

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 3

BILL O'REILLY MAKES A DEATH THREAT; LETTERS ARE WRITTEN TO THE EDITOR; AND STANLEY FISH REAPPEARS—IN *YET* *ANOTHER* COSTUME

1.

Let's take these events in the order of their occurrence. On July 21, 2006, the web site of Scholars for 9/11 Truth posted a <http://www.scholarsfor911truth.org/PressRelease21Jul2006.html> press release declaring that Bill O'Neill of Fox News in effect threatened the life of Kevin Barrett, a Professor of Islamic Studies, himself a member of Scholars for 9/11 Truth and also a founder of <http://www.mujca.com/essay.htm> MUJCA, or the Muslim-Jewish-Christian Alliance for 9/11 Truth.

I'll give the interested reader a moment to read the press release about Fox and the venomous Bill O'Neill and perhaps to take a look at the <http://www.st911.org/> Scholars for 9/11 Truth and <http://www.mujca.com/essay.htm> MUJCA sites. Then on we'll go to step two.

2.

What happened next? Well, Kevin Barrett wrote a remarkable, courageous, and hilarious <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL0607/S00262> letter to Rupert Murdoch himself. Take a minute to read it, enjoy it in the fullness it deserves, and then we'll go on to step three.

3.

On Sunday, July 23, 2006, what should appear on the Op Ed page of *The New York Times* if not a piece taking up on Kevin Barrett and entitled http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/23/opinion/23fish.html?_r=1&n=Top%2fOpinion%2fEditorials%20and%20Op%2dEd%2fOp%2dEd%2fContributors&oref=slogin "Conspiracy Theories 101"? And who might be the author of this piece if not my own favorite and personal nemesis <http://www.mv.helsinki.fi/home/kniemela/fish> Stanley Fish? Take a peek at this <http://www.mv.helsinki.fi/home/kniemela/fish.htm> Stanley Fish site if you like, but do be sure to read http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/23/opinion/23fish.html?_r=1&n=Top%2fOpinion%2fE

[ditorials%20and%20Op%2dEd%2fOp%2dEd%2fContributors&oref=slogin](#) “Conspiracy Theories 101.” After that, we’ll go on to step four.

4.

Well, I immediately wrote Kevin Barrett to alert him to the piece. And then I sat down and wrote my very own letter to the editor, suggesting that Fish may hardly be the guy who really ought to be pontificating about tolerance in the classroom or about the necessity that there exist there neither coercion, indoctrination, or the imposition of will. You can read my letter <http://www.ericlarsen.net/fishletter.to.nyt.html> here, if you like, and then we’ll go on to step five.

5.

Step five consisted of Kevin Barrett himself writing a letter to *The New York Times*, taking quite another approach from mine. Like his letter to Rupert Murdoch, once again it’s bright, quick, interesting, and suasive. Read it <http://www.mujca.com/nytimesoped.htm> here.

6.

In step six, quite wonderfully, no less a figure than David Ray Griffin himself wrote a letter to *The New York Times*. If you aren’t familiar with David Ray Griffin or with the important books he’s written, one of the best places to find out about both is on the <http://www.mujca.com/essay.htm> MUJCA site, and, of course, his books can also be seen and ordered on Amazon.com. For the most recent one, click http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0664231179/ref=pd_rvi_gw_1/103-5351400-0214231?%5Fencoding=UTF8&v=glance&n=283155 here. And, of course, don’t neglect to read Griffin’s letter to the editor, since you certainly won’ be seeing it in the *Times*. Click here <http://www.mujca.com/griffinandfish.htm> .

7.

And what is step seven? Well, step seven was my decision, after many years of not having looked at it, to go back and reread the long essay I wrote back in 1991, the essay where I used those quotes about Fish that appeared again in my letter to the *Times*. Like that letter, which certainly is never going to see print, my essay was rejected everywhere I sent it. But I thought that it deserved to be read, and I still do. And now, thanks to the wonders of electronic technology that have come about since 1991, it *can* be read by any who choose to do so. The interested person—one of whom, I hope, might be Stanley Fish—can begin by clicking <http://www.ericlarsen.net/despair.notes.essay.html> here.