

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT—ONE
(Part Two)
(NEW SERIES—2007)**

U.S.A.—LAND OF LIARS



**EDITOR OF *THE PROGRESSIVE*
RECEIVES GRADE OF “F”!!**

**ALEXANDER COCKBURN GOES
UNGRADED, IS BENEATH
CONTEMPT OR MEASURE!!!**



ENEMIES LIST:

- 1) **THE LEFT GATEKEEPERS**
- 2) **THE “DEMOCRATIC PARTY”**
- 3) **THE NEO-CONSERVATIVES**
- 4) **THE BUSHCISTI**



I used to be sort of proud of Madison, Wisconsin. This was partly because I studied there—in 1964-1965—partly because I got married there, and partly because I more or less came of age politically there. Part of the reason for *that* was not just that the Goldwater-Johnson campaign was going on and that then Vietnam was beginning, but also the fact that Madison still held on to a good part of its progressive and populist legacy from the old days of <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints/tp-035/> Robert La Follette. That illustrious legacy was reflected not only in the wonderful local paper, *The Madison Capital Times*, but also by the existence, right there in Madison, of nothing less than <http://us.history.wisc.edu/hist102/bios/21.html> *The Progressive* magazine, which dated all the way back to 1909, when Robert “Fighting Bob” La Follette himself founded it.

And now? I’m afraid things have changed. The “*Cap Times*,” as we used to call it, fares quite well, I’m happy to say—but *The Progressive* is dead as a doornail. *The Progressive* is a corpse, slain and dead just as surely as the fact is true that Frank Rich is a liar. Oh, yes, the magazine still *appears* each month; you can still *buy* it and you can still *subscribe* to it. But what’s the point? What’s the point of reading a dead magazine, a magazine still *pretending* to be progressive while in actuality it’s been nudging things along, just like Chomsky and Goodman and all the other <http://www.ericlarsen.net/foodforthought11.4.E.html> quisling Gatekeepers, toward the fascism that’s now all set up here and *all but secured for keeps* and toward the <http://www.counterpunch.org/gardiner01162007.html> nuclear Armageddon that right now looks likely to arrive in <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article16169.htm> six weeks or so. Skip *The Progressive*. Stomp on it, spit on it, in fact. Do worse, if worse occurs to you.



Strong talk, yes? Hardly polite, correct? Well, I’m sorry. Genuinely. I have no *desire* to be offensive But I *do* have a powerful desire for the truth. And I *do* find lying despicable. *And* waiting—as we appear to be right now—for the start of the <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=viewArticle&code=20060222&articleId=2032> first nuclear-initiated war in human history, waiting for *that* <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=viewArticle&code=GAR20070116&articleId=4483> rash and ungodly act to be undertaken by the insane war criminals who—child’s play compared to this—orchestrated 9/11 just because it was useful as a big jump-start for their monstrous and criminally-based global grab. These aren’t matters of a kind to calm a person down. These aren’t events, expectations, or affairs of the kind to cause a person to polish up on the manners and set aside rage, fear, and anger.



So, it’s probably true that I’m not likely to get my good manners back until things change a bit for the better, *if* they ever do. And they never *are* going to get better until such time as the criminal “left” Gatekeepers do some changing of their own, since *they’re* the dead-guilty ones who *allowed us to get into such an impasse as this in the first place*.

Yes, you heard me correctly. The absence of a free press in America is, in my view, a criminal—and desperate—matter. All of those elements of the press *that have blocked the 9/11 truth* are in fact directly responsible for the fascistic and unconstitutional policies of the Bush administration having come to the point of fruition—grimly ironic word in *this* context—that they *have* come to.

In the actual truth of what was done and what happened on and before 9/11, there's enough *concrete and provable* evidence of treason and high criminality to impeach, try, and convict Bush, Cheney, and scores of accomplices very nearly over night. And, that being the case, just exactly why and how *is it* that we've *lost* habeas corpus, *lost* the protections of Posse Comitatus, *lost* the moderating protections of The Insurrection Act, *legalized* torture, *accepted* extreme rendition, *not stopped* the massive building of concentration camps *within our own borders*, face now the horrible prospect of becoming that ugliest and most ruinous of all things, the first nation in the history of the world to *initiate* thermo-nuclear war—all of this, and *still not*, even at so late a date, *so much as even seriously considered* the utterly essential and absolutely necessary course—if we hope ever to regain either our republic or its freedoms—of bringing impeachment charges against the administration, charges *based on 9/11 truth*, and charges that would swiftly bring about, as I said, impeachment, trial, and conviction.

The great question, then: Why and how *is it* that the transparently evil, criminal, treasonous, treacherous, and *indescribably dangerous* things, actions, and events that have been done by the Bush administration before, on, and *since* 9/11, have not over the past six years met with *any* significant challenges or impediments, have not been stalled, slowed, resisted, and, above all, either exposed if already done and *prevented* otherwise?

The hideous and contemptible answer: Because the free press in America no longer exists. Because the free press in America—just like *The Progressive*—is dead as a doornail: Because the press in America—*all* of it—has been bought out, compromised, paid off, threatened and bullied into being *nothing other* than deceitful, mendacious, passive, contemptible, lying, hypocritical, diseased, complicit, criminal, treasonous, and—in regard *to every one of these characteristics and abysmal failures*—absolutely and unequivocally *guilty of aiding and abetting* the criminals who have repeatedly committed treason and murder and other high crimes and who have—once and for all, it would seem—taken away our republic.

Let's name some. ABC. NBC. CBS. PBS. NPR. The New York Review of Books. The New York Times. The Nation. The New Republic. The New Yorker. The Atlantic Monthly. The Chicago Tribune. The Los Angeles Times. The Washington Post. The . . . It could grow tiresome, couldn't it, to continue? The list would become very long. Simpler might be just to go here <http://www.50states.com/news/> and take a look, state by state, at every newspaper in America. And then go http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_magazines and take a look at a list of every magazine in America. If you find *any magazine or any newspaper* that tells the truth about 9/11 and that, consequently and accordingly, speaks out about the obvious fraud, treason, and criminality of the Bush administration and declares itself, accordingly,

in favor of restoring the Republic of the United States of America *to a free* republic, declares itself therefore also in favor of impeachment proceedings *and*—also accordingly in consequence—declares itself in favor of turning back the “Doomsday Clock” of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists from its <http://www.canada.com/topics/news/world/story.html?id=0a8c7247-052d-4628-a952-54efadd05f11&k=82380> recent advance to five minutes from midnight—well, if you *do* find such a newspaper or magazine anywhere in America, I beg of you, do me the favor of ericlarsen@ericlarsen.net please letting me know about it.

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The Unforgivable Guilt of *The Progressive* Magazine

Its roots deep in history, as you can see at a glance http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Progressive by looking here, *The Progressive* magazine today has as its editor Matthew Rothschild. On the magazine’s website—and on the conspicuously significant date of September 11, 2006—Rothschild posted a piece entitled http://www.progressive.org/mag_wx091106 “Enough of the 9/11 Conspiracies, Already.” The piece is *so* typical of its kind, *so* uninformed, *so* disinformative, *so* false, *so* incomplete and therefore *so* mendacious that it’s a model of the genre as despicable as was the disgusting example provided by <http://www.ericlarsen.net/foodforthought11.4.D.html> Nicholas LeMann in *The New Yorker* for October 16, 2006.

In short, Rothschild’s piece, pro-fascism by default, is deserving of a close analysis, particularly coming as it does from a magazine with so long and illustrious a tradition that’s *anything but* sympathetic with the brutally reactionary political forces and interests that Rothschild gives his servile lackey’s—or criminal—support to here.

His opening:

At almost every progressive gathering where there’s a question and answer period, someone or other vehemently raises 9/11 and espouses a grand conspiracy theory.

If you haven’t had the pleasure of enduring these rants, please let me share.

Here’s what the conspiracists believe:

9/11 was an inside job.

Members of the Bush Administration ordered it, not Osama bin Laden.

Arab hijackers may not have done the deed.

On top of that, the Twin Towers fell not because of the impact of the airplanes and the ensuing fires but because the Bush Administration got agents to plant explosives at the base of [no, not at the base of, but *throughout*—EL] those buildings.

Building 7, another high-rise at the World Trade Center that fell on 9/11, also came down by planted explosives.

The Pentagon was not hit by American Airlines Flight 77 but by a smaller plane or a missile.

And the Pennsylvania plane did not crash as a result of the revolt by the passengers but was brought down by the military.

“Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence.”—Carl Sagan

I’m amazed at how many people give credence to these theories. Everyone’s an engineer. People who never even took one college science course can now hold forth at great length on how the buildings at the World Trade Center could not possibly have collapsed in the way they did and why the Pentagon could not have been struck by that American Airlines jet.

Alas, the poor *Progressive* magazine. And alas, our poor nation of baby-talkers, baby-thinkers. Is Rothschild—a *professional journalist*, we must remember—really as ignorant as he appears here in this unutterably dumbed-down piece of writing, or is he *actually lying*, actually *pretending to be dumber than he really is* in order to disparage and imply the *dumbness* of his subject—that is, to imply the *simple-mindedness* of anyone who could take the *least* bit of the 9/11 Truth movement at *all* seriously?

It’s the same with Rothschild as it has been with <http://www.ericlarsen.net/foodforthought11.4.D.html> other of the Gatekeeper cases we’ve looked at: If Rothschild is really this dumb about what’s arguably the most important public issue in the world today, he by rights ought to be fired from his job *instantly*, and the firing ought to be made retroactive to 1909. On the other hand, if he’s just *playing dumb* in order to cow-tow to his masters and owners by disparaging 9/11 Truth—well, *then* he should be charged with the conscious dissemination of known falsehoods, doing so for the purpose of covering up the guilt of the perpetrators of the crimes including murder and treason, thus making himself *complicit* in those same crimes and an *abettor of them*.

Out of plain old human feeling, I actually do hope that Rothschild really is just that unbelievably out of touch, just that inexplicably uninterested in what he’s shooting his mouth off about, and just that abysmally ill-informed. It hardly makes him a great editor, but so it goes. Either way, though, in a more rigorous or in a really *honest* world, he’d be outta here. Either way—*uninformed* or *uninterested*—would disqualify the editor of a major political magazine in an world of honesty and rigor. But *our* world—our beloved United States—is right now far, far less honest than the whore who, for an extra twenty-five bucks, will swear her eternal love in your ear.

Why is it—insecure? out of his depth? protectively nervous at his own criminality?—that Rothschild shows the same slimy way of putting smear, innuendo, and “attitude” in the place of honest reasoning—same as we saw with the vile hypocrite Walter Kirn in that <http://www.ericlarsen.net/foodforthought3.html> monstrous depravity

he pawned off as a “smart” review of Cynthia Ozick in *The New York Times Book Review*.

Here again, à la Kirn, Rothschild even at the start can’t just can’t say “someone raises 9/11” but instead has to stick in the little stiletto-adverb “vehemently”—just the touch that will imply naiveté, youthfulness, hotheadedness, and un-coolness in the 9/11 question-raiser—and to imply, at the same time, the author’s *own superiority* to any such inexperienced rube.

Ditto with the smarmy addition of the tiny adjective “grand” that does its sarcastic bit to disparage further the *already* pejoratively phrase “conspiracy theory.” And, oh, yes, there’s one other dirty little authorial brush stroke, but nobody really needs help with the intentional use of the pejorative “rants.”

However unpleasant—no, despicable—it’s been so far, we ain’t seen nothin’ yet. Take another look at the last paragraph from the section I quoted a moment ago:

I’m amazed at how many people give credence to these theories. Everyone’s an engineer. People who never even took one college science course can now hold forth at great length on how the buildings at the World Trade Center could not possibly have collapsed in the way they did and why the Pentagon could not have been struck by that American Airlines jet.

Why the snidely superior *tone*? What’s the *reason* for it? Oh, Rothschild is “amazed,” is he. Even the complicitous cover-up artist Christopher Hayes in his *own* obedient underling’s hatchet-job in *The Nation* (December 25, 2006: “9/11—The Roots of Paranoia”) is more honest, albeit not less condescending, when he replaces Rothschild’s “how many people” with something more concrete: <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20061225/hayes> “According to a July poll conducted by Scripps News Service,” he writes in his opening sentence, “one-third of Americans think the government either carried out the 9/11 attacks or intentionally allowed them to happen in order to provide a pretext for war in the Middle East.”

But let Hayes be for a minute. Rothschild is too interesting to leave just yet. His declaration of “amazement” at what he considers to be people’s gullibility is almost Chaucerian in its fairness and sympathy compared to the sentences that come out with his next two breaths:

Everyone’s an engineer [he writes]. People who never even took one college science course can now hold forth at great length on how the buildings at the World Trade Center could not possibly have collapsed in the way they did and why the Pentagon could not have been struck by that American Airlines jet.

And again—*why* the smear and innuendo? *Why* the blanket generalizations used as put-down? *Why* the transparently *ad hominem* abandonment of logic, *why* the attempt to slay the enemy by *tone* and nothing else?

Speak for yourself, Mr. Rothschild—how can a person *not* say that after reading what Rothschild has written? How can a person *not* conclude that it must be *Rothschild* who “never even took one college science course”—is there any more likely reason than *insecurity* that would lead to so sniping, condescending, outright *false* an assertion? And there again, tagging along after, comes the snottily hyperbole diction—“hold forth” instead of “talk,” “at great length” to show superiority and exasperation, “could not possibly have collapsed” instead of simply “could not have collapsed.”

As for science classes, I wonder what Rothschild knows about, say, Kevin Ryan, the scientist at Underwriters’ Laboratories who got *canned* for telling a 9/11 truth about the steel that he himself helped test for strength and fire-endurance—I suspect Rothschild hasn’t heard about Ryan, but he can read about him <http://www.911truth.org/article.php?story=20041112144051451> here, or else <http://www.septembereleventh.org/newsarchive/2004-11-11-ryan.php> here, or perhaps <http://www.wanttoknow.info/911kevinrryanfired> here, or he can read some of Kevin Ryan’s *own* criticism of <http://www.counterpunch.org/physic11282006.html> another scientist’s work <http://stj911.org/ryan/garcia.html> by going here. That *other* scientist, by the way, is Manuel Garcia, who published *his* piece in *CounterPunch* magazine, where Alexander Cockburn prides himself, like Rothschild, in being a denouncer of all things related to 9/11 Truth. Manuel Garcia’s piece is called <http://www.counterpunch.org/physic11282006.html> “We See Conspiracies that Don’t Exist—the Physics of 9/11,” just in case Rothschild would like to read, first, Manuel Garcia, and then, second, Kevin Ryan—now, wouldn’t that be an original idea, actually to read the work of two scientific experts whose views are opposed, so as one could evaluate one against the other? Astonishing idea!! The making of decisions not on the basis of smear, innuendo, and calumny—but on the basis of the solidity of evidence, strength of logic, and empirical observation!!! My lord above!!!! What an enlightening idea!!!!

It’s hardly likely to work for Rothschild, though—that is, unless his piece of 9/11/2006, which we’re now looking at, is *greatly* deceptive and *wholly* unrepresentative of his overall writing and views about 9/11/2001.

It’s no more likely to work, either, for Alexander Cockburn, who positively crows about his own ignorance of the subject calumniates as being based on ignorance. What are we to make of such editors and writers? In the email edition of *CounterPunch* for October 16-31, 2006, Cockburn ran a single-column piece on page one called “On Conspiracies.” Here’s his opener:

There are plenty of real conspiracies in America. Why make up fake ones? Every few years, property czars and city government in New York conspire to withhold fire company responses, so that enough of a neighborhood burns down for the poor to quit and for profitable gentrification to ensue. That’s a conspiracy to commit ethnic cleansing, also murder.

Overwhelming! Thank the deities that Cockburn is just Cockburn and not the Surgeon General or the Commissioner of Health—since, by his extraordinary logic, the

existence of *cancer*, a disease greatly dreaded, should result in a total *ignoring* of AIDS, as being a disease less well understood by many and almost without doubt a disease feared by a smaller part of the population than is cancer.

Hey, Cockburn! Listen to this! I know you've *got* to agree! You *have* to agree! You've already made that perfectly *clear*! Gonorrhea exists, so let's quit monitoring syphilis! The hell with syphilis! And anthrax! how about *anthrax*? The hell with anthrax—after all, the Ebola virus exists, doesn't it? Hell, then! no more *anthrax vaccine* research!!! Yeah, and starvation exists, so no more research into *obesity*. *Yeah!!* Heart disease? The *hell* with it! After all, there's *bi-polar disorder* to take care of!

Logic to be neither credited or condoned in English 101, and yet the illustrious Alexander Cockburn parades it with consummate pride in his own magazine. The slogan atop the front page says that CounterPunch "Tells the Facts and Names the Names." On the basis of Cockburn's piece, it hides the facts and smears the names.

Look how he ends: "The conspiracy virus is an old strand," he declares, then names some things that in the past people have had "conspiracy theories" about (9/11, the lone gunman and JFK, etc.). Then, 9/11 foremost in the reader's mind, he concludes:

It's all pathetic, but it does save the trouble of reading and thinking.

The insult is obvious—that 9/11 Truth researchers are bigoted, fantasy-driven, half-wit *non-readers* and *non-thinkers*. Well, may the guiltless cast the first stone. What has *Cockburn* read on 9/11? More, do you suppose, or *less*, <http://www.ericlarsen.net/foodforthought1.1.2007.html> than Richard Posner? Has he, do you suppose, even read the *fundamental* six books recommended *and* at great effort described by <http://www.ericlarsen.net/foodforthought1.1.4.G.html> *me*? *Does*, he, do you suppose, scan what's offered daily at <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/index.html> Information Clearing House dot com or, for that matter, at any other of the major web sites that he may openly scorn *but* that, contrary to the Cockburnian wisdom, provide solid, mature, reasoned, empirically-based, thoroughly researched and thoughtful arguments, presentations, and demonstrations showing that 9/11 was indeed an inside job, a black flag operation—sites like Kevin Barret's <http://www.mujca.com/> MUJCA, or the abominable-to-Gatekeepers <http://www.st911.org/> Scholars for 9/11 Truth (of which I myself am a member), or <http://www.911truth.org/> 9/11 Truth, or the extraordinary <http://www.patriotsquestion911.com/> Patriots Question 9/11, where, as it happens, <http://patriotsquestion911.com/professors.html#Larsen> I myself am listed?



Ah, but what point in continuing? Cockburn, identical in this way to Rothschild and *all* Gatekeepers, witting or unwitting, wear their ignorance on their sleeves.

Remember back when Rothschild told us he was “amazed at how many people give credence to these theories?”? Well, he went on to set us dummies straight by saying that the “Problem is, some of the best engineers in the country have studied these questions and come up with perfectly logical, scientific explanations for what happened.”

Oh! You don't say! Really, Rothschild? Well, blow me down!

Our progressive leader then cites names and organizations—a massive name-dropping that does precisely nothing whatsoever to weaken the 9/11 Truth's position. Take a look, if you can stand it:

The American Society of Civil Engineers and FEMA conducted an in-depth investigation of the World Trade Center. The team members included the director of the Structural Engineering Institute of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the senior fire investigator for the National Fire Protection Association, professors of fire safety, and leaders of some of the top building design and engineering firms, including Skidmore Owings & Merrill in Chicago, Skilling Ward Magnusson Barkshire in Seattle, and Greenhorne & O'Mara in Maryland.

It concluded that massive structural damage caused by the crashing of the aircrafts into the buildings, combined with the subsequent fires, “were sufficient to induce the collapse of both structures.”

The National Institute of Standards and Technology did its own forty-three volume study of the Twin Towers. “Some 200 technical experts . . . reviewed tens of thousands of documents, interviewed more than 1,000 people, reviewed 7,000 segments of video footage and 7,000 photographs, analyzed 236 pieces of steel from the wreckage, [and] performed laboratory tests and sophisticated computer simulations,” the institute says.

I think “Greenhorne” may, however serendipitously, be the word most applicable here. Anyone remember Hurricane Katrina? Remember how reliable, up-and-at-'em, knowledgeable, and trustworthy FEMA was *then*? Hey, so FEMA “lost” an entire major American city. So? I'll trust 'em all the *more*, then, on their 9/11 and WTC research. Well, wouldn't *anyone*? Wouldn't *you*?

Rothschild would, our illustrious and *very confident* progressive editor-leader.

Ha! Here's something for Rothschild to read, a truly grown-up piece of writing and thinking by Phil Rockstroh from *Online Journal* called http://onlinejournal.com/artman/publish/article_1554.shtml “Expanding markets and dying oceans: Eating the planet like a bag of Doritos for Jesus.” Ever the consummate thinker and ever the writer *extraordinaire*, Rockstroh asks this question, its special applicability to Rothschild and Cockburn quite clear:

How did it come to be that our ability to apprehend reality is in such short supply at a time when the consequences of such dangerous folly will prove so tragic and lasting?

I wonder if Rothschild's *own* limited “ability to apprehend reality” (this same kind of limitation is a central subject, by the way, in my own book,

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593760981/ref=nosim/104-1974668-7081548?n=283155> *A Nation Gone Blind*) is what's responsible for his *actually* suggesting that the *Popular Mechanics* cover story—and subsequent book, *Debunking 9/11 Myths*—is worth the paper it was printed on, which in clear fact it's most, most demonstrably *not*?

<http://www.bartleby.com/123/62.html> *Terence, this is stupid stuff.* . . It's time for a letter.




January 21, 2007

Matthew Rothschild
Editor, *The Progressive*
409 East Main Street
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Mr. Rothschild:

When I read for myself the *Popular Mechanics* article that you refer to in “Enough of the 9/11 Conspiracies, Already” (September 11, 2006), I was able to see immediately that the piece was in no way objective or disinterested, but that, instead, it was an abysmal job of hack work filled with false assertions, failed logic, important omissions, incorrect words *and* incorrect wording, and plain, outright deceit. Its purpose *obviously* was not to clarify but to deceive.

Here's a page from the article, showing some of my annotations:  ``

And here is another:  ``

One of the most interesting implausibilities that struck me is the one suggested by my annotation in the lower right-hand corner of the first image, where I wrote “can't pancake when top 25 floors aren't even exerting a straight downward force.” As you, or anyone else, can see very clearly, the top of the tower—whether exactly twenty-five floors' worth, I can't be certain, but a huge amount—is falling at very nearly a forty-five degree angle *to the side*. In the absence of explosive charges, what conceivable force was present to “right” the direction of that huge mass so that it subsequently fell *straight down* and thereby, with its immense weight, began the hypothetical “pancaking” of the entire building beneath? My own understanding of elementary physics is that once the top of the tower had begun falling sideways, the greatest—the only—force that would or could continue to be exerted on it would be the force of *gravity*. In this case, however, something *other* than gravity must have been present. I'm sure you must have the famous paper of Professor Steven E. Jones

<http://www.911scholars.org/WhyIndeedDidtheWorldTradeCenterBuildingsCompletelyCollapse.pdf> on exactly this subject.

In reading your own words, I have gathered that, although you may never have taken even one science class in college, you nevertheless, for what may be a psychologically curious reason, do have an inordinate admiration for, if not a near-idolatry of, fancy or long names and titles or strings of names and titles when these are associated with scientific or engineering groups. I wonder whether your sense of awe in cases of this sort might not in fact come about as a result of your *own* feelings of inadequacy in certain matters, particularly those that have to do with engineering and science.

If this is the case, as it appears to be, then it must your *awe* more than your *intellect* that guided you in your implicitly favorable evaluation of the *Popular Mechanics* article. In regard to myself, I should let you know that I am recently retired from a career of four decades as a professor of college English. If the *Popular Mechanics* piece that we're talking about had been submitted to me—as, say, a term paper—by an undergraduate student in an advanced composition course, or in a technical writing course, or conceivably even in a business writing course, it, because of its many internal failures and weaknesses, would not have received a grade higher than C-minus, and more likely a D-plus.

So your own judgment of it, and your own holding of it up as a “proof” or “example” of a sort intended to throw 9/11 Truth theorists into shame or disarray—well, your own judgment is therefore itself highly suspect if not outright ludicrous.

You wrote: “Problem is, some of the best engineers in the country have studied these questions and come up with perfectly logical, scientific explanations for what happened.” But your own example—in the case of *Popular Mechanics*—refutes the very substance of your implication that the *Popular Mechanics* piece casts doubt on 9/11 Truth. You can't cast doubt on strong and evidence-based arguments with work that's not logically strong, not evidence-based, and is at a D-plus level. Therefore, by corollary, your readers have no reason to trust *any* of your lengthy appeals to authority, those strings of name-droppings of the kind I quoted earlier.

That fallacy—of appealing to authority in substitution for authentic evidence (it's akin to the “bandwagon” fallacy—is an especially well-known one to professors of freshman English—and a particularly slick and lazy trick it is, guaranteed always to weaken rather than strengthen an argument, as well as to lower rather than raise a grade.

The same is true of your sad little comment that “I made a few calls myself,” an assertion followed only by more names and titles that comprise your on-going false appeal to authority—the whole then concluding with what may be your most hollow, sweeping, baseless, and extraordinarily broad generalization of all:

I also contacted engineering professors at MIT and other leading universities in the country, and none of them puts any stock in the 9/11 conspiracy theories. In fact, they

view them as a huge waste of time. They are busy trying to figure out how to prevent buildings from falling in the future.

But who *were* these “professors”? What did they *say* that indicated they had *any knowledge whatsoever* of 9/11 Truth studies? What were their *own* fields of study? *No one in their right mind* is going to bow to your utterly false logic in accepting the authority of someone just because he or she may be one of the “engineering professors at MIT and other leading universities in the country”—and, in fact, if you were to read, just say, <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593760981/ref=nosim/104-1974668-7081548?n=283155> *A Nation Gone Blind: America in an Age of Simplification and Deceit*” (that is, if you did it with an open mind), you’d quickly be relieved of your *automatic* and *extraordinarily* naïve (or perhaps just mendacious) faith in the quality of *anything* that goes on “at MIT and other leading universities in the country.” Let me recommend, too—as additional evidence that your naïve and wide-eyed respect for scientific research institutions in the U.S. is pitifully misplaced—that you take a look at this truly evidence-based piece of research by Sherwood Ross, dated January 10, 2007, headlined <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL0701/S00056.htm> “Companies Refusing To Reveal Biotech Research” and sub-headed “113 Universities, VA Hospitals, and Pharmaceutical Houses Charged with Refusing To Reveal Biotech Research Ops As Required By Law.” *There* you’ll find a substantial and thoroughly evidenced piece of writing, one having to do with very true and very great hazard—and illegality—in U.S. universities and scientific institutions.

In a nutshell, only blind faith, not intellectual analysis, could lead any intelligent and thinking person to *assume* that at MIT, say, only good guys are at work, never any bad guys. Since you presume to know so much about what does and doesn’t go on in American universities, I might also suggest, as more fundamental background for your own highly tendentious writing on 9/11 Truth, that you read (as I have) Jennifer Washburn’s http://www.amazon.com/University-Inc-Corporate-Corruption-Education/dp/0465090516/sr=1-1/qid=1169477219/ref=pd_bbs_1/104-4231058-3189532?ie=UTF8&s=books *University, Inc.: The Corporate Corruption of American Higher Education*. In addition, since another of your appeals to authority in lieu of evidence is an appeal to The National Institute of Standards and Technology, or NIST, which, you write, “did its own forty-three volume study of the Twin Towers.” You go on once again to gild the lily, as it were, without providing either evidence or substance:

“Some 200 technical experts . . . reviewed tens of thousands of documents, interviewed more than 1,000 people, reviewed 7,000 segments of video footage and 7,000 photographs, analyzed 236 pieces of steel from the wreckage, [and] performed laboratory tests and sophisticated computer simulations,” the institute says.

“*[The] institute says.*” And well it might, since it has its own reputation to protect. I haven’t read the forty-three volumes of the report, and I doubt that you have, either. But I do know someone who *has*. His name is Mark H. Gaffney, and he has written a scholarly and extremely powerful two-part analysis of them entitled <http://thetruthseeker.co.uk/article.asp?id=5697> “Dead on Arrival: the NIST Report Part I”

and, not surprisingly, <http://www.thetruthseeker.co.uk/article.asp?id=5695> “Dead on Arrival: the NIST Report Part II.” They will, I’m certain, be of very great interest to you.

It must be growing more clear to you as we continue that your *own* credentials—of a kind that might justify the position you take on 9/11 Truth—are themselves increasingly and glaringly questionable—and that any *grade* it might be possible for you to receive for your work is more and more rapidly lowering. Your intellectual habit of simply *tossing away* any empirical basis for some of your more flagrant assertions (http://onlinejournal.com/artman/publish/article_1554.shtml “How did it come to be that our ability to apprehend reality is in such short supply at a time when the consequences of such dangerous folly will prove so tragic and lasting?”) became outright hilarious, risible, and clownish, as in this all but unutterable (though *you* do utter it) absurdity of logic:

First, Osama bin Laden has already claimed responsibility for the attack several times and boasted of the prowess of the suicide bombers who hijacked those planes. Why not take him at his word?

The more I read of your own piece, the more clearly I understand that you, too, *are* a baby, that you speak in baby-talk, think in baby-think, and write in baby-writing—just like the other of your fascism-bringing Gatekeeper colleagues, leading me to think that you might benefit from reading “Fascism, American Style: All Is Baby-Talk,” where, among other things, you’ll find yourself mentioned:

<http://www.ericlarsen.net/foodforthought1.1.2007.html> And so Frank Rich, Nicholas Lemann, Amy Goodman, Maureen Dowd, David Corn, Christopher Hayes, Alexander Cockburn, Matthew Rothschild, Christopher Hitchens—aren’t they all, in this same sense, *babies*, and aren’t they all, in this same sense, speaking *baby talk* in precisely the equivalent way they’d be speaking *baby talk* if they told us, for example, that they *do* believe in Santa, or *do* believe in the tooth fairy, or *do* believe in the known *untruth* that black cats are bad luck?

Of *course* they’d then be talking baby talk, just as they’re *talking it now*, every single time they *toss off* 9/11 truth as something *nutty*, or *fruity*, or *demented*, or *stupid*, or *nonsensical*.

Are you, Matthew Rothschild, *really* the editor of *The Progressive*? And, if so, how can you *possibly* ask of Mayor Rudy Giuliani’s foreknowledge (see http://www.amazon.com/New-Pearl-Harbor-Disturbing-Administration/dp/1566565529/sr=1-1/qid=1169478593/ref=pd_bbs_1/104-4231058-3189532?ie=UTF8&s=books *The New Pearl Harbor*) that WTC 7 was going to *collapse*—how can you possibly ask “Is that really evidence?”

“*Is that really evidence?*” Why, let all the gods in all the heavens above join us in asking whether it be true that *you*, Matthew Rothschild, are asking us to think, to perceive, to *function* at so infantile a level as this? You do this and you *still keep your job* as editor of *The Progressive*?

How can such a thing *be*? As bad or worse, you also *actually ask us* to agree that Larry Silverstein can’t possibly have had any foreknowledge that WTC7 was rigged with

explosives for a controlled demolition—even though he <http://www.prisonplanet.com/011904wtc7.html> said so himself *on national television*—you actually ask us to agree that Silverstein *DID NOT* have such knowledge for the absolutely most infantile and laughable reason of all conceivable reasons, namely, that

Silverstein has flat-out denied that.

You not only reveal, Mr. Rothschild, that you have never read *Mother Goose*, that you have never read the *Fables* of Aesop, that you have never read *The Canterbury Tales* of Chaucer; you not only, Mr. Rothschild, show *either* your own ignorance *or* your criminal complicity in the crimes of murder and treason that were committed on 9/11 (by deceitfully obscuring evidence relating directly to them); but, Mr. Rothschild, you gravely and unforgivably insult our intelligence over and over again in—whether it be criminal or not—your eminently juvenile, childish, infantile, baby-talking piece of writing. Throughout my study and analysis of the piece, it has become increasingly clear to me that *all* of my professional training to become a Ph.D., and that *all* of my ethical responsibilities as I honored and undertook them over forty years as an instructor—requiring even now that I evaluate not just student writing but *any* writing by absolutely the same measures and by absolutely the same rules—all of these, Mr. Rothschild, bring me to the unavoidable recognition that I can do no other than award your essay with a grade of F, it being *so* abysmal, *so* wholly incompetent, and *so* entirely and thoroughly fraudulent.

Now, let us turn back to your colleague in journalism, Mr. Alexander Cockburn, he who wrote the *ignorant, specious, arrogant, unfounded*, and, above all, the *prideful* words in regard to 9/11 Truth researchers that I quoted earlier—to wit: “It’s all pathetic, but it does save the trouble of reading and thinking.”

So vile is Cockburn that I have no grade for him and will award none, since in fact none exists that could possibly be a suitable reflection of his contemptible ignorance, or, if that in fact be the case, criminality.

His pride, though, is beyond the endurable, and therefore let this passage from the great satirist and truth-teller, Jonathan Swift, stand as our farewell—for now—to Cockburn himself, and to all those in the vast army of the beneath-contemptibles, namely, the Gatekeepers, referred to by Swift, who knew them well indeed, as the YAHOOOS:

My reconciliation to the YAHOO kind in general might not be so difficult, if they would be content with those vices and follies only which nature has entitled them to. I am not in the least provoked at the sight of a lawyer, a pickpocket, a colonel, a fool, a lord, a gamester, a politician, a whoremonger, a physician, an evidence, a suborner, an attorney, a traitor, or the like; this is all according to the due course of things: but when I behold a lump of deformity and diseases, both in body and mind, smitten with *pride*, it immediately breaks all the measures of my patience; neither shall I be ever able to comprehend how such an animal, and such a vice, could tally together.

Eric Larsen
January 22, 2007