

JULES NAUDET'S FIRST PLANE SHOT WAS STAGED

A Clue to the Truth about 9/11 ?

1. Introduction



The Naudet brothers: Jules, left, and Gédéon, right.

At 8.46 a.m. on September 11, 2001, at the intersection of Church and Lispenard Streets in Manhattan, one of two French film-making brothers, 28-year-old Jules Naudet, was filming a group of firemen from Ladder 1/Engine 7 at 100 Duane Street, checking for an alleged suspected gas leak, when he captured what was thought to be unique film of American Airlines Flight 11 from Boston flying into the North Tower of the World Trade Center, three quarters of a mile away.

Two years later — the delay still not satisfactorily explained — a Czech immigrant called Pavel Hlava produced his own video film of the event, shot from south-east of the tower and much further away, at the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel — the plane impact unseen, on the far side. It later turned out — although virtually no-one seems to have noticed at the time — that the plane had a third photographer all along, a German artist, Wolfgang Staehle, whose single still picture showed the plane heading towards the tower. No credible explanation has been offered as to why the Naudet shot was universally, at least from September 2002, described as the only existent image of the plane. It is still in many ways unique, however — and far superior to the two others — with its view, from almost directly behind, of the plane actually hitting the tower, followed by close-ups.

Jules Naudet claims his film exists only because of pure luck — as would seem to be logical, given that this was the first attack of the whole "9/11" sequence, and was totally unexpected. When United Airlines Flight 175 flew into the South Tower sixteen minutes later, it was captured by many photographers — including Jules Naudet's brother Gédéon — who were filming the aftermath of the attack on its neighbour, but who had not, of course, filmed that attack itself. After the first attack, the second one was easy to film — but how else could the first one have been captured than by luck ?

There is an answer to that question, but an extremely disturbing one. I believe the Naudet film of Flight 11 is a charade, staged to appear accidental. However bizarre that claim may appear to be, the evidence that justifies it is there in the film (which throughout this article, unless otherwise specified, refers to the DVD version, issued in September 2002 : "9/11 — The Filmmakers' Commemorative Edition" (Paramount PHE 8276)), and I challenge anyone watching it and following my arguments to reach any other conclusion. No-one can dispute that this is an extraordinary piece of film — because of its uniqueness as well as its content — and that there must therefore be an equally extraordinary explanation for how it came to be captured. I believe, for the reasons in this essay, that those who had both the motive and the effrontery to carry out these attacks also had the motive and effrontery to film the first one for propaganda purposes, passing it off as the product of luck, complete with a contrived cover story, the one told in the Naudet film.

The second plane would have been filmed anyway, but having "accidental" film of the first one as well was obviously too good to resist. It was too important an event not to somehow record on film and, perhaps with the help of professionals from the industry, which has had a long and close relationship with the intelligence agencies (Richard Sorge, Sir William Stephenson, the Korda brothers, etc), it would not be too difficult to disguise the fact that the scene was arranged — the film equivalent of the (long-outdated, but similar) steganographic technique of hiding a coded message in a microdot, where it would not even be suspected. [The absence of film from the Pentagon that morning, where security surveillance appears — if only to the chronically credulous — to be limited to the one car park camera that allegedly got stills of the explosion, with the wrong date and time, must have some other explanation.]

Unfortunately — for them — the people behind this disguise operation were anything but professional, and it does not take a genius to deconstruct the whole thing, when the joins holding it together are so obvious, to anyone who can see not only what is in the film, but — just as important — what is **not**. A single still photograph from the DVD — Picture 1d in Appendix 4 — raises a whole host of questions. Where, for example, in a Manhattan street scene at about 8.45 am on a working Tuesday, is the moving traffic ? This is not the busiest area of the city, but there are vehicles in the shot : they are all stationary, however, and given that two of them belong to the Fire Department and are displaying emergency lights, it would be illegal to overtake them, or drive into the same block or park behind them in it, or to come closer than 200 feet behind them in the same lane, or an adjacent one, or to drive past in front of them (New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law, §1217) — see below, from the film.



Anyone, professional or amateur, who has tried filming street scenes knows about the problems moving vehicles can cause, and that the best solution is filming when there are none — but that normally means waiting for traffic lights to change. Or, even better, the situation in the Naudet film — a junction blocked by authority of the Fire Department, whether traffic lights change or not; a trick not available, it has to be said, to most ordinary photographers — one so unusual, in fact, that it immediately attracts suspicion. Furthermore, this photographer is not only filming at an officially blocked junction, he is filming the firemen who blocked it, as their guest — a 28-year-old beginner, treated the way a documentary film legend like Fred Wiseman might be; the suspicions multiply.

At the scene of a potential emergency, a photographer without credentials from the Fire Department would have been told to stand well clear, along with other pedestrians: he would not get the kind of privileged access Naudet gets. And if the white mail van parked at the south-east corner in this film had been turning right up Lispenard Street, between Naudet and the North Tower, just as the plane flew into it, not only — since he is standing in the road — would he have had to get out of the way rather fast, the plane's impact might have been missed. How very convenient that, at the appropriate time, the van was still parked at that corner, the only other vehicles that could have caused problems belonged to the Fire Department and Naudet's view of the tower was unimpeded by either vehicles or people — including the firemen, all conveniently standing well away from the film action to the south.

How many firemen, precisely ? According to Firehouse magazine (April 2002), three units responded to the gas leak call — Duane Street, Engine 6 from Beekman Street and Ladder 8 from North Moore Street — and co-director James Hanlon's commentary tells us there were thirteen men on duty just at Duane Street alone that day, with only 21-year-old probationary Tony Benetatos left in charge of the firehouse when the call came in. There must have been at least twenty firemen at this intersection, yet no more than five are ever in shot at any one time. Where are the rest of them ? All hiding behind Naudet, camera-shy ?

And where are the police at this emergency roadblock ? The First NYPD Precinct's HQ is at 16 Ericsson Place, just across West Broadway from Lispenard, and one block north of Ladder 8. Why did no-one contact the police ? Why did the brothers choose Duane Street, out of the 224 firehouses in New York, or the 51 in Manhattan ? Because their "old friend" James Hanlon worked in that one. How did they become "old friends" ? We don't know : David Friend of *Vanity Fair*, a personal friend of the Naudets' father since the 1970s, attempts to answer this question and many others — only four years after I first raised them — in his 2006 book "Watching the World Change." Gédéon allegedly met Hanlon "at a party in the mid-1990s," when Hanlon was a "fireman-in-training" : he joined the FDNY in 1994, after five years at the New York Daily News (he has a degree in Journalism and Media). This was also five years after the brothers moved to New York, so that would date it to that year or 1995 (the year Gédéon allegedly graduated from film school; Jules had gone to classes pretending to be his brother — what, as if they were twins ? — but never actually enrolled, let alone graduated). "They clicked at once" : why ? Both smokers ? Hanlon's French wife ? Was she at the party ? "The more time they spent with him, the more determined they were to make a film with Hanlon" : but it only took them five years — first they made a film about boxers, not firemen. Why ? Why didn't they make their fireman film first ? Friend tells us they first approached the FDNY in September 2000, and were given "carte blanche" by May 2001 : to go anywhere they wanted, and do anything they saw fit, in a **firehouse** ?!!! Incredibly unlikely, and their legal permission to film dated from 17 July, not May (see Appendix 6). In "What We Saw," a compilation of testimonies put together in book-and-DVD format by Dan Rather and CBS and published by Simon and Schuster in 2002, Jules had also made the claim that their filming started in May 2001, but not that they were given carte blanche.

How does Antonios "Tony" Benetatos fit into this ? Because the brothers had followed the progress of 99 Fire Academy* students, decided Benetatos was the one they wanted and, explains Hanlon, "We got Tony assigned to my firehouse, one of the biggest in the city" (06:35 into the DVD). How did they manage that — an ordinary firefighter and two French film-makers ? We don't know. How did they acquire the authority to assign probationaries to a particular firehouse ? How long were the brothers going to be allowed to film at Duane Street, under their contract with the Department (they actually filmed until December 2001, before starting to edit their footage) ? Clause 2 of that document (see Appendix 6) limits the filmmaking to "a reasonable time" after Benetatos' probationary period at Duane Street, which began on 5 July, and would continue for the next 9 months (or 12, in some sources) — which means they would still, conveniently, be at Duane Street on 11 September. The film implies, with the date 9 June shown as we first see the new recruits at the Fire Academy, that that is when the course started, with Benetatos moving to Duane Street four weeks later. But the training was for **fourteen** weeks, not four, and must have begun around the end of March. When did the Naudets select Benetatos as their perfect subject — a month from the end of his course ? Would it not make more sense to conduct interviews at the **start** of the course ? If they first approached FDNY in September 2000, they must have known the next intake would be in the following March.

* Based at Randall's Island in the East River — which, ironically, is hired out by the Fire Department as a film location (fire trucks and equipment also available).

If the training had begun in September, or as early as June, the Naudets might still have been out filming at Randall's Island on 9/11 — but it conveniently began in March, and ended 10 weeks before 9/11, conveniently giving Benetatos time to settle in at Duane Street. 9/11 might have been at the start of his probationary period, or before it, or at the end of it : but it was a convenient, comfortable 10 weeks into it. What would it look like if 9/11 had happened on his first day as a firefighter ? Would a proxy have been left to mind the shop alone on Day One ? The time frame in the contract was never meant to be **compulsory** : the Naudets could have packed in the filming at any time, but they carried on until September (and later). Why ? Waiting for a big fire, we are told — again and again : ah, that would explain it. But does it ? Doesn't this all begin to look like the construction of a fiction ? The Naudets linked to Hanlon and Duane Street — how, we don't know — linked to Benetatos — how, we don't know — with a film deal that has the brothers and their subject in Duane Street 10 weeks before 9/11, not 10 weeks after it, or 10 months — the Naudet timing linked to the 9/11 timing — how, we don't know — but we can't have the film without the links. Ironically, or not, Benetatos' mother, Rev. Patricia Ray Moore, a Presbyterian pastor, says she is convinced the Naudet film was scripted, and "I think it was my boss" — presumably a reference to God. I agree about the scripting, but not the writer: I would suggest someone rather less exalted, possibly in the pay of some branch of the US Government.

How can I make such an outrageous accusation against public figures ? Surely if the Naudet film was so obviously incriminating, it would have been exposed long before now, and all those behind the 9/11 plot would have been brought to justice ? Why would those responsible even risk having public figures so openly involved in it ? The short answer is that for most of the nine years after 9/11 the Naudets have never really **been** public figures. At the end of 2007, "In God's Name," their first new product since the filming of "9/11" — apart from its supposed "update" in 2006 — was broadcast on CBS TV, in the USA only ; CBS's Susan Zirinsky again co-produced, as she did on "9/11," but there was no mention this time of James Hanlon — of whom more shortly — or of *Vanity Fair*. The Naudets could hardly be more public — one might think — than being seen hanging out with twelve of the world's main religious leaders, not to mention the apparent credibility it would give a pair of liars like them. But (a) being public would involve the Naudets making themselves accessible to us, not folk like the Dalai Lama making themselves accessible to the Naudets ; and (b) would any of these leaders, with billions of followers between them, ever have granted an audience to the brothers in the first place without the involvement of CBS ? Would the project ever have got off the ground without CBS ? The publicity says the Naudets made the film first, then brought in CBS in August 2007 ; I very much doubt that. Where would they get the money, for a start ? Jules claims it was their naïveté that opened doors for them : I find that even less likely. Ruth Gledhill of the London *Times* of 26 January 2008 : "The US broadcasting giant CBS chose him as one of the 12 most influential religious figures in the world in its December documentary *In God's Name*" (my emphasis). Spot the mention of the Naudets : CBS picked the subjects — CBS made the film.

When exactly was the film shown ? From 9 to 11 p.m., Eastern Standard Time (9-11 — well, it would hardly be 8 to 10, would it ? — same timing as the March 2002 broadcast of the "9/11" film, funnily enough), on Sunday — the **Christian** day of worship — 23 December — two days before **Christmas**. How many spiritual leaders were included, again ? Twelve : the number of disciples chosen by **Christ**. So they were all **Christian** leaders, then ? No. Five were : the Pope* (representing Roman Catholicism), the Archbishop of Canterbury (Anglicanism), the Patriarch of Moscow (Russian Orthodox) and the Presidents of the Lutheran World Federation and the Southern Baptist Convention. The number twelve, the Sunday and the date would not have had much significance to the seven others : the Dalai Lama (Tibetan Buddhism), Sheikh Tantawi of al-Azhar in Cairo [died in March 2010] (Sunni Islam), Grand Ayatollah Fadlallah [died in July 2010] (Shia Islam — the "Twelvers"), the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel (Judaism), the High Priest of the Shrine at Ise (Shinto), the Jathedar of the Akal Takht in Amritsar (Sikhism) and Amma (Hinduism — the only woman among the twelve). Of these, eleven were interviewed by the Naudets ; the Pope never gives private interviews, being almost as inaccessible as the brothers themselves.

* Assuming they were consulted about the film, the Vatican must have been perplexed by its title. "In God's Name" had been the title of a best-selling 1984 book by investigative writer David Yallop, accusing Papal officials of involvement in a conspiracy to murder Albino Luciani, who reigned as Pope John Paul I for just 33 days in 1978. Does the film title have any connection with Yallop's book, or is it just another Naudet coincidence ?

It should be pointed out that none of these is actually the head of a religion in the usually understood sense : the head of the Church of England is the Queen, not the Archbishop of Canterbury; Shinto has no head, or founder, or scripture, and religion and state are completely separate, as in the USA (allegedly); Sikhism has had no Guru for more than three centuries, and treats the holy book, the Adi Granth, as its "leader"; Hinduism has no founder and no leader; Israel itself has two Chief Rabbis, an Ashkenazi and a Sephardi, and they do not exercise authority over Jews in other countries; there is no head of either Sunni or Shia Islam; the Dalai Lama is the head not of Buddhism, or even Tibetan Buddhism, but its Yellow Hat Sect. None of the non-Christian religions represented in the film has a single leader, and even the Christian sects are all divided into subsets and countless splinter groups — Eastern Catholic, Uniate Catholic, Coptic, etc. etc. the Orthodox "church" is split into 15 churches, of which the Russian is 5th in order of "honour" — the Patriarch of Moscow does not represent every Orthodox worshipper in the world, and he is not the head of their religion. The presentation of these twelve individuals as speaking for billions of people around the world is false and misleading in the extreme : how unusual for the Naudets.

In telephone interviews from his New York home, Jules Naudet explains that the two-hour film had been edited down from an original 180 hours, shot over 165 days of filming between October 2006 and June 2007, and that the impulse for the film's "spiritual journey" (also a literal one — India, Japan, Russia, Egypt, etc) came from what happened on 9/11, although we get no explanation as to why it took five years to get around to making the film. The 2006 update to "9/11" contained not one mention of the new film project, which must already have been well advanced. The Naudets have years of apparent inactivity to account for, and this appears to be their best effort : less than six months of filming, travelling, research and arranging access to their subjects — who presumably would have been far from reluctant to advertise their **own** product, a far more credible reason for their participation than the naïve Naudets turning up at their door.

In "9/11" the brothers tried to steal reflected glory from New York firemen ; in the new film, they do the same thing with Popes, Lamas and Ayatollahs. But however much they would like us to think it, we can quickly dispose of any implication that they have had their "9/11" film or their own moral character approved by any or all of these leaders, or that any of their sanctity had rubbed off on the brothers. What actually happens in the film is the exact opposite : the sanctity of the twelve being tainted by association with the Naudets and their handlers. Obviously, they were unaware who the Naudets were before (and after) they met them, but I will personally be making sure they find out, and exactly how — and how **easily** — they were manipulated and abused and deceived by people complicit in mass murder.

Jules Naudet, raised as an agnostic by his parents, made the film as part of an alleged search for answers to the Big Questions — the meaning of life, etc. Why are we here ? Where was God on 9/11 ? (better questions : Where was the US Air Force ? Where was Richard Myers ? Where was Donald Rumsfeld ?) So did he find any ? "I don't think I can say at the end of the journey itself after meeting these people that I found God — but I found hope." Hope above all, no doubt, that the questions raised in this essay can be forgotten about for a few more years, because of a cobbled-together, half-baked film that answers not one of those questions, and tells us not a great deal more about the Naudets than we already knew, and that was little enough. The film is, frankly, yet another reaction from the Naudet camp to my agenda-setting, still-unanswered accusations about them ; it is also another piece of shameless effrontery — an insult to the leaders involved, and to us — but that is one thing we know to expect from them by now. Where next ? Onwards and upwards ? An interview with God, perhaps ?

As for James Hanlon, he seems to have struck out on his own at about the time the "update" was made : in 2006, he set up his own production company with an old friend Darren Capik, PiKLoN Entertainment (from CaPIK and HanLoN, website at www.piklon.com), and their first film, directed by Hanlon — "Popwhore : A New American Dream" — was shown at the New York International Independent Film and Video Festival on July 21 2007, later winning awards for Best Documentary and Best Director of a Documentary. Hanlon says of the film, an investigation of the US porn industry, "I believe this story has the potential to become the first real look into that world." Only someone who was almost totally ignorant of the history of documentary (and fictional) film could make a statement as ludicrous as that, awards or no awards.

In 2007 Hanlon was "forced into retirement with recovery-effort lung ailments," according to the *New York Daily News* of 2 July 2007. Curiously, he never mentioned these ailments in the coda of the 2006 version of "9/11" — other firefighters' health problems, but not his own : maybe he was just too modest. Hanlon himself says the Department left him with "no pay, no pension, and no insurance," after 13 years. Did that come as a surprise to him ? If it did, why ? And if it didn't, why the complaint ? And if the FDNY left him penniless, where did he get the money to help set up PiKLoN ? If it came from his work as an actor, where have his credits been in recent years ? Yet he now calls himself a "film-maker," having produced the grand total of **two** : "9/11" and this one, six years later. Why would he expect help with any ailments he developed from the 9/11 recovery when the Naudet film shows him **volunteering** for it ?

Presumably, now that New York City, as of March 2010, has offered a "final payoff" to its 9/11 compensation litigants, Hanlon will also be volunteering for his share of the \$675 million — if, that is, he ever registered a claim : thousands of others did. It might also help if he had some proof of his claim, since New York City does not have a history of giving handouts to anyone who applies. If he is a real 9/11 victim, good luck to him.



James Hanlon, with the "recovery-effort lung ailment" : left, 12 September 2001, on his way to Ground Zero for this recovery effort ; right, 22 September 2002, in Los Angeles, accepting his Emmy.

Apart from "9/11" and "Popwhore," Hanlon's entire career since 2001, according to the IMDB website, consists of precisely eight jobs : Law & Order: Special Victims Unit (1 episode, 2001); 100 Center Street (1 episode, 2001); Law & Order: Criminal Intent (1 episode, 2001); Sex and the City (1 episode, 2003); Raising Helen (2004); Law & Order: Trial By Jury (1 episode, 2005); Criminal Minds (1 episode, 2009) and, most recently, yet another bit part, in Ang Lee's film Taking Woodstock. Eight blink-and-you-miss-them appearances in as many years ?

Why did it take six years for both Hanlon **and** the Naudets to produce their follow-ups — which they must have been working on at the same time — and even attempt to justify their description as film-makers ? And how peculiar it is, that when they finally do, the Naudets make a film about men of God (or similar) and Hanlon makes one about a woman some might say had lost God : "I believe the Conservative right will rally behind the film despite the title and the Left Wing will also hold it up for First Amendment rights. What makes me feel good about the film is everyone will leave the theater and have a strong opinion on the film." So how about Hanlon himself, then ? Where does **he** stand ? The Naudets are still the agnostics they were before they made their film, and Hanlon has no position on religion, prostitution or the porn industry : he just wants to keep everybody happy. God forbid that he might upset anybody by having something as dangerous as an opinion (on who was behind 9/11, for example).

Here's **mine**, on why both these films were made : in reaction to constant pressure, since 2002, from this article, its writer and its readers. It is not a coincidence that both films should turn up around the same time : nor is it accidental that Hanlon and his "old friends" the Naudets have separated, at least in film-making terms. If one new film had been produced by the same partnership that made "9/11," it would reopen the questions about that film : this is an attempt to divert attention from those questions, by splitting up the partnership, or making it appear that way, as if there never was any working association between them. Both Hanlon and the Naudets mention the "9/11" film in recent interviews, but they never mention each other. Why would that be ? Try finding one mention of James Hanlon in all the publicity for "In God's Name," or any mention of the Naudets in the publicity for "Popwhore." In his interview with Show Business, Hanlon actually says "When I made 9/11" : the Naudets had nothing to do with it, apparently — Hanlon won all the awards, single-handedly. Whereas the Naudets seem to be telling us **Hanlon** had nothing to do with the film. More lies to add to the list.

From September 2002 on, the only events — the only evidence that the Naudets might still be alive — have been the following :

1. Both Naudets (and James Hanlon) were the honorees at the 2nd annual United Firefighters' Association celebrity golf benefit at Lake Success on Long Island on 23 June 2003 (with Evander Holyfield, the late Jerry Orbach, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and others).
2. Gédéon and Hanlon were Special Honored Guests at the Hilton Head Island Celebrity Golf Tournament off South Carolina from 3-5 September 2004 (with (again, just three months before he died) Jerry Orbach, Elke Sommer, Patrick Duffy, Lee Majors, etc — and a group of firefighters from Duane Street)
3. In November 2004, *Variety* magazine carried news of a follow-up to "9/11," a feature film written and directed by the Naudet/Hanlon team, and produced by Daniel Bigel, called "Seamus" ; this project never did turn into an actual film.
4. On 26 September 2005, the New York Daily News reported that the brothers had been special guests at the Department's centenary party for the Duane Street firehouse — their "second home" — the day before, also attended by Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta.
5. In May 2006, lawyers for the Naudets and Hanlon (Frankfurt, Kurnit, Klein and Selz PC) forced the removal, under copyright law, of footage from "9/11" from Dylan Avery's film "Loose Change" (due to be given a special screening at the UK Houses of Parliament on 14 June until its sponsor, former Cabinet Minister Michael Meacher, bottled out and withdrew it.)
6. The September 2006 update to the "9/11" film (see Appendix 3).
7. The first (and probably last) TV showing of "In God's Name," December 2007.

None of these involved the Naudets making a public appearance (the golf benefits were presumably invitation-only) or being interviewed at any length. Since their relative visibility in 2001 and 2002, they and Hanlon effectively dropped off the radar for the next few years. The Emmy and Peabody laureates went back to private obscurity, and the world of journalism seems not to have noticed, or cared. Even now, after "In God's Name," unless there are interviews and appearances to come, we can justifiably still ask the question : if the Naudets are so innocent, why do they appear to have a phobia about publicity ? They have no website, no blog, no presence on the internet, apart from what other folk contribute : now does their production company, CaPiKLoN, but then with websites as modest as www.ingodsnamemovie.com and www.popwhoremovie.com — where can the Naudets be ? Solving one of the documentary film world's

from what other folk contribute, not does their production company, Corbis — but then with virtually no product to advertise, why would it need one? Why are the Naudets the S.D. Samplers of the documentary film world? The question of why Hanlon appears to be not quite as reclusive, although not exactly a household name, might have something to do with the relationship between them, and the question of how they came to have one in the first place.

I originally wrote this because virtually no-one else was saying it, and I was amazed — and appalled — that that was the case. Why wasn't every professional investigative journalist in the USA and elsewhere on to the Naudets from Day One, when it should have been obvious to anyone who knew the Flight 11 shot was unique that it must have been contrived? Were they blind? What was wrong with these people? I still don't know the answer, and most still refuse to touch it, as if afraid their careers might be contaminated by anything with the word "conspiracy" attached: a lethal combination of cowardice and stupidity. Even among those who refuse to believe the official story, the Naudet angle is still, nine years later, a minority view, although a growing one. I could blame a general failure of imagination — the fact that most people, even conspiracists and sceptics, have fixed patterns of thinking, and are looking for the same kind of clues that might have helped explain the Kennedy assassination four decades ago (with which 9/11 does indeed have many similarities). Sometimes the truth is just too obvious for folk obsessed with the fine detail, or with using scientific terminology to make their case sound more impressive, whether it actually is or not.

Sometimes the truth can stare us in the face for years before someone looks at it the right way and sees it for what it is. If other people don't want to accuse the Naudets and their associates, for whatever reason — shortsightedness? — intellectual laziness? — in some cases, just plain dishonesty? — that is up to them, and they can and will be judged by it. There are libel laws, and that can perfectly understandably affect some people's attitudes, if they have too much to lose — and don't have enough confidence in their case. I have 99.9% confidence in the case, and nothing to lose — and unlike some, I have no interest in making one penny out of 9/11, in sales of books, films or anything else. To me, the case for the Naudet film being fraudulent stands on its merits: you don't need degrees in physics, engineering or anything else to follow my arguments, and I am a non-graduate myself. Anyone applying an open, common-sense, rational mind to the facts presented here should reach the same conclusions I did. And these are mostly facts: there is nothing speculative in my list of 69 conveniences in the Flight 11 shot — they are all solid, concrete factual observations. The speculation is in trying to construct an explanation for them — a perfectly valid exercise, as long as fact and conjecture are distinguished.

On that subject, I want to emphasise that this essay does not claim to be able to prove who was responsible for 9/11. The point of the exercise is to establish that the Naudet shot must have been staged by people who knew about the attacks in advance: who those people might be is a different subject. I have my own ideas on that, but they have little or nothing to do with the Naudet film, other than observing that it seems rather unlikely that two French infidels would be working for a Muslim fundamentalist group — or that that group could penetrate and subvert the Fire Department of New York, which at some level seems to have been involved in the planning of 9/11 — and the Naudet film.

If the film was staged, it strongly suggests that that planning must have been internal to the USA, but anything beyond that has to be guesswork, albeit educated. They wouldn't have done it if it was going to be simple to prove who they were: unless, of course, you buy the instant solution of the al-Qaeda confession — so much easier than having to animate the brain cells. Or maybe you prefer the Noam Chomsky argument — the man who has to have the documents before he believes it — a historian who has the truly bizarre idea that everything is written down somewhere, or it didn't happen. 9/11 must have involved hundreds of people. It would have leaked out, and before it happened. So why doesn't that apply equally to al-Qaeda? Why did none of them talk? Zacarias Moussaoui was arrested before it happened: did he talk? If twenty or thirty Muslim terrorists could pull it off, without leakage, why not twenty or thirty senior US military officers — who would be in a better position to do it, and under the constraints of military discipline?

For the record, my own opinion is that 9/11 was commissioned by that cliché of American politics — the military-industrial complex: the one Eisenhower warned us about; and that the lead role in organizing the attacks (and failing to respond to them) was played by the Pentagon, in particular the branch of the armed forces that took zero casualties when that building was hit (see Appendix 7) — the US Air Force — in which formerly served General Richard Bowman "Star Wars" Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs until his retirement on 30 September 2005, and, to this writer, prime 9/11 suspect.

Considering method, motive and opportunity, the USA's military leaders could unquestionably be said to have method and opportunity for being able to, at best, fail to defend the country — or, at worst, to actually attack it themselves. Killing people is, after all, their job, and the Pentagon's version of morality is, and always has been, what works — not least in the nuclear age, now more than 60 years old, with its strategy documents contemplating dead and dispensable Americans by the million, not thousand.



What do terrorist mass murderers look like? Mad staring eyes? Turbans and beards? On the left, Thomas Ferebee, bombardier on the *Enola Gay*, responsible for **thirty** 9/11s, with **one** plane; in the centre, Kermit Beahan, bombardier on the *Bockscar*, responsible for twenty more, two planes, like the Trade Center, but fifty times the death toll; and on the right, Harry S. Truman, the man who gave the order to both to murder, indiscriminately, Japanese, Koreans, Indonesians, Americans, British, men, women, children, grandparents, soldiers, teachers, scientists, writers, painters, doctors, patients, the lot, in the two worst acts of terrorism in human history.

The Manhattan Project that produced the USA's — and the world's — first atomic bomb is the perfect demolition of the "always leaks" argument: up to 130,000 people working at 30 sites, some the size of cities, for six years, and the Russian government knew more about it than most Americans — until Truman announced Hiroshima in August 1945. Yes, it leaked — but not to the folk we are told always find out because it would be impossible to keep secret if so many were involved. Manhattan was kept secret — from the Germans, the Japanese and most of the rest of humanity. Hiroshima and Nagasaki also demonstrate that the US Government is perfectly prepared to kill its own: hundreds of Allied POWs, some of them American servicemen, were among the victims — as was known, or should have been, to those who bombed them. Just like Northwoods: that too was kept secret for a lot longer than the atomic project — more than 30 years. If these things can be hidden, the truth about 9/11 can be hidden — and nobody even suggests as many as 130,000 were in on that: probably only dozens or hundreds. History — and simple common sense — prove the leak argument totally false. When it's important enough, or dangerous enough, those involved keep their mouths shut.

At Ludlow, Colorado, in 1914, several dozen striking miners and members of their families were killed by the National Guard in the most, but by no means only, violent episode in American industrial history. The Bonus Army incident of 1932 was not a theoretical war plan, nor was it secret, nor in Japan: it happened, in public, in the USA's capital city. Long before he ran the war against Japan, and then its occupation in the post-war years, Douglas MacArthur, as US Army Chief of Staff, used tanks and tear gas against his own countrymen, and ex-servicemen at that — unarmed veterans of World War I, with one protester shot dead and several injured. More recently, in May 1970, four students protesting the Vietnam War were shot dead at Kent State University by Ohio National Guardsmen. An entire generation has grown up knowing nothing about these obscenities, or if they have heard of them, have inherited the reactionary rubbish their parents spouted at the time — that the victims were anarchist troublemakers who deserved what they got, that the MacArthurs and Pattons were towering heroes and that Vietnam was a just war that could have been won but for the traitors in Congress. These are just three examples from the long history of American servicemen being used to attack and kill American citizens: it did not start in 2001, and 2001 will not be the last time.

That other aspect of method, the multiple deceptions of 9/11 — like having Bin Laden playing his part as the Muslim Lee Oswald, or Hitler, or Satan, or whoever — would have gone to the specialists in that area, George Tenet's CIA. And as for motive, that would be what it always has been in the USA's 200-year history of wannongering — greed; in this case the greed of men — and, these days, the odd token woman — in the boardrooms of companies selling oil and weapons. The chances, however, of a single shred of evidence emerging from those buildings, or from offices at the Pentagon or the Capitol or the White House, proving — or even hinting at — the involvement of any of these people in the 9/11 attacks, must be virtually non-existent. If we are to get to them, it will have to be indirectly, and I think the Naudet film is the most promising way of doing it.

Some people claim to have established as fact that the Twin Towers' collapses (and 7 WTC's) were caused by demolitions, which must have been planned long in advance, but where does that get us? Adding the biggest insurance fraud in US history (with leaseholder — since only 23 July 2001 — Larry Silverstein the most obvious suspect) to the biggest mass murder? The central question was never "how?" but "who?" — and we have no evidence of charges being planted or of who might have planted them. The film of Flight 11 must have been planned in advance, too, but in this case we can put an actual name to the deed, and we have at least a chance of getting from that name to others perhaps more deeply involved. In the fog of lies, theories, speculation and disinformation around 9/11, the Naudet film offers something solid and tangible, that might, eventually, lead us towards the guilty: it may only be a start, but the people who changed the world that day, incalculably for the worse, are not going to be voluntarily throwing themselves in jail in the near future.

It is, of course, possible — **theoretically** — that all the circumstances in the film were genuine, if unusual, and that it was captured by chance. The most incredible things do happen that way sometimes, and we have all heard the stories. They do not normally involve capturing the last two seconds of a plane's flight before it ploughs into the joint tallest building in New York. That sets this story apart from the likes of ten strangers meeting at a party and discovering they all share the same birthday: spooky, but ultimately meaningless and irrelevant — unless God likes practical jokes. A jet being used to attack a skyscraper is an unusual enough event on its own, without our being asked to accept a second bizarre proposition happening at the same time — that someone managed to get full-frontal film of it, while making a documentary about firemen checking a gas leak. How often has that been seen on the streets of New York in the last 50 years? How many fingers would you need to count it? And how many of the cameramen were French? Why not — since I have had it put to me as a serious argument that the circumstances did not matter — have it captured by an Albanian Jehovah's Witness, standing on his head on a bicycle, while juggling three camcorders, blindfolded? Because what is most unusual — and most suspect — about the Naudet story is that its unusual circumstances are all highly **convenient**. The scene could not have been filmed by someone in normal circumstances — and wasn't, to prove the point. It had to be an unusual situation — but it would have been far more credible if there had been only one or two unusual elements in it, and none especially convenient to the photographer.

Naudet himself has suggested the intervention of "History" to explain his achievement — but we might ask why that intervention did not prevent the plane from hitting the building, instead of letting him film it happening. Why would an omniscient God need a videotape, or want us to have one? But someone in the propaganda business might. Half a dozen pieces of luck coinciding could produce a credible story: when ten times that many are involved, the odds magnify astronomically. You have to take into account that the conveniences in my list do not all have only one alternative — but even if they did, their cumulative effect would be enough to justify my claim that staging is more credible than accident. The Ocean's Razor standard says the simplest, most obvious, explanation is normally the correct one, and in this case prearrangement causes far fewer problems than accepting 69 simultaneous accidental conveniences. In probability terms, one fraud beats a 69-part miracle.

I cannot claim to be able to **prove** my proposition, except in the probability sense — but that is the sense in which things are proved in a criminal trial: to the satisfaction of a jury weighing the evidence — beyond a reasonable doubt. I do not believe there is a reasonable doubt that this film shot must have been prearranged, because luck is so improbable an explanation. There is no smoking gun in the film — only circumstantial clues and absences. But I don't need a smoking gun — I only have to demonstrate which is more probable: either Jules Naudet performed the greatest miracle in the entire history of photography, or, like so many other miracles before and since, it is a total fraud, the product of dishonesty.

I challenge the reader to offer a single example, since the first photograph was taken in 1826 by another Frenchman, Nicéphore Niépce, remotely comparable to the Naudet film of American Airlines Flight 11. No other world-shattering event, as sudden, as rapid and as totally unexpected to the people of New York as the arrival of that plane was — which is **why**, essentially, nobody else got it — has ever been recorded on film: least of all with only six seconds to spare, after a 90-degree camera pan and with the buildings that were both about to be hit over the next 20 minutes centred in the shot, and framed by the buildings on the sides of the street next door, like curtains framing the action on a theatrical stage. There had been nothing like it in the previous 175 years, and there has been nothing like it since. In the putative "Complete History of Documentary Photography," in the chapter entitled "Accidental Pictures of Moments that Changed the World," the only name mentioned would be Jules Naudet's: how many other photographers have a whole branch of the art all to themselves? The unique 9/11 event was the subject of an equally unique photographic event. Two simultaneous once-in-a-lifetime moments: how credible is **that**?

The Zapruder film of the 1963 Kennedy assassination started off as film of a public event — a Presidential visit to Dallas; the explosion of the Hindenburg in 1937 — as in the "Oh, the humanity!" film — took place at a public event. There was no public event going on in Lispenard Street in Manhattan on 11 September 2001: no-one was expecting a President or an airship — and very few expected a hijacked jet. If someone had been filming the Grand Hotel in Brighton in the small hours of 12 October 1984 while making a documentary about the Metropolitan Police, and captured a bomb going off, there might be questions asked as to how the film-maker could be so "lucky" — or whether he might in fact be in league with the IRA. Not an exact analogy — the IRA has never had any interest in filming its bombings, for example — but roughly equivalent to Naudet's achievement.

Another example might be a Japanese photographer in August 1945 capturing a large bomb being unloaded from a certain American B29 bomber piloted by a man named Tibbets. No such film or photograph exists — for obvious reasons — and if it did, the reason would be that the photographer was working for the US armed forces. I think that, as it happens, is the explanation of the Naudet film — although I do not necessarily accept that Jules Naudet was the photographer. He claims to have been, and he may have been, but, like my proposition, there is no **proof** in the film — only circumstantial evidence.

The first experiments in moving film were in the 1870s; by the start of the 20th century, film cameras were a reality, yet — with one exception — none of the following dozen historical events, only a small sample of what could be listed, was captured on film, although most of them involved famous people, more likely than most of us to have their major events recorded on camera.

6 Sep 1901 US President McKinley shot, in public, Buffalo, NY: no pictures
16 Apr 1912 Titanic sinks: 3,500 dead: 0 survivors

28 Jun 1914 Archduke Franz Ferdinand shot, in public, Sarajevo : no pictures
7 May 1915 Lusitania torpedoed off Ireland — 1,200 dead : no pictures
6 Dec 1917 Massive explosion in Halifax, Nova Scotia — 1,400 dead : no pictures
7 Dec 1941 First Japanese planes arrive over Pearl Harbor, Hawaii : no pictures
20 Jul 1944 Attempt to kill Hitler with bomb planted at his HQ : no pictures
30 Jan 1948 Mahatma Gandhi shot, in public, New Delhi : no pictures
4 Apr 1968 Rev. Martin Luther King shot, in public, Memphis : no pictures
5 Jun 1968 Senator Robert F. Kennedy shot, in public, Los Angeles : no pictures
8 Dec 1980 John Lennon shot, in public, New York : no pictures
11 Sep 2001 Plane hits One World Trade Center, New York : full colour video, shot from behind, in focus, middle of picture, close-up within two seconds

One could point out that, if my argument is a conspiracy theory, so too is the official story of what happened on 9/11. Two of the only three people ever convicted of involvement in 9/11 were found guilty of **conspiracy**; one pleaded guilty, meaning that no evidence of that conspiracy would be put to the court in a trial, and the evidence in the two other cases was such that until the major conspirators are convicted, the official story can reasonably be described as just another **theory**, one of several.

Even if that were not true, there are usually perfectly valid, logical reasons for belief in conspiracy theories : there is no mystery, and we need no insulting nonsense about the mentality of their supporters. When an American President is shot in broad daylight in one of the country's biggest cities, in front of dozens of witnesses, **and no-one is ever convicted of the crime**, that fact alone justifies the theories. When the alleged assassin is himself murdered two days later, in police custody, in front of cameras that weren't there for the first murder, and no policeman is fired or jailed for total incompetence, we have a **double** justification. How many other times has **that** happened in the USA in the last 50 years ? Do I hear the number **one** ? When the ex-wife of the heir to the British monarchy, and mother of a possible future monarch, is killed in a late-night car crash in Paris, with her Muslim boyfriend, having been allowed by a paid bodyguard, himself a passenger (so much for **his** services), to get into a car driven by an alleged drunk, of which they were apparently completely unaware, sitting right next to him, and **it takes more than ten years to get an inquest verdict — fatuous as it was**, that fact alone justifies the theories. When there never was any need for this idiotic contest with journalists, when they could have spent the night in one of the biggest hotels in Paris, looked after by its owner, the boyfriend's father, we have a **double** justification. When the coroner seemed to think his function was to dispose of conspiracy theories, not to find out what caused the deaths, and almost the entire media treat the inquest as a trial of the only person in the country who believes those theories, Mohamed Al Fayed, we have a **triple** justification. When a hijacked plane is flown into the defence HQ of the most powerful country in the world, and **not one government official, military or civilian, is ever punished for even accidental negligence**, that fact alone justifies the theories. When the two tallest buildings in New York are attacked the same way and pulverised, killing thousands, and nine years later **not one person has been convicted of those murders**, we have a **double** justification.

What kind of argument do opponents of conspiracy theory have to offer ? That we need easy answers — and yet, at the same time, elaborate, fiendishly complex structures : which is it ? Why do we need to come up with these ridiculous ideas to explain events that are perfectly normal and straightforward ? A hijacked plane flies into the Pentagon : what could be more mundane ? Happens all the time. Kennedy is shot by an ex-Soviet defector who defects back : what's the mystery ? Just an ordinary car crash in Paris, like dozens of others involving a Princess and the son of one of the richest men in Britain : why can't the poor fools see that ? Does a question like that deserve a polite response ? I think not. I think liars who expect us to swallow any old insulting nonsense they serve up to us deserve a jail cell, and that those of us who research these subjects and try to construct explanations for them should stop ever being apologetic about it. The onus is on **them**, not **us**. **When** do we get the Kennedy files still classified ? **When** do we get a serious investigation of the Paris car crash ? **When** do we get the Twin Towers murder convictions ? Until then, conspiracy theories are as good as anything else we've been offered, the anti-conspiracy brigade are no better informed than the rest of us and their abuse can be treated with the total contempt it deserves. The implication is not so much "How dare you question the government ?" as "How dare you question **us**" ? Considering the patronising drivel churned out by the media on both sides of the Atlantic — but with a special mention for the news departments of the BBC and ITN, and their never-ending vomit of government handouts and lying, biased, racist, monarchist, tabloid junk — I would say we had a civic **duty** never to believe one word they say.

You don't need some giant conspiracy linking all the small ones together, or the existence of some secret elite organisation responsible for it all. Northwoods was a conspiracy involving senior government officials of the USA ; Watergate was the same, and led to the only Presidential resignation in US history ; Irangate was the same, and another President had to broadcast his tortuous version of an apology for it — and should have been impeached. Where would anyone get this silly idea that the USA's leaders are involved in secret plots ? The history of the last 50 years, maybe ? The stories plastered all over the front pages of the papers and broadcast by TV companies, when even those liars can't suppress it any longer ? But the media cognoscenti — the "opinion formers" — know better : there **are** no conspiracies — it's all nonsense. JFK's death was Oswald, Diana's was a drunk driver and 9/11 was Bin Ladin, period — simple, comforting solutions coming from folk who accuse others of wanting the same : in two words, lying hypocrites.

How probable is it that not only did Naudet (or whoever) capture Flight 11 — as if that were not enough on its own — but that he and his brother Gédéon then went on to record the rest of that day's events — and survive them ? Who else could appear to be almost simultaneously inside the towers, out on the streets and back at Duane Street firehouse, seven blocks away, than a pair of miracle workers like these ? Does the English — or the French — language have a word for people who can repeatedly, umpteen times in the space of a few hours, "just happen" to find themselves in the right place at the right time, doing the right thing ? Apart, that is, from "liar" ("menteur").

Their friend Hanlon **just happened** to work at a firehouse seven blocks from the Trade Center;