

Mr. Rawls:

For the past 18 months I have tolerated, by ignoring, your attempts to bully and threaten me to agree with your analysis of the Flight 93 memorial controversy. Apparently this tactic is not new to you, given that you even brag in print about how you try to win arguments by bullying your opponents (see pp. 125, 159 and 160 of your book [www.crescentofbetrayal.com/DirectorsCutDownload.htm](http://www.crescentofbetrayal.com/DirectorsCutDownload.htm)), rather than by logic. Since July of 2006, your web page references to me include: idiot, liar, moral imbecile, and stinker (all from your book); diabolical, academic fraud, lunatic, radically dishonest and America-hating academic, Rasputin-like, and pecksniff; you even have constructed a rather nasty webpage about me: [www.crescentofbetrayal.com/Griffithpecksniff.html](http://www.crescentofbetrayal.com/Griffithpecksniff.html). You threatened my reputation in your initial telephone conversation with me; and now you are threatening my colleagues: “all the [m]ore so if they decide to go down with you” (e-mail to me dated 1/30/2008), while circulating inaccurate materials to them. Rather than bullying your opponents, I suggest that you would benefit from the study of S. I. Hayakawa’s *Language in Thought and Action* (5<sup>th</sup> ed., 1990), and begin using logic in place of emotion in your arguments. Meanwhile, someone needs to expose you for the bully that you are! Furthermore, in reply to one of the questions in your most recent e-mail to me, the answer is no—I am **not** a convert to radical Islam. I also do not need to be saved!

I have no intention of debating your voluminous amount of discussion about me word for word. I will address three points here, emphasizing that my previous analyses were based on the information provided to me, much of it coming directly from you. My task was to evaluate your claims, not prove them or complete them where they were incomplete. When you posit statements, the burden of proof is on you about what you say, not on others to disprove what you say. This rule of debate remains true whether or not you resort to name calling; I am confident that a reinvention/resurrection of McCarthyism will fail in today’s United States. This context is why I remained (and still remain) unconvinced by your arguments. I suggest that you also would benefit from the study of a book like R. Garnier and J. Taylor’s *100% Mathematical Proof*. I tried to clarify why I am unconvinced in a 2006 e-mail to you, but you simply choose to overlook flaws in, rather than bolster, your argument: you need to establish both necessary and sufficient conditions for a mathematical proof; arithmetic calculations alone do not constitute a mathematical proof. You can state that your arithmetic is correct (I did not say it was incorrect), but you cannot state that your correct calculations in and of themselves constitute a mathematical proof.

My first point: you originally claimed that the orientation to Mecca “take[s] a short cut over the North Pole ... even though Mecca is south of Shanksville” (p. 11 of your document); not surprisingly, you fail to provide documentation for your claim. Figure 1 illustrates that this is not the standard great circle arc: the memorial would need to be located in Alaska for the arc to go through the North Pole (Figure 1a). Rather, the arc fails to go anywhere near the North Pole (Figure 1b). Although you can draw an arc that goes through the North Pole, the only way that you can make this claim is if a direction-specific shortest-path arc is drawn from where a person faces (hence in any direction) to Mecca; in other words, a person can face in any direction and still be oriented toward Mecca, if your statement is true. I fail to be convinced that only 2, rather than the infinity of possible, arcs are acceptable to Muslims. This situation is similar to airplane routings, which for various reasons do not always follow great circle arcs. More recently, you tried to finesse this issue by stating “There is only one great circle arc from the crash site to Mecca, and Griffith certainly knows that this is the only arc I am saying anything about” ([etuhomer.nestsites.net/2007/10/08/is-there-such-a-thing-as-the-direction-to-mecca/](http://etuhomer.nestsites.net/2007/10/08/is-there-such-a-thing-as-the-direction-to-mecca/)). So part of your criticism of me is that I am not a mind reader, substituting your thoughts in

lieu of what you write! I will not go into detail about margins of error here, other than note that you should have addressed accuracy and precision issues about your calculations. I tried to do that only to a very modest degree because it is a time-consuming task; again, the burden of this task is on you, not others. When I consulted the far more reliable (i.e., in terms of geographic resolution) qibla locator at [www.qiblalocator.com](http://www.qiblalocator.com) (whose Beta 0.8.10 version became available only on 9/24/2007; see [nomi.ibnmasud.com/qiblalocator#references](http://nomi.ibnmasud.com/qiblalocator#references))—the one you referenced earlier, at least, again involves a resolution that can propagate error (in fact, the literature reveals quite a controversy about the accuracy of qibla locators; e.g., Abdali, 1997)—I think I began to understand some of the statements you have been making about me. Nevertheless, additional calculations with this qibla locator (Figure 1c) failed to change my mind; in question is the “without exception” feature associated with a mathematical proof? Perhaps I did obfuscate (your word) by talking about azimuthal projections, which was my interpretation of what you were trying to describe. But I think Ms. Hanley was far too kind when she stated that "Alec Rawls bases all of his conclusions on faulty assumptions." I think you also deliberately distort and selectively omit relevant evidence and information.

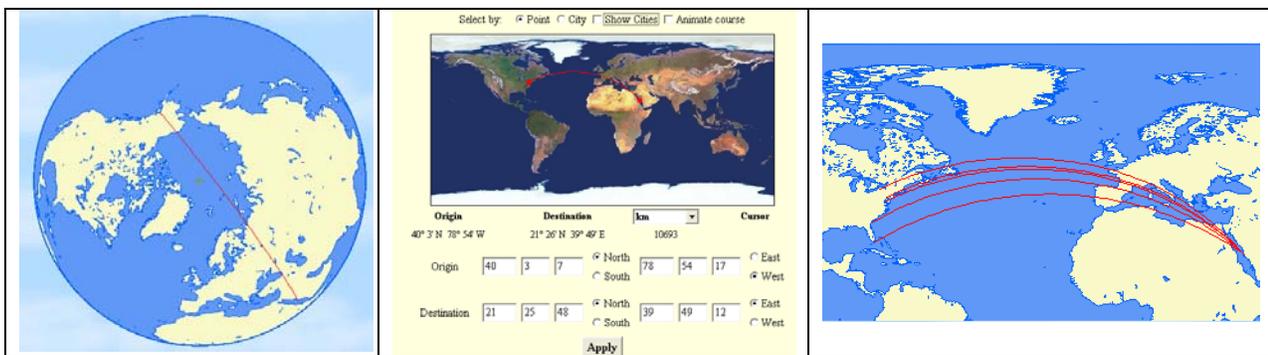


Figure 1. Great circle distances. Top left (a): Anchorage, Alaska to Mecca. Top right (b): Flight 93 memorial site to Mecca. Bottom (c): five disparate locations (including Shanksville) all yielding the same angle.

My second point: your group now claims that an interpretation of intent is irrelevant, whereas you constantly claimed in the materials I analyzed that it is: e.g., “it cannot possibly be an accident” (p. 15), “this ... is intended” (p. 16). Meanwhile, part of my assessment was to address your claims of intent. Again, I remain unconvinced by your mostly emotional arguments that are littered with logical fallacies (e.g., appeal to force, abusive argument, appeal to people). Similarly, the entire discussion about crescents on flags (whose emphasis I note has disappeared from you current rhetoric) is quite suspect; I doubt that the good people of South Carolina would agree that their flag is a radical Islamic symbol!

My third point: the Nazi concentration camp. Unfortunately, my MSWord program automatically changed Drancy to Darcey, a typographical error change that went undetected by me. The listing of Drancy can be verified at

[www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/cclist.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/cclist.html)

The locational information for Drancy can be obtained from

[www.gaisma.com/en/location/drancy.html](http://www.gaisma.com/en/location/drancy.html)

I had executed this exercise only for illustrative purposes because it is something that was mentioned in the blogs (i.e., Jewish people would be offended if such a memorial [was connected by a great circle arc] to a Nazi concentration camp) to which I was directed; note that I phrase this in terms of the great circle arc rather than orientation (vis-à-vis your more recent complaints). I think you have converted this point into a red herring. And, given that some typographical errors might be in this current document, I put a disclaimer here: any subsequently discovered typographical errors do not constitute my lying. Given that you have been so nasty toward me, I had absolutely no inclination to inform you of the correction. As an aside, I did notify the National Parks Service.

This letter is more for the people that I cc than for you. I fully expect that you will continue to disparage me. If a Congressional investigation is convened, you should be investigated, too: you have wasted so much time and so many resources without bothering to solidly establish your arguments; and, you have harassed so many people, including the families of the victims of Flight 93. I also go on record here as pointing out that your rebuttal to my initial evaluation that you post (dated July 26, 2006) was never sent to me. Ironically, on July 22, 2006 I sent you a copy of my commentary in response to your July 22, 2006 e-mail request, to which you replied:

**From:** Alec Rawls [<mailto:alec@rawls.org>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, July 26, 2006 2:15 PM

**To:** Griffith, Daniel A

**Subject:** RE: Flight 93 Memorial

Dear Professor Griffith:

I appreciate your sending along the comments. Unfortunately the document you sent me has a restriction that only allows it to be opened by Microsoft Office 2003 or later, which I do not have.

Could you please paste the contents into an email for me so I can take a look?

Thanks

AR

I then sent you a secured \*.pdf file that very day. I contest the truth about your claims regarding my not being forthcoming with these materials. And, regardless of what you contend about not needing my permission to distribute my analysis, as my intellectual property, you have no legal right to put it in your book and copyright it!

I have submitted my evaluations, and have spent considerable time with repeated reassessments that were done so with full consideration of your complaints over the past 18 months. Your bullying of me has not forced me to state that I “have been used by some” (from your 1/30/2008 e-mail to me). I do not intend to continue engaging you about this matter; and, I am doing no further reassessments. Rather, by following your reasoning, I could easily claim that *facing into the memorial in the way that you describe is oriented toward the Vatican: “[l]ess than two degrees off [the Vatican] is plenty close enough” (p. 11).*

Daniel A. Griffith

Fac cc: Congressman Tom Tancredo, 202-226-4623