

THERMITE: The Smoking Gun



If you are new to the volumes of research that have been compiled on the crimes of 9/11, it will quickly become apparent which parties have made an honest and unbiased attempt to discover the truth about what happened that fateful day and which parties have sought to cover up or ignore evidence damning to the government's official account. The discovery by an international cadre of scientists of molten iron, pulverized concrete, residual particles from thermite reactions, and small bi-layered chips in the dust from the area around Ground Zero, should compel the uncorrupted and inquiring mind to follow the scientific method to re-evaluate the presently accepted official theories. An unemotional and unbiased search for the truth would require science, logic, and factual evidence. A systematic approach to researching the matter would strictly adhere to the scientific method.

By Michael Schmidt

The scientific method is "a method of investigation involving observation and theory to test scientific hypotheses."¹ It involves "bodies of techniques for investigating phenomena, acquiring new knowledge, or correcting and integrating previous knowledge"². In addition, the scientific method compels the researcher to re-evaluate and correct previous hypotheses based on the acquisition of any new knowledge.

It has been publicly acknowledged that, in their investigation of the World Trade Center's destruction, federally-funded laboratories and commissions did not follow the scientific method. In August 2006, NIST publicly released a statement that they found no evidence of the involvement of explosives in the collapse of the World Trade Centers.³ In fact, NIST never even tested for explosive residue. In response to independent researchers' questions for clarification of their statement, NIST confessed that the federally-funded investigators did not check for the presence of explosive residue and such tests would not necessarily have been conclusive. NIST confirmed their blatant disregard for proper investigation and adherence to the scientific method when asked the question, "Was the steel tested for explosives or thermite residues?" The public response was that NIST did not test for the residue of these compounds in the steel.⁴

The proper duty of a fire investigator specifically calls for an un-biased investigator to follow section 19.2.4 on "Exotic Accelerants" of the National Fire Protection Association N.F.P.A. 921. This section reads as follows:

19.2.4 - Exotic Accelerants. Mixtures of fuels and Class 3 or Class 4 oxidizers may produce an exceedingly hot fire and may be used to start or accelerate a fire. Thermite mixtures also produce exceedingly hot fires. Such accelerants generally leave residues that may be visually or chemically identifiable.

Exotic accelerants have been hypothesized as having been used to start or accelerate some rapidly growing fires and were referred to in these particular instances as high temperature accelerants (HTA). Indicators of exotic accelerants include an exceedingly rapid rate of fire growth, brilliant flares (particularly at the start of the fire), and melted steel or concrete. A study of 25 fires suspected of being associated with HTAs during the 1981-1991 period revealed that there was no conclusive scientific proof of the use of such HTA.

In any fire where the rate of fire growth is considered exceedingly rapid, other reasons for this should be considered in addition to the use of an accelerant, exotic or otherwise. These reasons include ventilation,

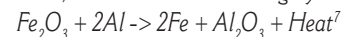
fire suppression tactics, and the type and configuration of the fuels.⁵

As we can see from the guidelines, thermite and its known variants are an established point of inquiry required by any fire investigation. Investigators should have adhered to the scientific method in the analysis of the building destruction on 9/11. Investigators are compelled by law and ethics to explore every possible explanation for building failure. Anything less is neglect.

Thermite is defined as the following:

A mixture of powdered or granular aluminum metal and powdered iron oxide when ignited it gives off large amounts of heat. In wartime it has been used in incendiary bombs... The aluminum reduces the iron oxide to molten iron and forms a slag of aluminum oxide on its surface. The reaction is very exothermic; temperatures above 2,500 deg. C; (4,500 deg. F;) are often reached. Because thermite reacts with explosive violence once ignited, it cannot be heated as a mass to its kindling temperature (about 1,550 deg.C; 2,800 deg. F...)⁶

The most common thermite is aluminium-iron(III) oxide. The aluminium reduces the oxide of another metal, most commonly iron oxide, because aluminium is highly combustible:

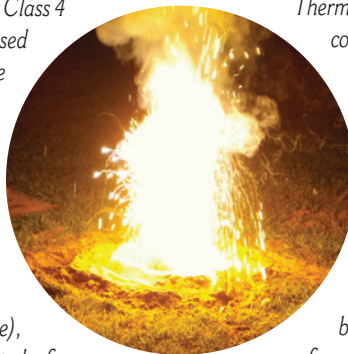


From thermite, more complex compounds can be derived including thermate and nano-thermite.

Thermate is a variation of thermite and is an incendiary pyrotechnic composition that can generate short bursts of exceedingly high temperatures focused on a small area for a short period of time. It is used primarily in incendiary grenades.

The main chemical reaction in thermate is the same as in thermite: an aluminothermic reaction between powdered aluminum and a metal oxide. In addition to thermite, thermate also contains sulfur and sometimes barium nitrate, both of which increase its thermal effect. As with thermite, thermate's ability to burn without an external supply of oxygen renders it useful for underwater demolition.⁸

NIST's breach of standard investigation protocol by not testing for explosives becomes even more serious when the numerous connections and reasons why NIST should have been at the forefront of such an investigation are revealed. As early as 1999, NIST was working with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories to test and characterize sol-gel nanothermites⁹, the



material that most likely caused the demolition of the buildings. In fact, Underwriters Laboratory whistleblower Kevin Ryan wrote a paper entitled "The Top Ten connections Between NIST and Nano-Thermmites" detailing the extent to which NIST should have been well-acquainted with and likely to study nano-thermites. We can conclude, then, that NIST *intentionally* did not test for explosive residue, though such testing would have been the prudent and necessary thing to do. Not only that, but since NIST had previously been studying the very particles found in WTC dust by researchers from around the world, it follows that NIST would be interested in these results.

Former BYU physics professor Steven E. Jones was one of the original non-federally funded researchers to investigate 9/11 by following the scientific method. His findings were released in his first paper on the subject of the destruction at the WTC, "Why Indeed Did the WTC Buildings Completely Collapse?" which can be found in the June 2006 issue of "The Journal of 9/11 Studies."¹⁰ In this paper, Jones identifies 13 compelling pieces of evidence that support an investigation into controlled demolition, including the presence of pools of and flowing molten metal, extremely high temperatures that could not be present if the government's official explanation were true, the manner in which towers 1, 2, and 7 collapsed (into their own footprint), and eyewitness reports of flashes, dust from the bottom of the towers before they collapsed, and explosive charges going off on the day. Dr. Jones presents the evidence in a manner that makes it clear that he used the scientific process, particularly to prove the circumstances that must have been present surrounding the molten metal.

In the May 2007 issue of "The Journal of 9/11 Studies" Dr. Jones released a paper titled, "Revisiting 9/11/2001 – Applying the Scientific Method." This paper further stressed the drastic need for scientific investigation with the announced discovery that "iron-aluminum rich spheres are seen in both the WTC dust and in spherules produced in thermite-control reactions."^{xi} This discovered residue of possible thermite materials demanded independent confirmation and attention from others in the scientific field.

In an attempt to foster a more collaborative research partnership, Dr. Jones, along with four other leading 9/11 scientific researchers, made an attempt to reach out to NIST through their peer-reviewed paper, "Fourteen Agreement with Official Government Reports on the World Trade Center Destruction."¹¹ NIST ignored this attempt.

Continuing his 9/11 research, Steven Jones was joined in his effort to investigate the spherical thermite residue as well as the unknown red/

gray chips later found in the dust and debris from Ground Zero. Steven Jones, with lead author Niels Harrit and seven other international scientific researchers, released the peer-reviewed paper "Active Thermite Material Discovered in Dust from the 9/11 World Trade Center Catastrophe," which concluded that a thermite material was in fact present in the dust of WTC 1, 2, & 7.¹² The researchers conclude that, "[b]ased on these observations... the red layer of the red/gray chips... in the WTC dust is active, unreacted thermite material, incorporating nanotechnology, and is a highly energetic pyrotechnic or explosive material." If the towers did indeed collapse in the manner in which the government stated in their reports, there is no reason these chips should contain unreacted thermite material. It would not have been present at all. The fact that it is present should tell NIST that controlled demolition should absolutely have been a point of research in their studies.

Scientific research continues using new testing methods to acquire new knowledge, correct and integrate previous knowledge, which support the hypothesis that thermite materials were involved in the demolition of all three WTC buildings. Independent researchers and activists from all over the world and average Americans from all walks of life will continue in their efforts to obtain an independent investigation to finally get to the bottom of what really happened on September 11, 2001. Government-funded entities, on the other hand, will continue with their own efforts to suppress such knowledge.

Who do you trust?

Michael Schmidt holds a Bachelor of Science in Engineering from University of Illinois - Urbana/Champaign, 5+ years engineering and construction management experience, Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth petition signatory.

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- 12 ^{xiii} Harrit, Niels H., et al. "Active Thermite Material Discovered in Dust from the 9/11 World Trade Center Catastrophe." *The Open Chemical Physics Journal* 2 (2009): 7-31.

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