

# The Problem with Conspiracy Theories

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Region: [USA](#)

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*People today spend a lot of time talking about conspiracy theories.*

*These theories often do harm because they divert attention away from the facts and thereby allow real crimes and other harmful effects to continue.*

*Such conspiracy theories can be spotted based on three basic characteristics.*

1. They lack evidence.
2. They spread widely before the facts are examined.
3. Much simpler alternatives are not considered.

For example, take the most popular conspiracy theory of recent times—the official account for the crimes of 9/11.

1. This theory was produced by mythologist Philip Zelikow, who, before the investigation began, created an outline [that was kept secret](#) from his own Commission staff. Zelikow’s outline determined the outcome of the investigation before any facts were examined. Moreover, the 9/11 Commission claimed sixty-three times in its report that it [could find “no evidence”](#) related to important aspects of the crimes. Evidence that the Commission did rely on, as a basis for its report, was later [found to be false](#). Similarly, the evidence collected and held secret by World Trade Center investigating agency NIST was later found to contradict the agency’s conclusions. Much of that evidence is still being held secret including the computer model data that NIST was forced to substitute for physical testing that [contradicted its conclusions](#).
2. The conspiracy theory reports provided by the 9/11 Commission and NIST spread quickly before anyone could examine them. Getting government representatives to commit to any explanation for what had happened on 9/11 took years but, once ready, news media sources were prepped in advance to allow rapid parroting of the official line. The timing of NIST’s reports coincided with political events, like each anniversary of the 9/11 crimes, so that media could quickly present the official story while public interest was high but critical review was not possible. With the report on WTC 7, the public was given just three weeks to

comment on a report that was nearly seven years in the making. The report was later found to be [unscientific and false](#).

3. The official conspiracy theory for 9/11 calls for belief in unbelievable things. That is, to believe the official account you must accept that otherwise honest military leaders [will lie repeatedly](#) for years to make themselves look bad. Buildings will collapse in unprecedented ways, through the path of most resistance, with no scientific evidence to explain it. The Secret Service will [fail to do its job](#), insider trading can occur [with no insiders](#), and “the enemy”—a vaguely defined group of dark-skinned people who just happen to live on strategically critical resources—can remain omnipotent and elusive. All the while, [much simpler explanations](#) are evident but cannot be considered.

The official conspiracy theory for 9/11 has led to tremendously harmful effects. Many Americans have [forgotten completely](#) what it means to be an American. An ongoing terrorism lottery, that could select any of us as a victim at any time, continues with no end in sight. And the 9/11 Wars that were based on the official account are bankrupting the nation both financially and morally.

Yes, conspiracy theories are a problem when not examined closely. Let’s all take a [closer look](#) at this one.

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*This article was originally published by [Dig Within](#).*

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## [America’s “War on Terrorism”](#)

 by Michel Chossudovsky

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September 11, 2001 provides a justification for waging a war without borders. Washington's agenda consists in extending the frontiers of the American Empire to facilitate complete U.S. corporate control, while installing within America the institutions of the Homeland Security State.

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