

## Highlights

- [Bruce Ivins: The Movie](#): Justin Raimondo
- [My Energy Plan Better Than Yours](#): Charles Peña
- [Irrelevancy of Gitmo Trials](#): Jacob Hornberger
- [Hiroshima and Nagasaki](#): Ralph Raico
- [New Iraq Op's Surprise Support](#): Ali/Jamail

## Quotable

It is finer to bring one noble human being into the world and rear it well...than to kill ten thousand.

– Olive Schreiner

[Original](#)   [Letters](#)   [Blog](#)   [US Casualties](#)   [Contact](#)   [Donate](#)

[Home](#)

[Antiwar Radio](#)

[Who We Are](#)

LAST 7 DAYS  
MON THU  
TUE FRI  
WED SUN SAT

[Search](#)

[Regional News](#)

Select a country

[Quotes](#)

[Free Newsletter](#)

[Shop Antiwar.com](#)

[Reprint Policy](#)

[Submission Guidelines](#)

[RSS](#)

ANTIWAR.COM  
A Member of the  
HAROLD P. SCHLES  
INSTITUTE



August 4, 2008

## The Patsy Was Bruce Ivins the anthrax killer?

The media **narrative** now being woven around the apparent suicide of U.S. government scientist **Bruce E. Ivins** – a prominent anthrax researcher who worked at Ft. Detrick's U.S. Army Medical Research Institute for Infectious Diseases bio-weapons research lab (**USAMRIID**) – is that he was a lone nut, a "**homicidal maniac**" who poisoned the five people killed in the 2001 anthrax attacks and was determined to go on another killing spree at his workplace as the Feds closed in on him. The *Times* of London headline says it all: "**Mad Anthrax Scientist in Threat to Kill Co-Workers.**"

However, as we sift through the reams of media coverage occasioned by this startling development in a 7-year-old case, we get quite a different story from the alleged objects of his rage: his colleagues on the job at Ft. Detrick. As the *Washington Post* **reported**:

*"Colleagues and friends of the vaccine specialist remained convinced that Ivins was innocent: They contended that he had neither the motive nor the means to create the fine, lethal powder that was sent by mail to news outlets and congressional offices in the late summer and fall of 2001. Mindful of previous FBI mistakes in fingering others in the case, many are deeply skeptical that the bureau has gotten it right this time.*

*"I really don't think he's the guy. I say to the FBI, "Show me your evidence," said Jeffrey J. Adamovicz, former director of the bacteriology division at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute for Infectious Diseases, or USAMRIID, on the grounds of the sprawling Army fort in Frederick. 'A lot of the tactics*

[Print this](#)

[Email this](#)

[Save this](#)

[Archives](#)

[Bruce Ivins: The Movie](#)  
8/6/2008

[The Patsy](#)  
8/4/2008

[Joe Klein Speaks Truth to Power](#)  
8/1/2008

[Is the Surge Working?](#)  
7/30/2008

[The War Party's Credo: Power Before Profits](#)  
7/28/2008

[Follow That Story!](#)  
7/25/2008

[Is Obama the 'Antiwar Candidate'?](#)  
7/23/2008

[A Brazen Evil](#)  
7/21/2008

[Coercive 'Diplomacy' – Prelude to War](#)  
7/18/2008

[Amber Alert!](#)  
7/14/2008

[Iran and the Photoshop Threat](#)  
7/11/2008

[The Shift](#)  
7/9/2008

[Fake Flip-Flop Flap](#)  
7/7/2008

[Who Planned the Anthrax Attacks?](#)  
7/4/2008

Environment  
Products,  
Research  
www.begreen.com.au

**How To Make  
Solar Power**  
In Your Home For  
Under \$200. Save  
Money, Electricity  
& Environment!  
Earth4EnergyNow.com

**Sustainable  
Investment**  
Fast-growing  
tropical hardwood  
trees are "a near  
perfect asset".  
tropicalhardwoods.com

**Luxury Eco  
Lodge**  
Escape to  
Amarant Retreat  
Yarra Valley  
hosted eco-lodge  
www.amarantretreat.com



*they used were designed to isolate him from his support. The FBI just continued to push his buttons."*

Another one of his co-workers, Richard O. Spertzel, pointed out that "USAMRIID doesn't deal with powdered anthrax. I don't think there's anyone there who would have the foggiest idea how to do it. You would need to have the opportunity, the capability, and the motivation, and he didn't possess any of those."

In what seems very similar to the **coordinated series** of "leaks" that pinned the blame on Steven J. Hatfill, a former bio-warfare scientist recently awarded **nearly \$6 million** in recompense and effectively **exonerated**, the effort to posthumously demonize Ivins has blanketed the "mainstream" media. The main feature of this effort has been the testimony of one **Jean Duley**, a counselor, who claims Ivins not only threatened her but also came to a group therapy session with a detailed story about how he had bought a gun, a bulletproof vest, and was planning to "go out in a blaze of glory" and kill as many of his coworkers as possible as the FBI closed in on him.

It's passing strange, then, that these very same coworkers are springing to his defense. Two Ft. Detrick scientists, who presumably would have been mowed down by Ivins, the so-called "revenge killer" (as Duley describes him), **told** the *Baltimore Sun* they were "stunned and angry" at the posthumous targeting of Ivins. "Nobody thinks Bruce did it," said one of them.

Nobody, that is, but the FBI, Duley, and Ivins' estranged brother Tom, who hadn't spoken to Bruce since 1985, and who **averred**, "It makes sense, what the social worker said. He considered himself like a god." Giving credence to such crass bad-mouthing of the dead has got to be a new low, even for the **agenda-driven** "journalism" we've become so inured to.

As **doubts** arise about the government/media narrative, it is becoming all too clear that Ivins' suicide – **likely** brought about by the unrelenting pressure brought to bear on him over many months of constant harassment by the FBI, rather than actual guilt – is the occasion for the institutional whitewashing of the FBI's **almost** unbelievable incompetence, which seems more like a cover-up as events unfold. We are being treated to media reports burbling about how the suicide of Ivins means that the victims of the anthrax attack and their families will finally have "**closure**" – but what's all too clear is that it's the FBI seeking closure of a case that exposes its shameful (and, perhaps, criminal) conduct.

Move along, nothing to see here! Or is there?

No doubt the FBI will come out with its own version of the "scientific" evidence that supposedly led them to Ivins' doorstep. We are told that "**new techniques**," developed since the pursuit and eventual exoneration of Hatfill, conclusively prove Ivins was the lone culprit. This has long been the methodology favored by anti-biological weapons activist and scientist **Barbara Hatch Rosenberg**, whose pronouncements in the early stages of this case were taken as gospel by the major

**Don't Wait for World War III**  
6/30/2008

**Is War Good For the Economy?**  
6/25/2008

**Imperial 'Justice'**  
6/23/2008

**The Welfare-Warfare State**  
6/20/2008

**Enough Already!**  
6/18/2008

**You Want Change?**  
6/16/2008

**The Revolt of the Liberated**  
6/13/2008

**'Faster, Please!'**  
6/11/2008

**Obama Capitulates**  
6/6/2008

**Will Obama Stand Up to the War Party?**  
6/4/2008

**Reclaiming the American Right**  
6/2/2008

**Standing Up Against the War Party**  
5/30/2008

**Into the Bosnian Quagmire, Part 3**  
5/28/2008

**Into the Bosnian Quagmire, Part 2**  
5/26/2008

**Into the Bosnian Quagmire**  
5/23/2008

**No Rest for the Wicked**  
5/21/2008

**Bush's True Calling**  
5/19/2008

**'May You Live In Interesting Times'**  
5/16/2008

**Obama vs. The Lobby**  
5/14/2008

**The Prime Directive**  
5/12/2008

**The Silenced Majority**  
5/9/2008

**Why Isn't It the End of Hillary?**  
5/7/2008

**Assassins of Peace**  
5/5/2008

**Divert, Distract, and Demonize**  
5/2/2008

**Is War With Iran Imminent?**

media. It was Rosenberg's theory that the anthrax killer was an "insider" with detailed knowledge of the government's bio-weapons research – and that his motive was to draw attention to a supposedly overlooked and under-funded field of vitally important research – that led to the persecution of Hatfill. Today, the same theory is being **trotted out** to finger Ivins.

This concept of the anthrax killers' motive drops the entire context of the postal terrorism that put the nation in a post-9/11 panic and energized the march to war with Iraq. As **Glenn Greenwald** and others have pointed out, the anthrax attacks were **used** by administration officials and **neoconservative** commentators to **make the case** for war: administration officials and their amen corner (including **John McCain**) used this "talking point" to promote the invasion of Iraq. The Rosenberg thesis also ignores the text of the anthrax letters, in which the author(s) **clearly** meant to indicate these horrific acts were being perpetrated by a Muslim who hated the U.S. and Israel.

It seems to me a stretch to divorce motive not only from context, but also from important physical evidence in this case, i.e., the letters themselves. Other equally important evidence has been completely ignored. Over the years, I've presented much of this neglected-albeit-fascinating aspect of the anthrax mystery in a series of columns – **here**, **here**, **here**, **here**, **here**, and **here** – in which I related the story of what happened to another Ft. Detrick scientist, **Dr. Ayaad Assaad**.

Assaad, an American citizen born in Egypt, worked for USAMRIID in the early 1990s and was involved in a conflict with a group of Ft. Detrick employees who dubbed themselves the "Camel Club." As detailed in a **series** of eye-popping pieces by Dave Altimari and Jack Dolan of the *Hartford Courant*, this cabal was engaged in systematic harassment of Assaad and other Arab-American employees at the facility, including putting obscene and racist poems on his desk and presenting him with a rubber camel adorned with a sex toy. The Camel Club's harassment of Assaad had a distinctively ideological edge, one that pre-dated the "invade their countries, bomb their cities, and convert them to Christianity" **meme** that later became so **popular** with post-9/11 neocons of a Coulterish stripe.

In September 2001 – *before* the news of the anthrax letters broke, but *after* they had been postmarked – a letter addressed to the "Town of Quantico police" was received that accused Assaad of being a terrorist who was planning to wage biological warfare against the U.S. on American soil. As the first anthrax letters were opened, Assaad got a call from the FBI. Agent Gregory Leylegian wanted to have a little talk with him.

The meeting, also attended by Assaad's lawyer, proved quite a shock to Assaad. As the agent read the accusing letter aloud, one thing became readily apparent: the Camel Club was getting its revenge.

Whatever the motives of the Quantico letter's author, one fact seems fairly obvious: whoever wrote it very likely had

4/28/2008

Pollard's Ghost  
4/25/2008Turning the Page on US  
Foreign Policy, Part 2  
4/23/2008The Middle East:  
Turning the Page on US  
Foreign Policy  
4/21/2008What We're About  
4/18/2008How the War Party  
Captured the Right  
4/16/2008Bob Barr: Wrong About  
Colombia  
4/14/2008Israel Loves Mugabe  
4/11/2008Endless Enemies  
4/9/2008The Barr Factor  
4/7/2008A Tragi-Comic  
Cavalcade of Chicanery  
4/4/2008NATO Marches  
Eastward  
4/2/2008Is Another 9/11  
Inevitable?  
3/31/2008The Mystery of  
American Foreign Policy  
3/28/2008Why They Hate China  
3/26/2008Iraq Recession – or  
Iraq Depression?  
3/24/2008Iraq and the Virtue of  
Selfishness  
3/21/2008Iraq: Five Years After  
the Conquest  
3/19/2008Smearing Obama  
3/17/2008Pure Fantasy:  
Colombia's Laptop  
Revelations  
3/14/2008'Fox' Fallon Fired  
3/12/2008A Strategy for Peace –  
and Survival  
3/10/2008Confessions of an  
Obama Cultist  
3/7/2008Medvedev, Hillary,  
and 'Media Bias'  
3/5/2008

foreknowledge of the anthrax attacks. Yet all attempts to examine this vital piece of evidence have been deflected by the FBI. **Don Foster**, a professor of English at Vassar and an expert in the field of textual analysis – it was Foster who identified **Joe Klein** as the author of *Primary Colors* – was asked to analyze the anthrax letters, and on the subject of the Quantico letter he had [this to say](#) in *Vanity Fair*:

*"It was now December 2001, yet Dolan and Altimari's Hartford Courant story was the first I had heard of the Quantico letter. [Supervisory Special Agent James R]. Fitzgerald had not heard of it, either. In fact, there were quite a few critical documents that Fitzgerald had not yet seen. What, I wondered, has the anthrax task force been doing. Hoping that the Quantico letter might lead, if not to the killer, at least to a suspect, I offered to examine the document. My photocopy arrived by FedEx not from the task force but from FBI headquarters in Washington. Searching through documents by some 40 USAMRIID employees, I found writings by a female officer that looked like a perfect match. I wrote a detailed report on the evidence, but the anthrax task force declined to follow through: the Quantico letter had already been declared a hoax and zero-filed as part of the 9/11 investigation."*

"The trail that leads us to the perpetrators of the anthrax letter terrorist attacks ends at Ft. Detrick" – I wrote those words in **July**, before the suicide of Ivins, yet we haven't quite yet reached the end of this particular road.

Foster refers to the **yeoman's work** done by the *Hartford Courant's* team of reporters in uncovering the chaotic and dangerous conditions that existed at Ft. Detrick for years, as well as the victimization of Assaad. One *Courant* story in particular, which detailed the wide variety of pathogens the facility lost track of over the years – including one developed by U.S. scientists known simply as "Pathogen X" – sent chills down my spine. In exposing this laxity, the *Courant* reported an incident in which a former employee, Dr. Philip Zack, was videotaped sneaking into the supposedly secured facility where pathogens were stored, assisted by his "good friend" Dr. Marian Rippy. They were both involved in conducting unauthorized experiments, according to Dolan and Altimari, and were charter members of the Camel Club. Indeed, the reason for Zack's departure reportedly had much to do with his constant harassment of Assaad.

I make no connection between Rippy and Foster's discovery of "writings by a female officer that looked like a perfect match" to the Quantico letter. It's just that inquiring minds want to know...

The suicide of one tortured soul doesn't put the anthrax mystery to rest. Instead, it raises more questions than it answers. According to the **obituary** in his hometown newspaper, Ivins worked at Ft. Detrick for his entire professional life: he was there for the Camel Club's antics and doubtless knew all the major participants, including Assaad. What he knew about the highly suspicious extracurricular

**Lebanon: The Unknown Crisis**  
3/3/2008

**The Foreign Policy Follies**  
2/29/2008

**McCain, Militarism, and the Legacy of Teddy Roosevelt**  
2/27/2008

**More Archives**

Justin Raimondo is the editorial director of Antiwar.com. He is the author of *An Enemy of the State: The Life of Murray N. Rothbard* (Prometheus Books, 2000). He is also the author of *Reclaiming the American Right: The Lost Legacy of the Conservative Movement* (with an Introduction by Patrick J. Buchanan), (Center for Libertarian Studies, 1993), and *Into the Bosnian Quagmire: The Case Against U.S. Intervention in the Balkans* (1996).

He is a contributing editor for *The American Conservative*, a Senior Fellow at the Randolph Bourne Institute, and an Adjunct Scholar with the Ludwig von Mises Institute, and writes frequently for *Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture*.

activities of the Camel Club, and the true origins of the deadly anthrax letters, is not known, and may never be known as this point. And that's just how the real perpetrators of one of the scariest crimes in our history would have it.

You'll note I use the plural, perpetrators: it is almost inconceivable that a single person could have been responsible for the anthrax terror. Logistically, it's near to impossible to imagine that a single "lone nut" could have produced the anthrax, let alone distributed it, without being caught. Did he travel all the way to **New Jersey**, of all places, just to mail these deadly missives, after single-handedly whipping up a substance that required all sorts of advanced equipment (and safety precautions) to prepare? It hardly seems likely.

Which means that, even if Ivins was in on the plot, he wasn't alone – and the rest of the poisoners are still out there.

Did Ivins wind up a "suicide" because he knew too much and was about to reveal what he knew to investigators? We may never know the answer to this question, but that should hardly stop us from raising it.

This whole sorry episode exemplifies media **complicity** with U.S. government agencies in creating narratives that reflect well on official Washington. The wide dissemination of the Ivins-was-a-psychopathic-killer meme, which depicts the departed scientist as an "obsessed" nerd who was a danger to his therapist – actually, Duley wasn't his therapist, and her charge that Ivins was a "sociopath" is based on her version of what his actual psychiatrist, Dr. David Irwin, is **reputed** to have said – underscores the American media's evolving role as the handmaiden of the state, rather than the citizens' watchdog.

We've been **covering** this scary story at Antiwar.com ever since the anthrax attacks hit the headlines, and we've continued to cover it even while the rest of the media tried to bury it. I believe that practically every year since 2001 I've written about it in this space and noted many of the facts related above. The sudden reemergence of this case in this spectacular manner emphasizes the need for outlets like this one, which present the facts the "mainstream" media would rather not deal with – because they're too busy creating phony narratives to cover the asses of government officials, or worse.

~ Justin Raimondo

[Print this](#) | [Email this](#) | [Save this](#)