

# Alternatives

## 9/11 Truth and the Silence of the IR Discipline

Journal:	<i>Alternatives</i>
Manuscript ID	ALT-19-0054
Manuscript Type:	Original Manuscript
Keywords:	9/11, 9/11 Truth, International Relations, False Flag Terrorism, Intellectual Responsibility
Abstract:	<p>IR scholars uncritically accept the official narrative regarding the events of 9/11 and refuse to examine the massive body of evidence generated by the 9/11 truth movement. Nevertheless, as calls for a new inquiry into the events of 9/11 continue to mount, with the International 9/11 Consensus Panel and WTC7 Evaluation inquiries having recently published their findings, and with a US Federal Grand Jury on 9/11 having been announced, now would be an opportune moment for IR scholars to start taking the claims of 9/11 truth seriously. A survey of the 9/11 truth literature reveals that the official 9/11 narrative cannot be supported at multiple levels. Two planes did not bring down three towers in New York. There is no hard evidence that Muslims were responsible for 9/11 other than in a patsy capacity. Various US government agencies appear to have had foreknowledge of the events and to have covered up evidence. Important questions regarding the hijacked planes need answering, as do questions about the complicity of the mainstream media in 9/11. IR scholars avoid looking at evidence regarding the events of 9/11 for several reasons. They may be taken in by the weaponized term, "conspiracy theory." A taboo on questioning the ruling structures of society means that individuals do not wish to fall outside the spectrum of acceptable opinion. Entertaining the possibility that 9/11 was a false flag requires Westerners to reject fundamental assumptions that they have been socialized to accept since birth. The "War on Terror" has created a neo-McCarthyite environment in which freedom to speak out has been stifled. Yet, if IR scholars are serious about truth, the first place they need to start is 9/11 truth.</p>

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### 9/11 Truth and the Silence of the IR Discipline

To learn who rules over you, simply find out who you are not allowed to criticize  
(Voltaire)

The consequences of the terrorist attacks of 11th September, 2001 have been catastrophic. In addition to the estimated 3,000 people who lost their lives during the attacks themselves, millions more have been killed in the “War on Terror”; there has been an aggressive worldwide expansion of US military power, including the introduction of drone warfare, costing the US taxpayer an estimated \$3 billion a week; the MENA region has been destabilized, leading to massive flows of migrants; international law has been violated (most egregiously with the Iraq War); and domestically there has been a draconian scaling back on civil liberties, including historically unprecedented levels of surveillance, arbitrary detention, and torture. All of this has worked to undermine the post-1945 liberal internationalist order and has contributed to mounting concerns about liberal democracies being transformed into police states. It would not be difficult to defend the claim that “9/11” represents the most significant political event of the post-Cold War era.

These consequences rest on the fundamental premise that the United States was attacked by Al Qaeda on 9/11. Upon that premise are erected the moral and legal bases of the “War on Terror,” i.e. that “civilized” states have the right to defend themselves preemptively against terrorist barbarism in an age where terrorism is networked, transnational, and more threatening than ever before owing to new technologies of destruction. Yet, what if the fundamental premise were false? As Benjamin observes,

Were this claim ever to be proved false - were it ever to be shown that the United States was not in fact attacked by “others” on 9/11 but rather attacked itself (or let itself be

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3 attacked) for the purpose of blaming others and justifying international war - then its war  
4 would not be one of self-defence but of pre-meditated and carefully camouflaged  
5 aggression (2017: 373).  
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9 Given the immense political stakes, one might have expected key international organizations  
10 such as NATO and the UN to have sought assurance that the US claim to self-defence is valid.  
11 Instead, both organizations “accepted without hesitation the American claim to have been  
12 attacked by elements of international terrorism,” despite their legal obligations to verify that  
13 claim, even if only retrospectively (Benjamin, 2017: 373).  
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19 Academia has followed suit. Despite the gigantic volume of academic literature on 9/11,  
20 “almost all such studies assume the correctness of the core US claim of self-defence and then  
21 proceed to nibble on issues lying around its perimeter” (Benjamin, 2017: 374-5). Thus, debates  
22 revolve around the appropriate relationship between civil liberties and security, whether or not to  
23 treat 9/11 as an act of war or a crime, the ethics of torture and drone warfare (implicitly  
24 assuming the “War on Terror” itself to be just), and so on. Particularly in the International  
25 Relations literature, including the Security Studies and terrorism literature, there is little to no  
26 suggestion that 9/11 may have been a false flag used to provide the pretext for illegal wars of  
27 aggression and domestic repression.  
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39 *Prima facie*, this seems odd given the long and well documented history of false flag  
40 terrorism. In 1931, for example, Japan tried sabotaging a railway line that it operated in the  
41 Chinese province of Manchuria. Blaming the incident on Chinese nationalists, Japan launched a  
42 full-scale invasion, occupying Manchuria and installing a puppet regime there. In 1933, the  
43 Reichstag fire, caused by the Nazis, was blamed on communists and used as the pretext for a  
44 witch hunt of political opponents. Operation Himmler in 1939 involved a series of false flag  
45 events, the most famous being the Gleiwitz incident, the day after which Germany invaded  
46 Poland. In 1967, Israel bombed and strafed the USS Liberty and sought to blame the incident  
47 on Egypt in order to bring the United States into the Six Day War. The Apartheid regime in  
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3 South Africa carried out stealth attacks against government officials and installations and  
4 blamed them on the African National Congress in an attempt to discredit the anti-Apartheid  
5 movement. The Algerian government is thought to have covertly murdered civilians and blamed  
6 the murders on Islamic parties during the civil war of the 1990s.  
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11 Is the United States above such behaviour? Hardly. The sinking of the USS Maine,  
12 widely suspected of being a false flag, provided the pretext for the Spanish-American War of  
13 1898 and the conquest of various Pacific islands. Operation Northwoods, approved by the Joint  
14 Chiefs of Staff in 1962, contained proposals for all manner of false flag attacks to be blamed on  
15 Fidel Castro and used as the pretext for invading Cuba. These included sinking a US Navy ship  
16 in Guantánamo Bay, blowing up John Glenn's rocket ship, sinking boats carrying Cuban  
17 refugees, staging terrorist attacks in Miami and Washington, D.C., and making it appear as  
18 though Cuba had blown up a US passenger plane by replacing the plane with a drone in mid  
19 flight and secretly disembarking the passengers. The Gulf of Tonkin incident in 1964 was  
20 cynically invoked by President Johnson as the reason to launch air strikes and escalate the war  
21 against North Vietnam: it is known never to have occurred. Operation Gladio, orchestrated by  
22 the US government via NATO, involved using far right and neo-Nazi groups to stage political  
23 assassinations and terrorist attacks against civilians in Western Europe and blame them on left-  
24 wing organizations.  
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41 "Putting all these pieces together," Benjamin (2017: 385) notes, "what emerges is a  
42 disquieting mosaic showing the very real possibility of a mass-casualty false-flag attack being  
43 executed to justify international war." *Prima facie*, it is not inconceivable that certain elements of  
44 the United States government, possibly with links to other transnational actors, could have  
45 staged 9/11 in order to provide the pretext for the "War on Terror." At the very least, this  
46 possibility should not be dismissed out of hand.  
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54 If it could be shown that 9/11 was a false flag, the implications would be of revolutionary  
55 significance. It would mean that the United States government, or at least a criminal cabal within  
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3 it, knowingly committed mass murder against its own population and lied to the the world about  
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5 it in order to launch imperialist wars and crack down on domestic dissent. The United States  
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7 government would then appear as a tyranny and according to the Declaration of Independence,  
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9 the American people would have the right to overthrow it.<sup>1</sup>  
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12 Despite the overriding importance of researching the events of 9/11, academia has all  
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14 but turned its back on that endeavour. As emeritus professor Morgan Reynolds writes (2007:  
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16 101, 114), “The response of the academic community when the official conspiracy theory of  
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18 9/11 was challenged [has been] primarily a deafening silence, with a few notable exceptions,”  
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20 and “the academy, despite the security for many of tenure, has thus far not been much of a  
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22 force for truth about 9/11.” According to emeritus professor Kees van der Pijl (2014: xii), “the  
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24 event and its consequences have remained taboo as IR subjects.” Retired professor Graeme  
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26 MacQueen, the erstwhile Director of the Centre for Peace Studies at McMaster University,  
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28 remarks vis-à-vis research into the events of 9/11, “the universities are sleeping so soundly you  
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30 can hear the snoring from outer space” (see Zuberi, 2013). According to Andrew Johnson of the  
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32 Open University, “For many who are more deeply embedded in the educational academic  
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34 establishment it seems that they are unable to confront or dispassionately analyse the evidence  
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36 for themselves” (Johnson, 2017: 15).  
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40 Instead, responsibility for safeguarding the truth about what took place on 9/11 (“9/11  
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42 truth”) has fallen to a global network of independent researchers who have examined the  
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44 evidence for themselves and produced a massive, highly significant body of work.<sup>2</sup> Admittedly,  
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48 <sup>1</sup> “[W]henever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends [to secure the  
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50 unalienable Rights of the governed], it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute  
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52 new Government [...]”

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54 <sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Wood (2011), Johnson (2011, 2017); Mazzucco (2013); Griffin and Woodward  
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56 (2018); Poteshman (2006); Griffin (2005); Griffin and Scott (2007); Gourley (2013); Griffin (2012);  
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3 the quality of 9/11 truth research varies wildly, the so-called “9/11 truth movement” quickly  
4 fractured and is characterized by pervasive in-fighting, and a good deal of known misinformation  
5 is present within it.  
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9           Yet, recent developments suggest that 9/11 truth is increasingly a force to be reckoned  
10 with. In 2016, two US presidential candidates, Donald Trump and Jill Stein, publicly cast doubt  
11 on the official 9/11 narrative, with Stein going so far as to call for a new investigation - a tacit  
12 recognition of the fact that many US citizens do not believe the official narrative.<sup>3</sup> In 2018, it was  
13 announced that there would be a federal Grand Jury on 9/11, a victory for the non-profit  
14 Lawyers’ Committee for 9/11 Inquiry. The same year, the findings of a six-year inquiry by the  
15 international 9/11 Consensus Panel were published: the panel comprises 23 expert reviewers  
16 and follows the scientific best-evidence consensus model (Griffin and Woodworth, 2018). In  
17 September 2019 a four-year inquiry by a team at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, into the  
18 destruction of World Trade Centre Building 7 (WTC 7) culminated in a 126-page report, which  
19 concludes, “fire did not cause the collapse of WTC 7 on 9/11, contrary to the conclusions of  
20 NIST and private engineering firms that studied the collapse” and “the collapse of WTC 7 was a  
21 global failure involving the near-simultaneous failure of every column in the building” (Hulsey,  
22 Quan, and Xiao, 2019: 2). Now would seem an opportune moment for academics to begin  
23 taking 9/11 truth seriously.  
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41           One scholar who has been at the forefront of 9/11 truth is emeritus professor David Ray  
42 Griffin, who since 2004 has authored numerous books on 9/11 and along with Elizabeth  
43 Woodworth was responsible for convening the 9/11 Consensus Panel. One of Griffin’s important  
44 early interventions (2005) was to identify scores of omissions and distortions in *The 9/11*  
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51 Davidsson (2013); McMurtry (2013); Zarembka (2008); Chossudovsky (2002); and Meyssan (2002).

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53 <sup>3</sup>           According to Margolis (2011), “Polls show that fully a third of American respondents believe that  
54 the U.S. government and/or Israel were behind 9/11.”  
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3 *Commission Report* (the official account of what happened on 9/11). Even the 9/11  
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5 Commission's co-chairmen, Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton (2006: Ch. 1) conceded that *The*  
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7 *9/11 Commission Report* was delayed, underfunded, obstructed, and "set up to fail." Much of it  
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9 relies on testimony by Khalid Sheikh Mohammed that was obtained under torture. This begs the  
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11 question of why the US government was so unwilling to support a proper investigation into the  
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13 events of 9/11 and why its eventual report, like the National Institute of Science and Technology  
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15 (NIST) reports of 2005 and 2008, lacks credibility. 51 key claims made in those reports are  
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17 systematically tested against best-evidence in the investigation conducted by the 9/11  
18  
19 Consensus Panel and found to be unsupportable (Griffin and Woodworth, 2018).  
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22         Therefore, there is no good reason to take the official 9/11 narrative at face value. When  
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24 one considers all the negative consequences that have flowed from 9/11, however,  
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26         the discovery that the official narrative about 9/11 [i]s a lie [sh]ould be a discovery of first  
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28 importance. And yet thus far the mainstream media and most members of the academy  
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30 have refused to explore the evidence that has been presented for [the] alternative  
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32 narrative [that the US government was implicated in the crime] (Griffin and Scott, 2007:  
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34         vii).  
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37 This remains true today. A near-total silence has descended over academia when it comes to  
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39 questioning the official 9/11 narrative. There are eery parallels here to the phenomenon known  
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41 as *Gleichschaltung* (voluntary political conformism) in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s, where  
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43 virtually the entire academic community failed to speak out against the rise of Hitler.  
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## 49 METHODOLOGY

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56 Demonstrating the twenty-first century *Gleichschaltung* requires (a) showing that the academic  
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3 literature does not address 9/11 truth; (b) explaining why it should; and (c) explaining why it  
4 does not. There are methodological limitations on (a) and (b) in particular.  
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7           In terms of (a), there must be a limitation in the scope of the literature reviewed. For the  
8 purposes of this article, the literature is restricted to the discipline of International Relations (IR),  
9 the one discipline that should be most conversant with false flag terrorism and the “War on  
10 Terror.” If IR scholars cannot or will not recognise the possibility that 9/11 was a false flag event,  
11 then there is little hope for other disciplines. IR is itself, of course, a vast and sprawling  
12 discipline, therefore further restrictions in scope are necessary. There will be no attempt to  
13 summarise the reams and reams of literature that all subscribes to the same premise - i.e. that  
14 “Al Qaeda” attacked “Western civilization.” Rather, attention will be focused on showing that the  
15 IR literature has never critically interrogated that premise - including the self-styled “critical  
16 terrorism” literature. In principle, therefore, the argument could be refuted by pointing to IR  
17 literature that does treat 9/11 as a potential false flag event based on analysis of evidence  
18 regarding what actually took place that day.  
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32           In terms of (b), persuading academics that 9/11 truth has validity runs up against the  
33 problem of source material. A vicious circle arises whereby: (i) academics refuse to take  
34 seriously any literature that is not peer-reviewed; (ii) there is barely any peer-reviewed 9/11 truth  
35 literature outside the niche *Journal of 9/11 Studies*; therefore, (iii) academics assume that 9/11  
36 truth is not worth taking seriously. It should be noted, however, that this is a sociological, rather  
37 than epistemological, problem. The fact that academics, for reasons discussed in the final  
38 section, choose not to pursue 9/11 truth does not mean that 9/11 truth cannot or should not be  
39 pursued. How, then, to persuade academics that 9/11 truth is worth pursuing?  
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49           First and foremost, the key findings of 9/11 truth need to be presented to an academic  
50 audience, so that academics are at least familiar with those findings and have an intellectual  
51 obligation to consider and respond to them instead of refusing to look at them. But, no less  
52 important, those findings also need to be intellectually credible. Sometimes this is achievable  
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3 by pointing to irrefutable scientific evidence, e.g. that the 110-story Twin Towers immediately left  
4 a debris pile no higher than their lobbies, that WTC 7 fell at freefall speed for 2.25 seconds, and  
5 that thousands of first responders have died prematurely of unexplained cancers.  
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9 It is also important to focus on sources that might reasonably be expected to command  
10 academic credibility and respect. Two such sources have already been identified, namely the  
11 9/11 Consensus Panel and the Alaska, Fairbanks, investigations, both headed by full  
12 professors, spanning six and four years respectively. Other sources worthy of academic  
13 consideration include texts written by emeritus professors, whose title signifies the high esteem  
14 in which they are held by the academic profession, for example, David Ray Griffin, Kees van der  
15 Pijl, Morgan Reynolds, Richard B. Lee, and Eric Larsen. Then there are non-emeritus but highly  
16 qualified academics, such as Professor Graeme MacQueen and Dr. Judy Wood, who have not  
17 only defended 9/11 truth, but in Wood's case (2011), published over 500 pages of meticulously  
18 researched scientific evidence in support of her claims. This article cleaves to such sources and  
19 invokes very few non-academic sources.  
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32 The remainder of the article proceeds as follows. First, there is a review of the IR  
33 literature on 9/11, showing that it fails to address 9/11 truth. Second, the key findings of 9/11  
34 truth are presented in summary form, drawing only on the sources mentioned above in order to  
35 avoid charges of parochialism. Third, there is a discussion of why IR scholars ignore 9/11 truth.  
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41 Finally, the conclusion considers the implications of taking 9/11 truth seriously.  
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#### 47 THE IR LITERATURE ON 9/11 48 49 50 51 52 53

54 The automatic assumption of IR scholars in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 was that "Al  
55 Qaeda" was to blame. For example, Chris Brown (2002: 263) writes that "the international  
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3 community is engaged in a hunt for a specific terrorist group [Al Qaeda]”; explicitly ruled out is  
4 “the absurd rumour that the WTC was attacked by Mossad” (Brown, 2002: 266). Michael Cox  
5 (2002: 261) points to “the role of Islam in international politics.” In a collection of responses by  
6 leading IR scholars published by *International Organization* in January 2002 as *Dialogue IO*, not  
7 one questions the “Islamic fundamentalist” narrative. Halliday’s *Two Hours that Shook the World*  
8 (2002) is not actually about the two hours in which the twin towers were destroyed; rather it is a  
9 summation of his earlier work on the Middle East. Elshain (2003: Ch. 1) asks the key question,  
10 “What happened on 9/11?” yet makes no attempt to examine the empirical evidence in her  
11 relentless condemnation of Islamic fundamentalism. 9/11 Commission staff member Daniel  
12 Byman (2003) surveys scholarship on al Qaeda and militant Islamism.

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Surveying ten edited volumes including 140 different authors on 9/11, Lisa Anderson  
(2004: 304, 310) identifies “a surprising failure of intellectual nerve” and “loss of scholarly  
composure,” concluding, “The discomfort with the scientific posture of open-ended inquiry and  
the thirst for answers that would reflect what came to be called ‘moral clarity’ were evident in  
many of the intellectual debates of the day” (2004: 323). In other words, instead of following the  
scientific method and looking at evidence, IR scholars lost their nerve and, in their need for  
“moral clarity,” fell into line with the Bush administration’s demand to be “with us or against us.”  
This belies the claims of the IR mainstream to be doing “hard science.”

After the initial avalanche of literature on 9/11, IR scholars quickly lost interest in the  
event itself as their attention shifted to its major consequence: the “War on Terror.” Five years  
after 9/11, Brenner (2006: 497) notes, “The response to September 11 has been comparatively  
muted. It has received little sustained attention, experienced no fervent debate, and has been  
largely excluded from any central focus that might have been anticipated.” Instead, IR scholars  
went about their business as usual. In a chapter titled “Implications of September 11 for the  
Study of International Relations,” Buzan (2003: 306) claims, “September 11 does not require  
major changes to the debates about IR theory or to the agenda of IR.” Instead of looking at the

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3 evidence concerning the events of 9/11 and realising that it changes everything, IR scholars  
4 were content to maintain the status quo.  
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7 While the events of 9/11 themselves remained unexamined in IR scholarship, a  
8 “terrorism industry” sprang up with “countless books produced whose title ends in ‘since 9/11’”  
9 (Dunne 2011: 970). But how many books in the terrorism industry include the phrase “on 9/11”  
10 in their title and critically examine what actually took place that day?  
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15 Dunne and Booth’s *Terror in our Time* (2012) is representative of the wider terrorism  
16 literature. With a picture of 9/11 debris on its cover, blame is pinned on “al-Qaeda” and “Usama  
17 bin Laden” in the first two pages (2012: vii-viii). The authors do not see how they are uncritically  
18 lending intellectual legitimation to the official narrative and thus the “War on Terror.” On the  
19 contrary, they are quick to stress that they have no intention of questioning the official line: “It is  
20 not our intention in this book to criticise all that has been done by Western governments in the  
21 decade [since 9/11]” (2012: viii). In fact, the “focus” of the book is “necessarily about the  
22 mobilisation of massive military power and state resources against [al-Qaeda]” (2012: 7).  
23 Precluding all possibility that 9/11 was a false flag, the authors assert, “This book is not about  
24 states as terrorists” (2012: 7). Thus, the book is framed as an unashamedly non-critical study  
25 obediently serving Western state power.  
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39 Even so-called “Critical Terrorism Studies” has worked to maintain the taboo on 9/11  
40 truth. “Discourses” such as Islamic terrorism, “temporalities” such as the supposed rupture  
41 “before” and “after” 9/11, and the politics of remembering 9/11 may all be critically interrogated  
42 (Jackson, 2007; Toros, 2017; Zehfuss, 2003). But a serious scientific investigation of what  
43 exactly took place on 9/11, how it was achieved, and who could therefore have been  
44 responsible remains strictly verboten.  
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51 *Terrorism: a Critical Introduction* (Jackson, Jarvis, Gunning and Smith, 2011) illustrates  
52 the point. It lauds Critical Terrorism Studies as “theoretically and methodologically rigorous,  
53 sensitive to the politics of labelling, self-reflective about issues of knowledge and power, and  
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3 committed to conflict resolution and human security” (2011: 27). Yet, it would seem that greater  
4 self-reflexivity about issues of knowledge and power is required when it comes to 9/11. The  
5 authors refer to the “dominant 9/11 narrative [which] helped to establish [...] how audiences  
6 should interpret the events” (2011: 70). They note, “Potential challenges to the dominant  
7 narrative were [...] effectively countered by the Bush administration and their allies through  
8 vigorous public diplomacy campaigns, protracted appeals to patriotism, the discrediting of  
9 political opponents and the use of pressure groups,” all “aided by a generally docile media  
10 which either directly repeated the understanding of official sources or simply relied on those  
11 sources for cues on how best to interpret the attacks” (2011: 71). Yet, rather than calling the  
12 official 9/11 narrative into question, or asking why the Bush administration went to such great  
13 lengths to close down alternative narratives, the authors merely show how the official narrative  
14 was constructed and propagated. Power is described, not challenged. In this “critical”  
15 introduction to terrorism, the phrase “false flag” is not mentioned..

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31 Even such a “radical” thinker as Noam Chomsky, for decades one of the most prominent  
32 critics of US foreign policy, refuses to entertain the possibility that 9/11 may have been a false  
33 flag; he is “willfully ignorant” of 9/11 truth (Ryan, 2013). According to Chomsky, bin Laden’s guilt  
34 was “plausibly surmised from the outset” and “In the case of bin Laden, no discussion is  
35 needed” (2011, 34; 2002, 146). The evidence produced by the 9/11 truth movement is  
36 “essentially worthless,” and the idea that the US government could have known anything in  
37 advance about the attacks has “such low credibility, I don’t really think it’s serious”; besides,  
38 “even if it were true, who cares? I mean, it doesn’t have any significance” (2008b).

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Psychologists might characterize this as a state of denial.

Still today, renowned IR scholars automatically accept the official 9/11 narrative that “al  
Qaeda operatives used box cutters so effectively to hijack commercial airplanes” (Mueller, 2018:  
15). No mainstream IR scholar, it seems, “will tolerate let alone initiate serious research into the  
backgrounds and implications of the War on Terror” (van der Pijl, 2014: 234). The idea that 9/11

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3 was a false flag is simply off limits, beyond the boundaries of the discipline (academic  
4 disciplines having been created precisely in order to discipline thought). In van der Pijl's view,  
5 those IR scholars most proximate to state power - what he calls the "academic intelligence  
6 base" - "subscribe to an obvious hoax - one in a series that has already featured the Tonkin Gulf  
7 incident, Lockerbie, the genocide of Kosovo Albanians, Saddam Hussein's 'weapons of mass  
8 destruction' and, today, Iran's nuclear bomb programme" (van der Pijl, 2014: 234). This is a  
9 strong claim to make, and one that requires examination of evidence in order to determine its  
10 plausibility.  
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#### 24 9/11 TRUTH: KEY FINDINGS 25 26 27 28 29

30 There are certain key propositions that the large majority of 9/11 truth researchers would agree  
31 on, which academics would do well to start considering. Some of these points are given below.  
32 Most can be found in the results of the 9/11 Consensus Panel investigation (Griffin and  
33 Woodworth 2018), which took 23 experts six years to agree upon, requiring an 85% consensus  
34 rate. The relevant chapter of that investigation is given in square brackets for further reference.  
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#### 43 Damage to the World Trade Centre 44 45 46

47 It is impossible that commercial airliners caused the complete destruction of the Twin Towers  
48 [3]. Not only does jet fuel burn nowhere near hot enough to melt steel, but even *The 9/11*  
49 *Commission Report's* claim that the floors of the towers pancaked down upon one another does  
50 not explain what destroyed the 47 massive interlocking steel box columns at the core of each  
51 tower. The alleged gravity-driven collapse is inconsistent with video footage showing massive  
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3 steel I-beams being ejected large distances horizontally [4]. It was not physically possible for the  
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5 top floors to accelerate through the path of maximum resistance (the lower floors) at near  
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7 freefall-speed unless resistance from the lower floors suddenly disappeared [9]. That the debris  
8  
9 pile from these two 110-story buildings was almost at ground level is consistent with video  
10  
11 footage and photographs showing that the towers were mostly turned to dust in mid air, i.e.  
12  
13 before hitting the ground (see Appendix). There was relatively little damage below ground level  
14  
15 compared to what one would expect from millions of tonnes of material crashing to the ground.  
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17 That sections of the lower outer walls as well as rescue workers on the second floor of Stairwell  
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19 B in the North Tower survived the “collapse” offer further evidence that these giant structures  
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21 did not simply slam to the ground.  
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24 World Trade Centre 7 was a 47-story building not hit by an aeroplane on 9/11, yet at  
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26 5:21 pm that day it spontaneously descended, at freefall speed for the first 2.25 seconds,  
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28 straight down into its own footprint, not damaging buildings across the street [11]. NIST claims  
29  
30 that this “spontaneous collapse” was due to “office fires.” If true, this would make WTC 7 the  
31  
32 only steel-framed skyscraper in history to have suffered such a fate. The fact that the skyline of  
33  
34 the building remains horizontal during the entire collapse indicates that all 82 supporting steel  
35  
36 columns must have suffered simultaneous failure [13] (Leroy et al. 2019). Police, firefighters and  
37  
38 the world’s news media somehow knew hours in advance that the building would come down,  
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40 indicating official foreknowledge [16].  
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43 Numerous eyewitness reports, including from those present within the buildings, testify  
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45 to large explosions and destruction of the basement/lobby areas of WTC 1, WTC 2, and WTC 7  
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47 prior to the total disintegration of those buildings [9, 17]. Massive amounts of energy,  
48  
49 inconsistent with a gravity-driven collapse, were released, evident in the dust clouds that  
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51 covered the whole of lower Manhattan (Wood, 2011: 297-319). It remains unexplained why  
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53 huge volumes of paper survived the destruction of the Twin Towers while only one of an  
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55 estimated 45,000 metal filing cabinets did, and why cars in the vicinity later appeared burned  
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3 out despite, in some cases, their upholstery remaining intact (Wood, 2011: 144, 213-42).  
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## 6 7 Islamic Fundamentalism 8 9

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11 An examination of empirical evidence renders it highly unlikely that 19 Muslim men armed only  
12 with box cutters were responsible for 9/11. For instance, the 19 alleged hijackers' names do not  
13 appear on the relevant flight manifests; airport CCTV footage only captures a few of them, not  
14 boarding any of the 9/11 flights, in ways that appear doctored; and ten of them showed up alive  
15 in different parts of the world afterwards, indicating that their identities had been stolen [41, 42]  
16 (Kolar, 2006). Of those suspects who do appear to have been present in the United States, the  
17 fact that they had large amounts of money to spend on alcohol, cocaine and lap dancers  
18 suggests that they may have been patsies rather than devout Muslims [43, 44]. One of them,  
19 Hani Hanjour, is known to have been a terrible pilot barely able to fly a single-engine Cessna.  
20 The official claim that in a Boeing 767 he performed the complex 270 degree downwards  
21 corkscrew manoeuvre detected on radar before hitting the Pentagon is not credible [18].  
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25 On 28 June 2001, former Navy intelligence analyst Bill Cooper inferred from a recent  
26 CNN interview with Osama bin Laden (in which bin Laden vowed to attack the United States  
27 and Israel within three weeks) that an imminent major attack on the United States would be  
28 blamed on bin Laden, a likely patsy. A search warrant on Cooper's address was issued on 11  
29 September 2001, and he was killed in November 2001. Bin Laden family members - close  
30 friends of the Bush family - were flown out of the United States while all other flights remained  
31 grounded after 9/11. The Osama bin Laden "confession tape" broadcast on 20 December 2001  
32 is demonstrably inauthentic (Kolar, 2006). In 2006, the FBI claimed to have no hard evidence  
33 connecting bin Laden to 9/11 [39]. There is evidence to suggest that bin Laden died in 2001,  
34 however (Griffin, 2009). Claims that bin Laden somehow managed to evade the most  
35 sophisticated surveillance dragnet in history for almost a decade are implausible, but the  
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3 suggestion that he served as a bogeyman in the “War on Terror” makes sense. Even when he  
4 was allegedly captured he was killed and his body dumped at sea, meaning that no hard  
5 evidence of his death could be presented to the public.  
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10 Contrary to propaganda that the United States is at war with Islamic fundamentalism, the  
11 United States has deliberately stoked Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East in order to  
12 create sectarian divisions. It has also sponsored Islamist terrorist organizations in Syria in order  
13 to undermine the secular Assad regime.  
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## 19 20 21 22 The Role of US Government Agencies 23 24 25

26 The Federal Aviation Authority and the North American Aerospace Defence Command were  
27 effectively paralysed on 9/11 by the incredible decision to stage no fewer than twelve different  
28 “war games” exercises on the same day: the only day in post-1945 US history when US air  
29 defences needed to be fully operational [26, 27]. Fake radar blips were inserted into air traffic  
30 controllers’ monitors. Fighter jets were scrambled over the Atlantic Ocean, in the opposition  
31 direction to their supposed targets. One of the world’s most heavily defended buildings, the  
32 Pentagon, was struck after the South Tower had been hit, by which time it was clear that the  
33 United States was under attack.  
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43 The FBI claimed to have recovered the fully intact passport of one of the alleged  
44 hijackers from Ground Zero despite being unable to retrieve any of the supposedly  
45 “indestructible” components of the planes’ black boxes [25]. Although the Pentagon was ringed  
46 with CCTV cameras and there were also CCTV cameras at nearby buildings whose footage  
47 could be used to demonstrate conclusively what hit the Pentagon, the FBI confiscated all of it,  
48 belatedly releasing only two tapes in 2006 that do not appear to show a commercial airliner. The  
49 jet engines retrieved by the FBI from New York and the Pentagon do not match the brands of  
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3 engine known to have been present on the aircraft involved. In Shanksville, despite the fact that  
4 no plane parts were visible in the immediate aftermath [23], the FBI claimed to have recovered  
5 95 percent of the plane, yet neither showed it to the public nor performed a reconstruction of the  
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7 plane as is standard procedure for plane crash investigations.  
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11 The Secret Service, upon learning of the first impact on the Twin Towers, allowed  
12 President Bush to remain in a classroom in Sarasota, Florida for a further ten minutes and then  
13 allowed him to deliver his regularly scheduled television address, thus advertising his location to  
14 potential suicide hijackers attacking the United States, for whom the President could have been  
15 a key target [29-30]. In Griffin's view, "This behavior makes sense only if the Secret Service  
16 knew that the planned attacks did not include an attack on the president. And how could this be  
17 known for certain unless the attacks were being carried out by people within our government?"  
18 (2007: 13).  
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28 The Environmental Health Agency, on the White House's order, claimed that the air  
29 around Ground Zero was safe to breathe, yet thousands of first responders have died  
30 prematurely from mysterious cancers.  
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34 New York mayor Rudolf Giuliani told ABC's Peter Jennings live on air that he had been  
35 informed in advance that the Twin Towers were about to collapse, yet he did not order their  
36 evacuation. He did, however, evacuate the Office of Emergency Management housed in WTC 7  
37 before 9am that morning, where he was based [38]. That office appears to have been  
38 responsible for leaking information that WTC 7 would collapse [38]. Giuliani ordered a ban on  
39 the public taking photographs of Ground Zero. In November 2001 he cut the number of  
40 firefighters searching for the dead from over 300 to 25, preferring a "scoop-and-dump" approach  
41 in order to expedite the clean-up of Ground Zero.  
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51 The reports by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (2002), the 9/11  
52 Commission (2004), and the National Institute of Science and Technology (2005 and 2008) are  
53 known to be riddled with inaccuracies, omissions, and distortions. For example, the collapse of  
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3 WTC 7 is avoided by both *The 9/11 Commission Report* and the 2005 NIST report. When the  
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5 2008 NIST report finally addressed WTC7, it came up with an explanation that not only relied on  
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7 a computer simulation that failed to imitate observed reality [13], but which also relied on trying  
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9 to hide the structural schematics of the building (later made public via a FOIA request) that  
10  
11 render NIST's explanation of the collapse impossible [14]. These reports are widely regarded as  
12  
13 cover-ups.  
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16 Key officials were not held to account for their failure to do their jobs on 9/11. These  
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18 include Donald Rumsfeld, who was photographed on the Pentagon lawn instead of attending to  
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20 his urgent duties as Secretary of Defence (he received the largest increase in defence spending  
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22 since the Vietnam War) [33]. General Ralph Eberhart, who presided over NORAD's catastrophic  
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24 failure to prevent the 9/11 attacks, was subsequently promoted to head of the United States  
25  
26 Northern Command [37]. Vice-President Dick Cheney, who gave the order that the plane  
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28 approaching the Pentagon *not* be shot down, remained in post [32].  
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31 When the Hamburg high court asked the US government to provide evidence in trials  
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33 against alleged assistants to Mohammed Atta, the US government refused to do so.  
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### 39 Possible Indications of Financial Foul Play 40 41 42

43 Insider trading appears to have taken in the days leading up to 9/11 [51] (Poteshman, 2006;  
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45 Zarembka, 2008). For example, exceptionally high volumes of put options were taken out on  
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47 United Airlines and American Airlines, as well as Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, which occupied  
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49 22 stories of the World Trade Center that were destroyed by the alleged plane impact. On 6 and  
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51 7 September 2001, a large number of put options on United Airlines were purchased through  
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53 Deutsche Bank/Alex Brown, the firm managed by Buzzy Krongard until his appointment as CIA  
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55 director in March 2001.  
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3 The day before 9/11, Donald Rumsfeld announced that the Pentagon could not account  
4 for an eye-watering \$2.3 trillion of missing funds. The only section of the Pentagon to be hit on  
5 9/11 contained the accounting offices, making that money impossible to trace.  
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9 Larry Silverstein bought a 99-year lease on the Twin Towers six weeks before 9/11  
10 despite the fact that the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey had just lost (in May 2014)  
11 a ten-year battle against insurers over who was liable for the \$1 billion cost of removing  
12 asbestos from the towers. Silverstein insured each tower separately against acts of terrorism  
13 and made an estimated profit of \$4.5 billion from 9/11, remarkably choosing that day of all days  
14 not to have his usual breakfast at the top of the North Tower. The fact that WTC 1, WTC 2, and  
15 WTC 7 (also owned by Silverstein) were all completely destroyed without falling onto  
16 neighbouring buildings (a feat conventionally attributable only to controlled demolition) was  
17 extremely fortunate for Silverstein from both a legal and financial perspective.  
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### 33 The Passenger Planes

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37 According to data from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, the two American Airlines flights  
38 on 9/11 (Flights 11 and 77) never took off. As for the two United Airlines flights (93 and 175),  
39 planes with the same serial numbers (591UA and 612UA) were still in operation until 2005,  
40 according to the FAA Aircraft Registry. Cell phone calls from 35,000 feet were impossible in  
41 2001, yet the audio recordings of several such alleged calls were released after 9/11 [46-50].  
42  
43 Bizarrely, none of the four hijacked aircraft squawked the hijack code, even though there would  
44 have been ample time for either the pilot or co-pilot to do so [22]. There is no hard evidence that  
45 it was the “hijackers” who turned off the transponders on all four flights [24].  
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54 Boeing 757s and 767s cannot fly anywhere near the official impact speed (ca. 580 mph)  
55 close to sea level without disintegrating because of drag. American Airlines Flight 93, alleged to  
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3 have hit the Pentagon at ground level, not only could not have done so because of wash, but it  
4 also left the Pentagon lawn completely unscathed. More importantly, it left the Pentagon itself  
5 relatively undamaged (especially compared to the catastrophic damage caused to the Twin  
6 Towers), as the so-called “composite picture” shows: minutes after the alleged impact by a  
7 Boeing 767 fully laden with jet fuel, the roofline and core columns at ground level were still  
8 standing. Remarkably few plane parts were recovered from any of the four crash scenes, and  
9 none were conclusively identified by serial number.  
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## 20 The Mainstream Media

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24 How did CNN manage to gain access to Osama bin Laden in June 2001 when the US security  
25 apparatus had supposedly spent years looking in vain for him? Why did CNN report on the  
26 imminent destruction of WTC 7 for over an hour before it happened? Why did the BBC report  
27 that WTC 7 had already collapsed over 20 minutes before it did, with WTC 7 still appearing in  
28 the background of the report? Why were all nominally independent mainstream news channels  
29 (ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox, NBC) broadcasting footage interchangeably from the same feeds? Why  
30 were they collectively unable to provide high quality footage of the second plane impacting upon  
31 the South Tower? Why were none of them able to get a camera crew in place at ground level in  
32 the middle of New York City to capture that impact? How did Fox News know to blame Osama  
33 bin Laden only 40 seconds after the South Tower was impacted? Why did Paul Bremmer,  
34 formerly of Kissinger and Associates and then of Marsh and McLellan (whose offices in the  
35 North Tower were destroyed by the first impact), not go to work that day and instead appear on  
36 MSNBC soon after midday to blame Osama bin Laden (Bremer would later be appointed  
37 Governor of Iraq following Saddam Hussein’s murder in 2003)? Why did the US news media, in  
38 the years that followed, repeatedly show footage of the Twin Towers being destroyed but not  
39 WTC 7?  
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## Summary

The above points, while offering a highly condensed summation of what most 9/11 researchers would probably agree on based on an examination of the empirical evidence, barely scratches the surface of the bigger picture regarding 9/11. Nevertheless, they should be sufficient to make IR scholars critically reconsider their basic presuppositions regarding 9/11.

## REASONS WHY IR SCHOLARS IGNORE 9/11 TRUTH

Given the substantial body of evidence indicating that the official 9/11 narrative is false, why has none of it appeared in the discipline of International Relations?

One possibility is that IR scholars have taken their cue from President George W. Bush (2001): “Let us never tolerate outrageous conspiracy theories concerning the attacks of September the 11th.” The knee-jerk reaction to anyone questioning the official 9/11 narrative is to brand them a “conspiracy theorist.” As IR scholars really ought to know, however, the term “conspiracy theory” is weaponized. Though in use beforehand, it was systematically propagated by the CIA through the mainstream media in the 1960s in order to

deflect accusations that officials at the highest levels of the American government were complicit in [President] Kennedy’s murder. [...] The CIA’s campaign to popularize the term “conspiracy theory” and make conspiracy belief a target of ridicule and hostility must be credited, unfortunately, with being one of the most successful propaganda initiatives of all time. (deHaven-Smith, 2013: 25)

Therefore, to dismiss 9/11 truth as “conspiracy theory” is not only intellectually lazy,

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3 supercilious, and uninformed, it is also the hallmark of vulnerability to a longstanding  
4 psychological operation. Such an approach is unbecoming of serious scholarship.  
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7         Certain topics are deemed off limits for socio-political reasons. The basic principle is  
8 never to discuss anything that is in conflict with the ruling structure of society, and that principle  
9 is enforced by systematic exclusion of such topics from consideration in mainstream media and  
10 political discourse, such that all debate and discussion remains confined to a spectrum of  
11 acceptable opinion (McMurtry, 1988; Herman and Chomsky, 2010). A “spiral of silence” then  
12 sets in whereby individuals, consciously or unconsciously unwilling to fall outside the spectrum  
13 of acceptable opinion, never question it (Noelle-Neumann, 1993). In anthropological terms,  
14 Chomsky notes (2008: 177), “we are dealing here with a form of taboo, a deep-seated  
15 superstitious avoidance of some terrifying question [...]” The contemporary taboo is 9/11 truth  
16 and the terrifying question is how power really works in the United States.  
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28         Psychologically, 9/11 truth can generate a sense of ontological insecurity as those  
29 waking up to it realise that key propositions that they have been socialized to accept are false.  
30 As one US academic writes, questioning the official 9/11 narrative means that “everything  
31 changes.” Possible changes include:  
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36         loss of belief and trust in government; loss of belief in the value of democratic  
37 participation; loss of belief in my own tradition as a bearer of ‘civilization’; loss of belief in  
38 the power of dialogue and compromise as a basis of civil society; loss of belief in  
39 openness and transparency in public policy; loss of faith in my democratically elected  
40 government to act on values and principles compatible with my own, etc. (Smith, 2012:  
41 348)  
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49         As the language of loss indicates, this is a lot for anyone to come to terms with, and too much  
50 for many Westerners to deal with, at least to begin with.  
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53         Academic silence on 9/11 truth can also be attributed to “the disciplining effect of the  
54 War on Terror and the state of emergency, which [...] is even stronger than McCarthy-era anti-  
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3 communism” (van der Pijl, 2014: 229). For example, van der Pijl continues, citing Gibson (2008:  
4 99), “The percentage of respondents affirming that ‘people feel as free to say what they think as  
5 they used to’ in 2005 was 42.4 percent against 55.6 in 1954 (and 52.6 in 1987).” “All too  
6 frequently,” notes Kirstein (2009: 70),  
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11 a call to arms abroad against the latest threat to American hegemony has a domestic  
12 battleground as well. From World War I to the nationalistic excesses following the  
13 September 11 attacks, public and private entities have tried to purge free speech from  
14 the academy without which the pursuit of truth would be futile.  
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20 The neo-McCarthyite climate of fear and intimidation that has descended over academia since  
21 9/11 means that academics are faced with clear (dis)incentives when it comes to speaking out  
22 on 9/11.  
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26 For example, when William Woodward, a psychology professor at the University of New  
27 Hampshire, expressed his view that the Bush administration allowed 9/11 to occur in 2006,  
28 students and state legislators call for him to be fired. When Morgan Reynolds raised evidence-  
29 based doubts about the official narrative in 2007, he was singled out for censure by by  
30 University of Texas at Austin President and former CIA director Robert Gates (Reynolds, 2007).  
31 Professor Steven E. Jones, an influential name in 9/11 truth, was allegedly edged into  
32 retirement by Brigham Young University in 2006. Jones’ nemesis, Dr. Judy Wood, author of  
33 arguably the most important book on 9/11 to date (Wood, 2011), left Clemson University in 2006  
34 for reasons that remain unclear, but it appears that her 9/11 research was incompatible with  
35 holding an academic post. Meanwhile, other academics, such as explosives expert Van  
36 Romero, who changed his tune from “explosives devices inside the buildings [...] caused the  
37 towers to collapse” to “certainly the fire is what caused the building to fail” went on to win \$15  
38 million of federal research funding (Reynolds, 2007: 112). Just as 9/11 truth was beginning to  
39 gain traction, academics quickly got the message to dissociate themselves from it.  
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56 Universities, the supposed guardians of legitimate knowledge, remain the one place  
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3 where research into the events of 9/11 is generally forbidden. No doubt such research would  
4 displease corporate and state funders, as well as the sizeable portion of students, staff, and the  
5 general public who, having never independently investigated the events of 9/11, uncritically  
6 accept the official narrative. Sceptics sometimes question why there are so few academic  
7 journal articles on 9/11 truth, as though knowledge could only be genuine if stamped with the  
8 imprimatur of peer-review. But when the institutional environment of academia is so hostile to  
9 9/11 truth - for political rather than intellectual reasons - then the dearth of peer-reviewed  
10 scientific literature on the events of 9/11 comes as no surprise. Contrary to ideas about  
11 academic freedom, the reality has been that no word threatening official orthodoxy on 9/11 may  
12 be uttered in academia. Those academics who have spoken out have tended to be emeritus  
13 professors with little to lose career-wise, e.g. Morgan Reynolds, David Ray Griffin, Richard B.  
14 Lee, Eric Larsen, and Kees van der Pijl.

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Van der Pijl found himself on the receiving end of the new McCarthyism in 2019, when  
he resigned his emeritus status at Sussex University after the university threatened to withdraw  
it because of a tweet in which he alleged Mossad involvement in 9/11. He accompanied his  
decision with a full-length academic paper providing supporting evidence for his claim, noting  
that criticism of the state of Israel does not equate to anti-Semitism and claiming that the  
university's attempt to censor him amounts to an attack on free speech and academic freedom  
(van der Pijl, 2019). Whatever one thinks about van der Pijl's views on 9/11, the latter points are  
surely valid.

Professor Piers Robinson was attacked by the *Huffington Post* in 2018 for suggesting  
that the 9/11 Consensus panel findings present "a serious challenge for mainstream academics  
and journalists to start to ask substantial questions about 9/11" (York, 2018). Eight months  
earlier, the *Times* had tacitly called for Robinson and his colleagues in the Syria Media  
Propaganda Working Group to be fired, comparing them to holocaust deniers that a history  
department would not employ (Keate, Kennedy, Shveda, and Haynes, 2018). In April 2019



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3 Robinson left his post at Sheffield following a campaign against him by the student newspaper  
4 *The Forge*, which alleged he was “engaging in denial” of anti-Semitism allegations within the  
5 Labour Party after he signed a petition saying it was “being used as a weapon to silence those  
6 who speak out against injustice.” In the case of 9/11, that is exactly what is happening: twice in  
7 two months, bogus charges of anti-Semitism were used to hound respected professors out of  
8 their posts after they dared to challenge the official 9/11 narrative.  
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## 20 CONCLUSION

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26 There is something sinister about the refusal of academics to subject the events of 9/11 to  
27 critical examination. While a sizeable and growing proportion of the world’s population has long  
28 had doubts about the official 9/11 narrative,<sup>4</sup> academia has maintained a rigorous regime of self-  
29 censorship. Nowhere is that more true than in the discipline of International Relations, where the  
30 official narrative on 9/11 is accepted virtually without question.  
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37 Although IR scholars are meant to be trained experts in such phenomena as false flag  
38 terrorism, there is a sense in which they might be forgiven for not exploring the possibility that  
39 9/11 was a false flag in the immediate years after the event. After all, 9/11 truth did not begin to  
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45 <sup>4</sup> Griffin (2004, 2-4) cites a range of international opinion polls showing that even in the years  
46 immediately after 9/11, significant proportions of the populations of the United States, Canada, and  
47 Germany had doubts about the official narrative. According to a CBS/New York Times poll taken in April  
48 2004, for instance, “an astonishing 72 percent of the American people believed the Bush administration to  
49 be guilty of a cover-up, at least to some degree, of relevant information it had prior to the attacks of 9/11”  
50 (Griffin, 2005: 3).  
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3 gain traction until around 2005-2007, when Griffin (2005) discredited *The 9/11 Commission*  
4 *Report*, organizations such as Scholars for 9/11 Truth (2005), Pilots For 9/11 Truth (2006), and  
5 Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth (2006) were founded, and Dr. Judy Wood and Dr.  
6 Morgan Reynolds brought Qui Tam cases (2007) against Applied Research Associates and  
7 Science Applications International Corporation for their allegedly fraudulent role in the  
8 production of the NIST report. However, the longer that time goes on, and more people around  
9 the world come to understand that there is something deeply suspect about the events of 9/11,  
10 the more inexcusable it becomes for academics to continue to turn a blind eye to those events.  
11 The burden of proof today is on academia to defend the official narrative against the allegations  
12 that have been made against it. This requires engaging with 9/11 truth rather than ignoring it.  
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24 Should academics prove unable to defend the official narrative, several major  
25 consequences would follow. First, the possibility that 9/11 was a false flag would have to be  
26 taken seriously. "What the 9/11 attacks showed more than anything," writes Hastings Dunn  
27 (2013: 1243), "was a willingness on the part of the perpetrators to think creatively and to employ  
28 technologies and tactics that were entirely unconventional in order to achieve strategic surprise,  
29 shock and destruction." Absolutely, but who were the perpetrators and what technologies were  
30 involved? What kind of technology, for example, can turn a 110-story steel-framed skyscraper  
31 mostly into dust in a little over ten seconds, and who would have had access to such  
32 technology?  
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43 Second, an inability to defend the official narrative would necessitate reflection on why  
44 that narrative has for so long been uncritically accepted among scholars who pride themselves  
45 on their ability to think critically. Certainly they should not be taken in by far-fetched conspiracy  
46 theories such as the one put forward by the Bush administration.<sup>5</sup> A certain humility would be  
47 required in order to recognise that so-called "conspiracy theorists," often without academic  
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56 <sup>5</sup> For a well-known five-minute satire of the official narrative, see Corbett (2011).  
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3 credentials, have done far more to uncover the truth about 9/11 than academia. In that respect,  
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5 academia would stand deeply discredited.  
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7         Let us assume for a moment that the only Muslims involved in perpetrating 9/11 were  
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9 patsies - which is reasonable based on the evidence - and that 9/11 was blamed on Muslims in  
10  
11 order to legitimize US military interference in a string of Muslim-majority countries. What would  
12  
13 this imply about the discipline of International Relations? “By selling out to the self-fulfilling  
14  
15 fiction of Islamic terrorism,” claims van der Pijl (2014: 189, 229), “the discipline of IR today has  
16  
17 itself largely degenerated into a mercenary, ‘embedded’ auxiliary force” - a process that has  
18  
19 been catalyzed by foundation funding flowing to research on “Islam,” with ideas about terrorism,  
20  
21 extremism, radicalisation, etc. frequently taken for granted. IR would appear as little more than a  
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23 sophisticated propaganda instrument, offering a thousand different ways of camouflaging real  
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25 power relations.  
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28         If 9/11 was a false flag, then academics have been complicit in maintaining the pretence  
29  
30 that it was not. By extension, they are complicit in the horrific consequences that have flowed  
31  
32 from 9/11, because they have failed to challenge the Great Lie on which everything was based.  
33  
34 Admittedly, remarks MacQueen, “It takes a certain intellectual courage to question a story that is  
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36 being promoted so heavily by virtually every government in the world, as well as the mainstream  
37  
38 media” (see Zuberi, 2013). Yet, there is a moral imperative to tell the truth when so much  
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40 murder and suffering is based on lies. As George Orwell is reputed to have said, in a time of  
41  
42 universal deceit telling the truth is a revolutionary act.  
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45         Van der Pijl (2014: 234) is pessimistic about the prospects for the IR discipline to renew  
46  
47 itself: “A discipline led by scholars of this moral calibre cannot be expected to restore its  
48  
49 intellectual integrity. Under conditions of the growing precariousness of academics at all levels,  
50  
51 few of the rank and file can afford to take their distance from such leading scholars either.” Yet,  
52  
53 it is important not to lose sight of what is achievable. As MacQueen observes (see Zuberi,  
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55 2013), “When you think about the potential power of universities - not a formal, political power,  
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3 but an informal power that comes through credibility, high status in society, and influence - they  
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5 *could* be stopping this whole thing in its tracks. But they're not.”

6  
7 Imagine if academics did start to cast off their cognitive and ethical shackles and come  
8  
9 out against the official 9/11 narrative. That would lend considerable weight to the public  
10  
11 crescendo of calls for a new 9/11 investigation. Consider the potential consequences:

12  
13 If the official account were falsified and the event adjudged a false-flag attack by a  
14  
15 transnational criminal cabal, several things would happen. The War on Terror would  
16  
17 come to an immediate halt. Indictments would be issued and criminal trials held until  
18  
19 justice was served. Forgiveness of the Muslim world would be sought [...] And not an  
20  
21 ounce of additional police-state control of innocent citizens anywhere in the world would  
22  
23 be needed in order to achieve these worthwhile goals. (Benjamin, 2017: 392)

24  
25 Perhaps this is a rose-tinted view of how things could be. Perhaps the reality would be  
26  
27 something closer to civil war in the United States. At any rate, if academics are serious about  
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29 pursuing and defending the truth, the first place they need to start is 9/11 truth.  
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## Appendix



Figure 1: Debris at ground level immediately after the destruction of the Twin Towers. Credit:

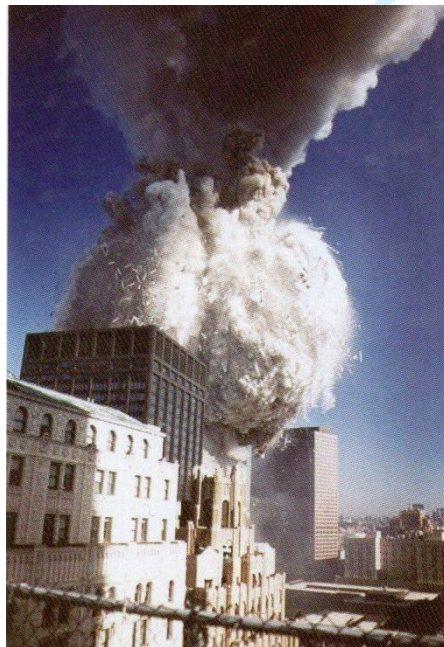
[http://www.drjudywood.com/articles/dirt/dirtpics/010913\\_5316\\_large.jpg](http://www.drjudywood.com/articles/dirt/dirtpics/010913_5316_large.jpg)

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Figure 2: WTC 1 is mostly turned to dust in mid air

Credit: <http://www.drjudywood.com/articles/DEW/dewpics/911wtc1blowupconcretetfull.jpg>



<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/alt>

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2  
3 Figure 3: the tower does not slam to the ground. Half of it is turned to dust in mid air while the  
4  
5 lower half still stands. Credit: <http://www.drjudywood.com/articles/DEW/dewpics/Image28.jpg>

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7 (scanned from Wood 2011, 140 for higher resolution)  
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40 Figure 4: rocket exhaust trails as the tower is blown apart with incredible energy

41  
42 Credit <http://www.drjudywood.com/articles/DEW/dewpics/Image250.jpg>



Figure 5: The destruction of the North Tower creates a “mushroom cloud” effect. Image courtesy of the New York City Police Foundation (Sweet, 2002: 20)