Destruction of the World Trade Center Twin Towers (WTC1 and WTC2) on 9/11: A Case Study

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Abstract
The final official reports on the destruction of the World Trade Center Twin Towers (WTC1 and WTC2) were published in September, 2005 by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Since then, serious questions have been raised by over 2100 qualified architects, engineers and scientists about how NIST selected the forensic evidence to be included and the processes used to reach its conclusions. The public has come to expect that analyses would depend on peer review to verify the soundness of a scientific work and ensure that the conclusions are the result of a consistent, transparent and ethical process. The appearance of the building during and after its collapse and its aftermath can provide the most direct evidence leading to the reason for collapse.

Ethical Standards for Failure Assessments
All professional organizations have codes of ethics. All of these organizations insist that their members adhere to a code of conduct that ensures their professional work products adhere to ethical standards that uphold the credibility of their professional organization. The use of selective or fraudulent data to support a hypothesis or claim is an ethical violation.

The US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Research Integrity, defines “Research Misconduct” as including fabrication or falsification. Its definition of fabrication includes making up data or results, while the definition of falsification includes misrepresenting quantitative data and subverting any inquiry into the use of explosives. These omissions violate professional ethical standards as well as sound scientific principles. The soundness of a scientific work and ensure that the conclusions are the result of a consistent, transparent and ethical process.

NIST permitted only limited public comments and its final report did not include an independent peer review. The appearance of the building during and after its collapse can provide the most direct evidence leading to the reason for collapse.

Consequences of Avoiding Peer Review
NIST permitted only limited public comments and its final report did not include an independent peer review process. Requests for supporting materials and key analysis have been refused by NIST. This paper describes many aspects of the investigations into the destruction of the Twin Towers that could not survive the scrutiny of an open and transparent peer review process.

Building failures can naturally occur for several different reasons that include fire, earthquake, subsidence, and poor construction. The appearance of the building during and after collapse can point strongly to the reason for the collapse. Therefore the study of a building’s actual collapse and its aftermath can provide the most direct evidence leading to the reason for collapse.

For example, NIST’s analysis did not proceed past the point where initiation of collapse was asserted to be imminent and therefore did not cover the actual collapse. The mechanics of collapse should have been a central portion of the investigation. NIST examined only the period before the actual destruction began but nevertheless concluded that there was “no corroborating evidence ... for controlling the approach using the initiated demolition.” The magnitude and enduring nature of NIST’s misrepresentations has alarming consequences for society.

Failure to Study the Destructions and their Aftermaths
NIST had in its possession copious photographic and video material showing the Towers’ destructions. By failing to study the actual “collapses” and their aftermaths, NIST omitted the most pertinent data and subverted any inquiry into the use of explosives. These omissions violate professional ethical standards and the scientific method.

The five frames in Figure 1 show the destruction is clearly sequential, symmetrical and floor-by-floor by 2.2 seconds into the “collapse.” Because this demolition wave can be seen, without being obscured by falling debris for a dozen stories, this indicates that the structure was being broken-up, pulverized and ejected as fast as building material can descend in free-fall outside the building. Figure 2 shows the symmetrical lateral ejections in all directions and the material in free-fall outside the building, beginning to obscure the demolition wave.

Failure to Consider Consequences to Public Health
By failing to examine the WTC powder and the abundant evidence for the use of explosives, NIST has severely down-played the toxic effects on, and greatly inhibited public response to, those who breathed the powder without protection. In a purely gravity-driven building collapse, such a lethal mixture of fine particulates may either have been created or dispersed so wide. Failure to study the WTC powder has momentous and on-going health consequences for many thousands of human beings. This omission violates the codes of ethics for engineers and health care providers that hold public safety paramount.

Failure to Provide the Most Essential Theory
NIST’s reports lack the most essential theory needed to substantiate a gravity-driven collapse. Such a theory would describe how the collapse began and progressed at a rate of acceleration equal to about two-thirds of gravitational free-fall, why the concrete floors and steel pans and most everything else were fragmented or pulverized to a fine powder, why exterior aluminum cladding and massive steel columns were severed and propelled hundreds of meters from the buildings, and why the powder contained an excessive amount of iron micro-spheres as well as unreacted nano-thermite. The theory would also have to explain the smoke sources needed to fuel fires in the debris pile that could not be extinguished for many weeks, as if it were the result of ongoing thermic reactions. By claiming a gravity-collapse mechanism as its conclusion, NIST has perpetrated a scientific fraud of major proportions.

Ethics: The Demonstrated Need For Open and Transparent Peer Review
NIST’s reports are highly suspect from an ethical standpoint, with alarming consequences for society. To maintain the integrity of the engineering profession and indeed respect for science itself, engineers, scientists and other professionals everywhere must speak out and demand a new, open and transparent, peer-reviewed study into the skyscraper destructions at the World Trade Center using all the available evidence, not just selected data.