

Media Pseudo-Debates and the Silence of Leftist Critics

The Incompetent, Negligent, Mishandling, Miscalculating Elite Blunderers

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Edward Curtin



ABC News' George Stephanopolous: A Clintonite operative and establishment media worm emblematic of the terminal careerist corruption afflicting his profession.

You've heard of them, no doubt, the U.S. rulers who can't rule too well and are always getting surprised by events or fed bad advice by their underlings. Their "mistakes" are always well intentioned. They stumble into wars through faulty intelligence. They drop the ball because of bureaucratic mix-ups. They miscalculate the perfidy of the elites whom allegedly they oppose while ushering them into the national coffers out of necessity since they are too big to fail. They never see the storm coming, even as they create it. Their incompetence is the retort to all those nut cases who conjure up conspiracy theories to explain their actions or lack thereof. They are innocent. Always innocent.

They and their media mouthpieces offer Americans, who are most eager to accept, what Lutheran pastor and anti-Nazi dissident Dietrich Bonhoeffer, executed at age thirty-nine by Hitler, called cheap grace: "Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on

ourselves. Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance..."

These incompetents are, in the immortal words of the New York newspaper columnist Jimmy Breslin, "The Gang Who Couldn't Shoot Straight."

Except they could and can.

They've actually shot a lot of people, here and abroad. It's one of their specialties. But they mean well. They screw up sometimes, but they mean well. They care, even while they kill millions with their guns and bombs. But they have their followers.

As another dissident thirty-nine-year-old pastor, executed by the American state, Martin Luther King, Jr. said: "Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity."

Mainstream Media Pseudo-Debates

The U.S. rulers have their defenders. Most are corporate mainstream journalists whose jobs are to defend the ruling elites of both political parties. They will criticize across the political divides depending on their organizations' political leanings at the moment. But they will never attack the fundamentals of the oligarchic war system since they are part of it. Their jobs depend on it. So *CNN* and *The New York Times* will obsessively attack Trump while *Fox News* will do the same to Obama or Biden. This is a game.



The vilification of Russia, China, Iran and other nations targeted by the Western oligarchy is unrelenting, all conducive to convincing the home publics that any measure—including nuclear war—needs to be considered to protect our supposedly sacred "way of life".

These days such massive media conglomerates are seemingly starkly divided and basically serve as adjuncts of one political party or the other. They are essentially political propagandists for either the Democrats or the Republicans and have abandoned any pretense to be anything else. They speak to their respective audiences in self-enclosed vacuums. They promote the divide that runs down the middle of the USA, a divide they helped to create.

Some have argued that this radical division of the media turf is because of economic and business factors; that the media organizations and their "journalists" have seen this strategy as the path to greater profits. There is probably some truth in this. But it is a small part.

For all sides of the corporate media serve the same overarching political function: to divide and conquer the population; to set the so-called left against right; middle America against the east and west coasts; white against black; working class against middle-class; men against women; husbands against wives, etc. To keep people, who in reality should be allies, fighting with each other. It is a classic

strategy of divide-and-conquer that is carried out by the mainstream media pursuant to their unstated mandate. It is not an accident and has been conducted with a vengeance in recent years.

And crucially, it is anchored in the false premise of the myth of left vs. right with a reasonable center somewhere between. Such a center has never existed. While left and right might once have been useful categories, they have long since outlived their usefulness. They now just serve to engender pseudo-debates.

Pseudo-debates are not new but they are highly effective. They are debates based on false premises. In this case, the premise is that the massive corporate media conglomerates are not part of the same system of control and containment of the population, but are genuine opponents in the battle for truth and democracy. Accept this premise and you have entered into endless debates leading nowhere. It is a classic method of intelligence agencies to sow uncertainty and confusion and to have people following Alice down the rabbit hole, tumbling and tumbling into an endless void as they argue continually about nothing. [\[1\]](#)

Dr. E. Martin Schotz has brilliantly explicated this trick in the case of the assassination of President Kennedy (“Certainly no honest person could ever accept the ‘single bullet theory’.”) where people are still debating a false mystery almost sixty years after the fact. He writes:

The lie is that there is a mystery to debate. And so we have pseudo-debates. Debates about meaningless disputes, based on assumptions which are obviously false...Perhaps many people think that engaging in pseudo-debate is a benign activity. That it simply means that people are debating something that is irrelevant. This is not the case. I say this because every debate rests on a premise to which the debaters must agree, or there is no debate. In the case of pseudo-debate the premise is a lie. So in the pseudo-debate we have the parties to the debate agreeing to purvey a lie to the public. And it is all the more

malignant because it is subtle. The unsuspecting person who is witness to the pseudo-debate does not understand that he is being passed a lie. He is not even aware that he is being passed a premise. It is so subtle that the premise just passes into the person as if it were reality. This premise—that there is uncertainly to be resolved—seems so benign. It is as easy as drinking a glass of treated water. But the fact remains that there is no mystery except in the minds of those who are willing to drink this premise. The premise is a lie, and a society which agrees to drink such a lie ceases to perceive reality. This is what we mean by mass denial.[2]

The entire corporate media ideological spectrum operates under the umbrella of oligarchic control, something that is not new, just more egregious with every passing day. More in your face. The corporate media serve as the mouthpieces for those oligarchs, but they try to convince their separate audiences that this isn't so. They give people enemies – false ones. Objects to hate.

But just like symptoms are not the disease, they give people a focus upon which to rivet their attention while the disease goes unattended. As with a drug addict, the taking of drugs is not the fundamental problem, although it becomes one and might kill you. The problem is why one takes drugs; what is it that is one feels needs to be tranquilized and silenced. Or, as the writer William Saroyan once flippantly said regarding the claim that smoking causes cancer: “You may tend to get cancer from the thing that makes you want to smoke, not from the smoking itself.”

The corporate mainstream media are the drug that serves to hide the core truth of an oligarchic cancerous warfare state drunk on power and using propaganda to play both sides. Everyone has become pawns in their game.

A recent example serves to illustrate a method in their madness. There is a new, ongoing *Spotify* podcast – [“Renegades: Born in the USA”](#) – featuring Barack Obama and the

singer Bruce Springsteen in conversation. Two rebels – it's of course ridiculous – but there it is. Two super rich celebrities stroking each other's egos in an upper class setting. One a singer, who rose to prominence out of nowhere as the voice of the small-town beleaguered working class; the other, a mixed-race politician who rose to prominence out of nowhere from a family background redolent of the CIA. Two icons of popular and political culture crossing over with a smooth patina of mixed-arts bullshit telling listeners they we need to return to the good old days when political centrism served the great American ideal that they both share. People are supposed to take this conversation between "buddies" seriously, as the two sit mask-less with their feet seemingly touching at a time when people are told to wear masks and avoid close contact with those outside their households. As Bruce strums his guitar, any half-way sentient person would realize he was being played, even while the meaning of the song was so twisted that he was enjoying it.

Left-wing Gatekeepers

Then, if we switch from the mainstream corporate media to alternative voices, especially prominent ones on the left, we notice something even stranger.

I think most readers would agree that the two seismic events of the last twenty years are the current COVID- 19 issue and the September 11, 2001 attacks. The latter, not only because of all the victims that died that day, but for how it led to so much death and destruction around the world, the endless war on terror, the invasions of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, etc., the ensuing loss of basic liberties and privacy via the Patriot Act, etc. The former for obvious current reasons of death and further loss of basic liberties under the lockdowns as governments throughout the world institute unprecedented measures of control, etc. Clearly these two events stand out over the decades. They bookend twenty years of massive U.S. war crimes, the growth of the national

security complex, an obscene increase in wealth for the wealthiest, and the loss of privacy and civil liberties for all.

And as everyone knows, September 11th and COVID-19 have resulted in great controversies and much debate because of their serious implications and the obvious questions about the official story lines raised by many respectable writers and researchers of varying political perspectives. At the very least, one would expect that leftist/liberal critics of the so-called Deep State and the machinations of the elite's wars and propaganda would have engaged in these discussions about these two seminal events or written analytic articles about them.

But for a core group of prominent left/liberal critics, these two subjects have been avoided like they are of no importance. No debates, no discussions, no analyses – simply silence, as if they didn't happen and there was nothing to discuss. Cases closed: the government has spoken. Let us move on to more important matters.

But that is wrong. For example, in about a dozen closely reasoned books of his own and with other international researchers, [David Ray Griffin](#) has raised innumerable questions that show that the official September 11 story is full of holes. Canadian writer Graeme MacQueen has written [a devastating exposé](#) of the linked anthrax attacks that followed September 11, showing clearly that they were a U.S. government operation. I myself have raised significant questions about what I call the linguistic mind-control associated with the attacks in ["Why I Don't Speak of 9/11 Anymore."](#) The dissident literature is enormous.

A few of Griffin's points are illustrative of the many anomalies in the official account. There are so many, and not just from Griffin but from other researchers, that I will mention just a few about the building collapses, what Griffin

calls “miracles of science.” The contradictions about the hijackers are also voluminous.

Here are a few such scientific miracles:

The Twin Towers and WTC 7 were the only steel-framed high-rise buildings ever to come down without explosives or incendiaries. The Twin Towers, each of which had 287 steel columns, were brought down solely by a combination of airplane strikes and jet-fuel fires. WTC 7 was not even hit by a plane, so it was the first steel-framed high-rise to be brought down solely by ordinary building fires. These World Trade Center buildings also came down in free fall – the Twin Towers in virtual free fall, WTC 7 in *absolute* free fall – for over two seconds. Although the collapses of the of the WTC buildings were not aided by explosives, the collapses imitated the kinds of implosions that can be induced only by demolition companies. In the case of WTC 7, the structure came down symmetrically (straight down, with an almost perfectly horizontal roofline), which meant that all 82 of the steel support columns had to fall simultaneously, although the building’s fires had a very *asymmetrical pattern*. The South Tower’s upper 30-floor block changed its angular momentum in midair. This 30-floor block then disintegrated in midair.

I could go on and on with examples. The simple point is that there are so many absurdities in the official story that to ignore them is an act of intellectual and moral betrayal. Anyone who has closely studied the government’s *9/11 Commission Report* knows it is highly fictional.

The same is true for dissenting voices on the COVID-19 issue. Three publications in particular have published an enormous amount of well-reasoned critiques of the official version of the COVID-19 narrative: [Global Research](#), [Off-Guardian](#), and [Children’s Health Defense](#). All present many articles by serious writers who raise innumerable questions and make irrefutable points about this matter.

And again, the point is not simple agreement with the dissenters' arguments, but the need to engage their critiques. Here too the silence is resounding, for it says "we buy the official account."

Consider these few:

The man who invented the test used to determine the so-called COVID positive test results, the Nobel Prize winning chemist, [Kary Mullis](#), has said that the test cannot do that, it is not a diagnostic test, and therefore all the test results are meaningless. Additionally, there is serious doubt that the virus called SARS-CoV-2 causes a disease called COVID 19 since there is no evidence that the virus has ever been isolated. Assuming for argument's sake, however, that the PCR test can detect a specific virus, even Anthony [Fauci himself, and the World Health Organization](#) (one hour after Biden was sworn into office), have both said that the PCR test in order to have any accuracy must be performed at cycles below 35 thresholds while for a year those tests have been done at thresholds much higher, resulting in vast numbers of [false positives](#). Cycle thresholds are the level at which the PCR test is said to detect a sample of the COVID-19 virus.

Furthermore, eminent voices such as Michel Chossudovsky and Peter Koenig at *Global Research*, Robert Kennedy, Jr. at *Children's Health Defense*, and Cate Black and Kit Knightly at *Off-Guardian* have for a long time been vociferously objecting to the official narrative with a vast amount of additional analyses involving the consequences of the wide-spread lockdowns. Such dissidents have had to fight against an organized campaign of censorship that should raise the alarm for anyone who cares about truth.

For leftists who remain silent on these fundamental issues, I can assure them that these critiques of the official explanations of September 11, 2001 and COVID-19 are not right-wing conspiracies but are the work of leftists digging deep

for truth.

It is therefore more than odd that certain left/liberal writers completely avoid these issues. One must assume, therefore, that they accept the official explanations for these events, just as this coterie of leftist/liberal critics dismiss the voluminous and detailed critiques of the Warren Commission and the assassination of President Kennedy. From their silence one can assume that these matters are of no importance because the authorities have given us the truth.

One such deceased left-wing writer, who can stand in for the group of living writers I allude to, was the well-known and often brilliant journalist Alexander Cockburn, the founder of *Counterpunch Magazine*. In Cockburn's case, however, and to his credit even though he had no idea what he was talking about regarding September 11, 2001 and the JFK assassination, he did not remain silent but expressed his bile in ways he thought piercing but which made him appear quite ignorant. Cockburn had a sharp tongue and liked to ridicule anyone who disagreed with him. He excoriated all who questioned the JFK assassination or September 11 as "conspiracy nuts," "lunatics" involved with "kookery."

Echoing the CIA's conspiracy meme, his name calling was offensive and his ignorance of these matters extraordinary. But he was a star leftist, an untouchable. Few wished to criticize him. He started with the assumption that government stupidity, incompetence, and screw-ups allow these terrible events to happen, and then without a shred of evidence, concluded that is why they happened. All evidence and logic to the contrary, he derisively dismissed as the work of fools. Only Cockburn and a government that admits mistakes were made were right. His arguments on these matters were pseudo-debates based on a premises he conjured out of thin air.

He was a master incompetent of the incompetence theory, one that many prominent leftists follow today, such as a recent

passing comment by one of them on the COVID-19 matter as a *mishandling* by the ruling elite. The implicit assumption being that the basic government and mainstream media tale is correct and all would be far better if the Trump administration hadn't screwed up. Nothing further is forthcoming or necessary. Let us proceed on the assumption that the official account is true and that the government's inept response is the problem. Failure of leadership. Government negligence. Incompetence.

And anyone who even harbors a suspicion that there may be more to the story is engaging in conspiratorial thinking. Of course this is the same response given to those who for twenty years have researched and questioned the government's account of September 11, 2001. The 9/11 omission story. The fictional account that will dominate the news as the twentieth anniversary approaches this September. Will any of those liberal/leftists who have remained silent all these years let it pass as truth? I suspect so but hope not.

The Need for Dialogue

So we have pseudo debates on one hand and silence on the other when what is required is not self-censorship but open critical dialogue on these fundamental matters. "There comes a time when silence is betrayal," said Martin Luther King from the pulpit of Riverside Church on April 4, 1967 when he condemned the Vietnam War and broke his own silence in opposition to many of his advisers. A year later to the day, like JFK, he was murdered by the warfare state he condemned. Like Senator Robert Kennedy two months later. They were killed by very competent people.

Dr. Martin E. Schotz wrote twenty-six years ago in [*History Will Not Absolve US*](#) that those he had in mind for their defense of the Warren Commission were "*such individuals as Noam Chomsky, Alexander Cockburn, the editors of The Nation magazine, and, if everyone remembers, I.F. Stone as well. I*

think the positions of these individuals are very important because in their surprising (to us) dishonesty and willingness to cooperate with the warfare state in covering up the crime, there is obviously something to be learned."

Yes, there is. It is time for all people of good will to stop finding excuses for the ruling elites, whether through incompetence theories or the silent refusal to publicly engage the government and its critics on the most important issues of our time – September 11, 2001 and COVID-19. Those Schotz names above are heroes for many on the liberal/left today who follow in their stead. It's as though they have found it necessary to mimic their teachers' lessons. Better logic would have them analyzing the premises of September 11 and COVID-19. Start with the basics. Be explicit. Tell us why you are silent.

It's time to graduate from this school of denial.

REFS

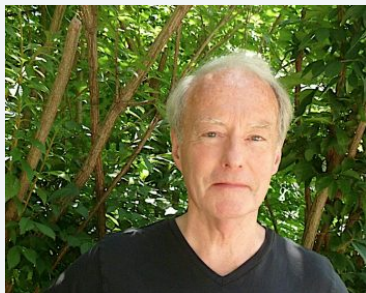
[\[1\]](#)

<https://ratical.org/ratville/JFK/HWNAU/letterToVJS.html#partIa>

[\[2\]](#)

<https://ratical.org/ratville/JFK/FalseMystery/COPA1998EMS.html#s2>

THE AUTHOR IN HIS OWN WORDS



.....
Educated in the classics, philosophy, literature, theology, and sociology, I teach sociology at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. My writing on varied topics has appeared widely over many years. I write as a public intellectual for the general public, not as a specialist for a narrow readership. I believe a non-committal sociology is an impossibility and therefore see all my work as an effort to enhance human freedom through

: understanding.

Select original comments

1. **Eddy Minimum** says:

[March 19, 2021 at 4:21 pm](#)

Yet another admirable direct hit! “And crucially, it is anchored in the false premise of the myth of left vs. right with a reasonable center somewhere between.” As G. Edward Griffin pointed out, this ubiquitous left-right paradigm is designed to ignore any non-collective system based on individual natural rights. To the left, if we go far enough, there is communism and socialism. On the right, if we go far enough, there is fascism (government/corporate merger) and Nazi-ism (National Socialists). What would be in the center between two collectivist models for central control? There is no place for individualism, which is the real opposite to either communism or fascism. This is disguised by singling out the leaders of the fascists as unilateral “dictators” and referring to the left side by their systems.

I have done a fair amount of thinking about Noam Chomsky since I learned few things about what actually happened in 2001. I have watched some old videos of Noam speaking around the time of the Vietnam war, and he seems at that point to be a brave truth-teller. More recently, in his old age, he has strangely warded off any serious discussion about the false flag event.

It seems most likely to me that someone got to him, threatened his family or some such. He was a high profile voice on the left, and if he questioned the official story, many college students and voting Democrats would have also done so. Since he blew it off,

there must be nothing there. This may be the case with any number of similar high profile leftists. This may be giving them too much credit, I suppose.

Of course, journalists learn quickly what to right in order to keep their corporate jobs.

The left, which seems to have been the primary source of anti-war sentiment back in the mid-20th century, has been re-directed toward false issues. Like most of us, they have been recruited as team players, and they have been convinced that all evil derives from the other team. Thus, if the bombs are dropped by Obama, they are humanitarian bombs designed to save people from their evil leaders. All environmental issues take a back seat to the mighty CO2 turning the Earth into Hell. No actual facts are needed, as those who disagree are using right-wing talking points, which are obviously all wrong.

2. **Steve Tailleir** says:

[March 19, 2021 at 1:16 pm](#)

Wonderful piece Ed !! ... I feel I have fallen short on Covid. It all just seems so complicated, and I think that allows the issue to lay in a personal weak place. Possibly one not so uncommon to others. I have little formal education and can easily be intimidated by matters seeming over my head. I do think this weakness is surely well acknowledged among the powerful and used to their advantage.....Anyway. I shall work harder trying to separate the wheat from the chaff.

..... I feel your writing is free of intellectual jargon, straightforward and clear. Sometimes your references to Greek Mythology or such are not in my wheelhouse but easily googled.

Keep the Faith !!

Steve Tailleir

3. **Gary Weglarz** says:

[March 19, 2021 at 11:19 am](#)

What a quote by Dr. E. Martin Schotz on the “pseudo debate.”

“This premise—that there is uncertainly to be resolved—seems so benign. It is as easy as drinking a glass of treated water. But the fact remains that there is no mystery except in the minds of those who are willing to drink this premise. The premise is a lie, and a society which agrees to drink such a lie ceases to perceive reality. This is what we mean by mass denial.”

It is quite stunning how that larger contingent of “left” or “progressive” outlets or journalists who were willing to issue ongoing challenge to the four years of MSM Russia-gate lunacy somehow can’t find the voice to so much as question the non-stop MSM covid fear mongering.

Meanwhile our seamless propaganda system marches valiantly on – 24/7/365 – colonizing and devouring the brains of everyone in its path while creating some bizarre sort of monolithic zombie hive brain. Our American gulag has always existed – right between our own ears. However, these newest layers of covid barbed wire being erected daily around the American psyche are so dense and impenetrable that they seem to have blocked out all critical thinking and all light.

A wonderful post Ed. Thank you.

Up to You.

^3000US citizens have no real political representation.

We don't live in a democracy. And our freedom is disappearing fast.

I don't want to be ruled by hypocrites, whores, and war criminals.

What about you? Time to push back against the corporate oligarchy.

And its multitude of minions and lackeys.

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