvii

lviii "See, in my line of work you got to keep repeating things over and over and over again for the truth to sink in, to kind of catapult the propaganda. (Applause.)"—George W. Bush, "President Participates in Social Security Conversation in New York," May 24, 2005, online at: <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/05/20050524-3.html> .

. “To the extent that it is true that repetition of lies may actually lead to their coming to be believed by the liar, the puzzles become even more difficult to unravel.”—W. Peter Robinson, *Deceit, Delusion and Detection*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: 1996), p. 328.

lix Phenomena like the lodestone, so inherently trivial they do not need to be understood.

lx See Wikipedia entries on “denialism,” “proof by assertion,” “*argumentum ad nauseam*,” etc., and Weaver, p. 106.

lxi See Miriam Schleifer McCormick, *Believing Against the Evidence: Agency and the Ethics of Belief*, (New York: 2015), and Laura Moretti, Irene Cristofori, Giovanna Zamboni, and Angela Sirigu, “The Neural Structure of Political Belief,” in Frank Krueger and Jordan Grafman, (edd.), *The Neural Basis of Human Belief Systems*, (NY: 2013), pp. 159-168. Interestingly in the light of Almond and Miller, they say (p. 159), “One of the focus themes of our contemporary society is politics.”

lxii “The primary method for sustaining a given mobilization of bias is nondecision-making. A nondecision, as we define it, is a decision that results in suppression or thwarting of a latent or manifest challenge to the values or interests of the decision-maker.”—Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, *Power and Poverty: Theory and Practice*, (NY: 1970), p. 44. See also Cass R. Sunstein, *Choosing Not to Choose: Understanding the Value of Choice*, (New York: 2015); and, again, Chapter Four of Nilsson.

lxiii Karen Dawisha, *Putin’s Kleptocracy: Who Owns Russia?*, (New York: 2014).

lxiv Of course, if we are indeed hated for our freedoms, removing them will constitute protection. See Robert M. Chesney, “The Sleeper Scenario: Terrorism-Support Laws and the Demands of Prevention,” http://works.bepress.com/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1004&context=robert_chesney ; and the Thomas Drake interviews at: http://therealnews.com/t2/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=74&jumival=14393 , and following interviews.

lxv http://therealnews.com/t2/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=74&jumival=14405 .

lxvi Richard Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*, (New York: 1986), p. 379. Drake: “The system itself was essentially set aside. Secret channels were the ones that were utilized. . . . This is really serious stuff. You’re talking about kind of the heart of dark government. What I call the double government. This is the other government in action.” Cf. Yevgenia Albats, *The State within a State: the KGB and its Hold on Russia—Past, Present, and Future*, (New York: 1994), and Glennon.

lxvii McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices About the Bomb in the First Fifty Years*, (New York: 1988), p. 76.

lxviii Georg Simmel, “The Sociology of Secrecy,” *American Journal of Sociology*, 11, 1906, pp. 441-498, 445. Online at: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2762562?seq=5#page_scan_tab_contents . Cf. Giovanni Botero: “Secrecy is also of great importance to a prince; not only does it make him like God, but men, ignorant of his intentions, are kept in suspense about his schemes.” (*The Reason of State*, translated by P.J. and D.P. Waley, (New Haven: 1956), p. 56.)

lxix Robinson, p. 166. According to Bovard (p. 77), “It is only about once a decade, or once a generation, that the issue of political lying leads the news for more than a week or two in a row.”

lxx According to Executive Order 13526—Classified National Security Information, of December 29, 2009, Section 1.1.(2), the United States government may own information. (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/executive-order-classified-national-security-information>). It would seem that a double utilization of a concept of proof would be necessary to convict someone of theft or illegal possession of a fact.

lxxi Richard Falk, “Interrogating the Arizona Killings from a Safe Distance,” <https://richardfalk.wordpress.com/2011/01/11/interrogating-the-arizona-killings-from-a-safe-distance> .

On January 24, 2011, the views of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon were reported thus: “The Secretary-General condemns these remarks. He has repeatedly stated his view that any such suggestion is preposterous — and an affront to the memory of the more than 3,000 people who died in the attack.” <http://blog.unwatch.org/index.php/2011/01/25/ngo-says-richard-falk-has-zero-credibility-urges-un-chief-to-fire-him/#more-730>

^{lxxii} See Robert Hudson, *Seeing Things: The Philosophy of Reliable Observation*, (New York: 2014).

^{lxxiii} See, *e.g.*, Simon and Eitzen, Raymond J. Michalowski and Ronald C. Kramer, (edd.), *State-Corporate Crime: Wrongdoing at the Intersection of Business and Government*, (New Brunswick, NJ: 1996), Michael Johnston, *Syndromes of Corruption: Wealth, Power, and Democracy*, (New York: 2005), David O. Friedrichs, *Trusted Criminals: White Collar Crime in Contemporary Society*, 3rd ed., (Belmont, CA: 2007), Dawn L. Rothe, *State Criminality: The Crime of All Crimes*, (New York: 2009), and Michael Johnston, *Corruption, Contention, and Reform: The Power of Deep Democratization*, (New York: 2014). As Weaver's discussion of the World Bank benefits from sociological explanation of hypocrisy, discussion of this subject would benefit from being placed within a wider context, such as that provided by Allan V. Horwitz, *The Logic of Social Control*, (New York: 1990).