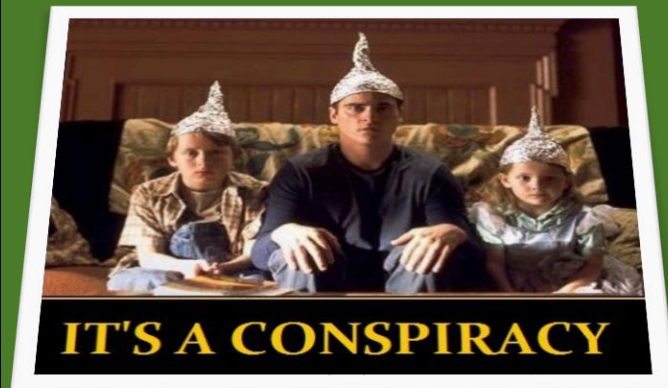




Conspiracy Theories

Who Believes Them, and Why? How Can You Determine if They Are True or False?



ABSTRACT

What is a conspiracy theory, why do people believe in them, and why do they tend to proliferate? Why does belief in one conspiracy correlate to belief in others? What are the triggers of belief, and how does group identity factor into it? How can one tell the difference between a true conspiracy and a false one? We humans love gossip. We love it so much that whenever we find it, our initial reaction is to immediately tell someone, and if we don't find a salacious story we make it up and tell someone anyway. Let me lead-in with a quote from my grandfather Forrest Goodrich. He taught me that I should never believe anything I hear and only half of what I see. When it comes to conspiracy theories we all should take his words of wisdom to heart.

John F. Lemon, PhD

Dedication

This is dedicated to all of the fruits, nuts, and flakes who have fallen for some of the dumbest conspiracies ever perpetrated on mankind. It's been said that there's a sucker born every minute and conspiracy theories are proof of that.

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Conspiracy Theories

Who Believes Them, and Why? How Can One Determine if They Are True or False?

Introduction

What is a conspiracy theory, why do people believe in them, and why do they tend to proliferate? Why does belief in one conspiracy correlate to belief in others? What are the triggers of belief, and how does group identity factor into it? How can one tell the difference between a true conspiracy and a false one? We humans love gossip. We love it so much that whenever we find it, our initial reaction is to immediately tell someone, and if we don't find a salacious story we make it up and tell someone anyway. Let me lead-in with a quote from my grandfather, Forrest Goodrich. He taught me that I should never believe anything I hear and only half of what I see. When it comes to conspiracy theories we all should take his words of wisdom to heart.

Many people simply can't resist getting the details on the latest conspiracy theories, no matter how far-fetched they may seem. At the same time, many people quickly denounce any conspiracy theory as untrue and sometimes as unpatriotic or just plain ridiculous. I have friends who believe in conspiracy theories, the more ridiculous the better. I used to spend hours trying to convince them how stupid they were. However, the reaction was always, "My mind is made up. Don't confuse me with the facts." Now I just listen politely then hurry on my way, knowing that we will just have to agree to disagree.

Conspiracy theory is a term that originally was a neutral descriptor for any claim of civil, criminal or political conspiracy. However, it has become almost exclusively in reference to any fringe theory which explains a historical or current event as the result of a secret plot by political, religious, criminal, scientific, or international conspirators of almost superhuman power and cunning. To conspire means "to join in a secret agreement to engage in an unlawful or wrongful act or to use such means to accomplish a lawful end." The term "conspiracy theory" is frequently used by scholars and in popular culture to identify secret military, religious, corporate, scientific, or political actions aimed at stealing power, money, or freedom, from "the people." To many, conspiracy theories are just human nature. Not all people in this world are honest, hardworking and forthcoming about their intentions. Certainly, we can all agree on this. So how did the term "conspiracy theory" get grouped in with urban legend, fiction, fantasy and folklore?

Skeptics are important in achieving an objective view of reality. Healthy skepticism is important and based on empirical evidence. However, the skepticism of the conspiracy theorists is based on emotions, manufactured evidence, rumors, conjecture, and supposition.

In fact, if one were to look into conspiracy theories, they will largely find that thinking about a conspiracy is associated with lunacy and paranoia. Many of these people are pictured wearing the tinfoil hats and sitting in front of their computers in their basement printing out reams of papers about their latest theory. Citing as proof the myriad of web sites no matter how meaningless. I find it extremely odd that the assumption is on thousands of participants in a conspiracy. I, for one, find it hard to believe any conspiracy involving more than a handful of people but the fact remains that there have been conspiracies in our world, proven and not made up, that involved many hundreds of people. It's not a matter of opinion, it's a matter of fact. This fact merely bolsters the belief that all conspiracy theories are true.

One more thing to consider, have you noticed that if the conspiracy involves powerful interests with the ability to bribe, threaten or manipulate major institutions such as the mafia, big corporations or government, then don't you find it odd when people use one of those as the "credible" counter-argument? What I mean is, if you are discussing a conspiracy about the mafia, and someone hands you a debunking article that was written by the mafia, it doesn't seem like it would take a rocket scientist to look at that with serious criticism and incredulity. While intelligent cynicism certainly can be healthy, though, some of the greatest discoveries of all time were initially received often with great vitriol and as blasphemous conspiracy theories. Think of the revelation that the earth was not the center of the universe, or that the world was not flat but actually round.

The romance of the conspiracy hunt lies in the way it transfers energy from the assassin to the common man, at home alone, searching for the plot's true source. In this, it matches perfectly the romance

of the Internet, which perhaps explains why conspiracies have found such a resolute home there. If the villains are merely pawns, then the story needs a hero, and the grass roots investigator raises his hand to volunteer for the job.

The wider the gap around this theory, the harder its proponents work to implicate powerful forces in the plot to destroy the country and the world. What is left is a general sense that something is amiss. Beneath the surface chaos of the disaster, natural or manmade, the war, the medical breakthrough, the scientific development, the downturn in the economy or another nefarious event, the story follows a familiar plot. We know the characters in the story. We understand the patterns of conspiracy. We owe a great deal to the Kennedy assassination, which gave birth to the modern golden age of conspiracy.

The history of paranoia in America is long and magnificently elaborate: the witches burned in Salem; the society of stonemasons supposedly bent on controlling the government; Catholics who owe their complete and utter allegiance to the Pope in Rome, and the modern conspiracy theory evolved into the documentary logic, with its familiar cast of villains resulting in the common downfall of the United States and repercussion around the world. With the corruption in the government, corporations, organized crime, terrorism, special interest groups, false news stories, and other shadowy figures in a shadow government, conspiracy theorists are working overtime to spread their paranoia, fear, and mistrust in the basic institutions in our society.

The seduction of conspiracy is the way it orders chaos. Even those who consider themselves the bastions of logic sometimes get sucked into the shadowy world of conspiracy. The self-made logician goes to work. Meticulously, he documents the discrepancies between the official report and the chain of events in the story. Eventually the researcher convinces himself that what he has “found” is a science, with conclusive evidence that here is an obvious conspiracy which has become a template for ornate intrigues.

The screen-writing guru Robert McKee explained conspiracies a few years ago, “a murder is committed and the investigation drives inward: You know, you’ve got six possible murderers. In the American tradition, a murder is committed, we start to investigate, and it turns out to encompass all of society.” There is inevitably an intrigue that goes all the way to the White House. The conspiracy is not just how the alienated view the powerful; sometimes, it is how the powerful view themselves with impunity and elitist.

The stories told on our maniac fringes are not so different from the supposition we see every day on Fox News, MSNBC, and CNN where they march out troops of experts that give their opinion on how something is amiss. In our zeal to hunt the enemies we see gathering on the horizon, we have committed torture, secretly spied on the innocent, and lost touch with our own principles. American state power has extended around the globe, and simultaneously, the world has become more transparent: We are keeping, and leaking, many more secrets. And so, conspiracy theories are no longer about religious cults, or foreign plots, or hypothetical invasions. They are instead about the police state, the FBI, the CIA, and secret international societies bent on national and international domination.

“A fundamental paradox of the paranoid is the imitation of the enemy,” the historian Richard Hofstadter famously wrote. The anti-masons had their own rituals and lodges. The anti-communists have secret arms deals, propaganda, overseas fronts, and purges; the anti-Catholic Ku Klux Klan have their priest like robes and secrecy. In fact, the common denominator in all of this is secrecy; Secrecy in the government, secrecy in some religious and fraternal organizations, secrecy in some corporate policies and practices. This secrecy feeds the paranoid, delusions of the conspiracy theorist. Conspiracists are by nature protagonists who, armed with their bit of misinformation, feel powerful because they have cracked the secret code that solves the mystery of the conspiracy. People who suspect conspiracies aren’t really skeptics. Like the rest of us, they’re selective doubters. They favor a worldview, which they uncritically defend. But their worldview isn’t about God, values, freedom, or equality. It’s about the omnipotence of elites.

Conspiracy chatter was once dismissed as a form of mental illness. But the prevalence of such beliefs, documented in surveys, has forced scholars to take it more seriously. Conspiracy theory psychology is becoming an empirical field with a broader mission: to understand why so many people embrace this way of interpreting history. As you’d expect, distrust turns out to be an important factor. But it’s not the kind of distrust that cultivates critical thinking.

In 1999, a research team headed by Marina Abalakina-Paap, a psychologist at New Mexico State University, published a study of U.S. college students. The students were asked whether they agreed with statements such as “Underground movements threaten the stability of American society” and “People who see conspiracies behind everything are simply imagining things.” The strongest predictor of general belief in conspiracies, the authors found, was “lack of trust.”

But the survey instrument that was used in the experiment to measure “trust” was more social than intellectual. It asked the students, in various ways, whether they believed that most human beings treat others generously, fairly, and sincerely. It measured faith in people, not in propositions. “People low in trust of others are likely to believe that others are colluding against them,” the authors proposed. This sort of distrust, in other words, favors a certain kind of belief. It makes you more susceptible, not less, to claims of conspiracy.

An example of this is foreign language. Americans are generally English speaking only. They look at others who speak other languages with suspicion. Put an American in a group of people where another language is spoken and they instinctively suspect that everyone around them are talking about them. If someone speaks to them with a foreign accent, even though they may be speaking English, they look at them, shake their heads and tell them they don’t understand. Some even get hostile and tell them to go back where they came from if they can’t “learn to talk American.”

The common thread between distrust and cynicism, as defined in these experiments, is a perception of bad character. More broadly, it’s a tendency to focus on intention and agency, rather than randomness or causal complexity. In extreme form, it can become paranoia. In mild form, it’s a common weakness known as the fundamental attribution error—attributing others’ behavior to personality traits and objectives, forgetting the importance of situational factors and chance. Suspicion, imagination, and fantasy are closely related. The more you see the world this way—full of malice and planning instead of circumstance and coincidence—the more likely you are to accept conspiracy theories of all kinds. Once you buy into the first theory, with its premises of coordination, efficacy, and secrecy, the next seems that much more plausible.

Many studies and surveys have documented this pattern. In 2014, Public Policy Polling asked 1,200 registered U.S. voters about various popular theories. Fifty-one % said a larger conspiracy was behind President Kennedy’s assassination; only 25 % said Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone. Compared with respondents who said Oswald acted alone, those who believed in a larger conspiracy were more likely to embrace other conspiracy theories tested in the poll. They were twice as likely to say that a UFO had crashed in Roswell, N.M. in 1947 (32 to 16%) and that the CIA had deliberately spread crack cocaine in U.S. cities (22 to 9 %). Conversely, compared with respondents who didn’t believe in the Roswell incident, those who did were far more likely to say that a conspiracy had killed JFK (74 to 41 %), that the CIA had distributed crack (27 to 10 %), that the government “knowingly allowed” the 9/11 attacks (23 to 7 %), and that the government adds fluoride to our water for sinister reasons (23 to 2 %).

The appeal of these theories—the simplification of complex events to human agency and evil—overrides not just their cumulative implausibility (which, perversely, becomes cumulative plausibility as you buy into the premise) but also, in many cases, their incompatibility. Consider the 2003 survey in which Gallup asked 471 Americans about JFK’s death. 37% said the Mafia was involved, 34% said the CIA was involved, 18% blamed Vice President Johnson, 15% blamed the Soviets, and 15% blamed the Cubans. If you’re doing the math, you’ve figured out by now that many respondents named more than one culprit. In fact, 21% blamed two conspiring groups or individuals, and 12% blamed three. The CIA, the Mafia, the Cubans—somehow, they were all in on the plot.

I personally believe LBJ was involved in the plot but just because I believe it doesn’t make it true. That’s the difference between conspiracy theorists and others. The Conspiracy theorists believe and therefore it has to be true. The rest of us realize that beliefs are like opinions. Everyone has one. However, we don’t turn our beliefs into conspiracies.

In 2012, psychologists at the University of Kent led by Michael Wood (who blogs at a delightful website on conspiracy psychology), escalated the challenge. They offered U.K. college students five conspiracy theories about Princess Diana: four in which she was deliberately killed, and one in which she faked her death. In a second experiment, they brought up two more theories: that Osama Bin Laden was

still alive (contrary to reports of his death in a U.S. raid earlier that year) and that, alternatively, he was already dead before the raid. Sure enough, “The more participants believed that Princess Diana faked her own death, the more they believed that she was murdered.” And “the more participants believed that Osama Bin Laden was already dead when U.S. special forces raided his compound in Pakistan, the more they believed he is still alive.”

Another research group, led by Viren Swami, fabricated conspiracy theories about Red Bull, the energy drink, and showed them to 281 Austrian and German adults. One statement said that a 23-year-old man had died of cerebral hemorrhage caused by the product. Another said the drink’s inventor “pays 10 million Euros each year to keep food controllers quiet.” A third claimed, “The extract ‘testiculus Taurus’ found in Red Bull has unknown side effects.” Participants were asked to quantify their level of agreement with each theory, ranging from 1 (completely false) to 9 (completely true). The average score across all the theories was 3.5 among men and 3.9 among women. According to the authors, “the strongest predictor of belief in the entirely fictitious conspiracy theory was belief in other real-world conspiracy theories.”

Clearly, susceptibility to conspiracy theories isn’t a matter of objectively evaluating evidence. It’s more about alienation. People who fall for such theories don’t trust the government or the media. They aim their scrutiny at the official narrative, not at the alternative explanations. In this respect, they’re not so different from the rest of us. Psychologists and political scientists have repeatedly demonstrated that “when processing pro and con information on an issue, people actively denigrate the information with which they disagree while accepting compatible information almost at face value.” Scholars call this pervasive tendency “motivated skepticism.”

People can’t accept how easily one lone gun man or a few guys with a bomb can totally change people’s lives. Conspiracy believers are the ultimate motivated skeptics. Their curse is that they apply this selective scrutiny not to the left or right, but to the mainstream. They tell themselves that they’re the ones who see the lies, and the rest of us are sheep being led to the slaughter. But believing that everybody’s lying is just another kind of gullibility.¹

²in the days following the bombings at the Boston Marathon, speculation online regarding the identity and motive of the unknown perpetrator or perpetrators was rampant. And once the Tsarnaev brothers were identified and the manhunt came to a close, the speculation didn’t cease. It took a new form. A sampling: Maybe the brothers Tsarnaev were just patsies, fall guys set up to take the heat for a mysterious Saudi with high-level connections; or maybe they were innocent, but instead of the Saudis, the actual bomber had acted on behalf of a rogue branch of our own government; or what if the Tsarnaevs were behind the attacks, but were secretly working for a larger organization?

Crazy as these theories are, those propagating them are not — they’re quite normal, in fact. But recent scientific research tells us this much: if you think one of the theories above is plausible, you probably feel the same way about the others, even though they contradict one another. And it’s very likely that this isn’t the only news story that makes you feel as if shadowy forces are behind major world events.

“The best predictor of belief in a conspiracy theory is belief in other conspiracy theories,” says Viren Swami, a psychology professor who studies conspiracy beliefs at the University of Westminster in England. Psychologists say that’s because a conspiracy theory isn’t so much a response to a single event as it is an expression of an overarching worldview.

As Richard Hofstadter wrote in his seminal 1965 book, “*The Paranoid Style in American Politics*,” conspiracy theories, especially those involving meddling foreigners, are a favorite pastime in this nation. Americans have always had the sneaking suspicion that somebody is out to get us — be it Freemasons, Catholics or communists. But in recent years, it seems as if every tragedy comes with a round of yarn-spinning, as the Web overflows with stories about “false flag” attacks and “crisis actors” — not mere theorizing but arguments for the existence of a completely alternate version of reality. As the Mythbuster Adam Savage commented, “I reject your reality and substitute my own.”

¹ William Saletan. Will Saletan writes about politics, science, technology, and other stuff for Slate. He’s the author of *Bearing Right*.

² Why Rational People Buy into Conspiracy Theories, Eureka, Maggie Koerth, Baker May 21, 2013

Since Hofstadter's book was published, our access to information has vastly improved, which you would think would have helped minimize such wild speculation. But according to recent scientific research on the matter, it most likely only serves to make theories more convincing to the public. What's even more surprising is that this sort of theorizing isn't limited to those on the margins. Perfectly sane minds possess an incredible capacity for developing narratives, and even some of the wildest conspiracy theories can be grounded in rational thinking, which makes them that much more pernicious. Consider this: 63% of registered American voters believe in at least one political conspiracy theory, according to a recent poll conducted by Fairleigh Dickinson University.

While psychologists can't know exactly what goes on inside our heads, they have, through surveys and laboratory studies, come up with a set of traits that correlate well with conspiracy belief. In 2010, Swami and a co-author summarized this research in *The Psychologist*, a scientific journal. They found, perhaps surprisingly, that believers are more likely to be cynical about the world in general and politics in particular. Conspiracy theories also seem to be more compelling to those with low self-worth, especially with regard to their sense of agency in the world at large. Conspiracy theories appear to be a way of reacting to uncertainty and powerlessness.

Economic recessions, terrorist attacks and natural disasters are massive, looming threats, but we have little power over when they occur or how or what happens afterward. In these moments of powerlessness and uncertainty, a part of the brain called the amygdala kicks into action. Paul Whalen, a scientist at Dartmouth College who studies the amygdala, says it doesn't exactly do anything on its own. Instead, the amygdala jump-starts the rest of the brain into analytical overdrive; prompting repeated reassessments of information in an attempt to create a coherent and understandable narrative, to understand what just happened, what threats still exist and what should be done now. This may be a useful way to understand how the brain's capacity for generating new narratives after shocking events can contribute to so much paranoia in this country.

"If you know the "truth" and others don't, that's one way you can reassert feelings of having agency," Swami says. It can be comforting to do your own research even if that research is flawed. It feels good to be the wise old goat in a flock of sheep.

Surprisingly, Swami's work has also turned up a correlation between conspiracy theorizing and strong support of democratic principles. But this isn't quite so strange if you consider the context. Kathryn Olmsted, a historian at the University of California, Davis, says that conspiracy theories wouldn't exist in a world in which real conspiracies don't exist. And those conspiracies whether they be Watergate or the Iran-contra Affair often involve manipulating and circumventing the democratic process. Even people who believe that the Sandy Hook shooting was actually a drama staged by actors couch their arguments in concern for the preservation of the Second Amendment. Those on the other side of the argument exploit the tragedy to lobby for more gun control.

Our access to high-quality information has not, unfortunately, ushered in an age in which disagreements of this sort can easily be solved with a quick Google search. In fact, the Internet has made things worse. Confirmation bias, the tendency to pay more attention to evidence that supports what you already believe, is well-documented and is a common human failing. People have been writing about it for centuries. In recent years, though, researchers have found that confirmation bias is not easy to overcome. You can't just drown it in facts. As most people know, a smart person can make facts prove any point they want.

In 2006, the political scientists Brendan Nyhan and Jason Reifler identified a phenomenon called the "backfire effect." They showed that efforts to debunk inaccurate political information can leave people more convinced that false information is true than they would have been otherwise. Nyhan isn't sure why this happens, but it appears to be more prevalent when the bad information helps bolster a favored worldview or ideology.

In that way, Swami says, the Internet and other media have helped perpetuate paranoia. Not only does more exposure to these alternative narratives help engender belief in conspiracies, he says, but the Internet's tendency toward tribalism helps reinforce misguided beliefs. Just look at the social media phenomenon. Something happens and everyone on Facebook or Twitter or whatever the media is popular

at the moment jumps on the suspected offender like vultures on roadkill. It doesn't matter if the victim is innocent or guilty. Facts don't matter. In fact, some genius even said as such during the riots that occurred around the country when police officers were targeted in Houston and other US cities.

And that's a problem. Because while believing George W. Bush helped plan the Sept. 11 attacks might make you feel in control, it merely gives you a false sense of security. Earlier this year, Karen Douglas, a University of Kent psychologist, published research in which they exposed people to conspiracy theories about climate change and the death of Princess Diana. Those who got information supporting the theories but not information debunking them were more likely to withdraw from participation in politics and were less likely to take action to reduce their carbon footprints.

Alex Jones, a syndicated radio host, and all-American nut job, can build fame as a conspiracy peddler; politicians can hint at conspiracies for votes and leverage; but if conspiracy theories are a tool the average person uses to reclaim his sense of agency and access to democracy, it's an ineffective and deceptive tool. It can even have dangerous health implications. For example, research has shown that African-Americans remembering the abuses of the Tuskegee experiment, who believe AIDS is a weapon perpetrated on them by the government³ are less likely to practice safe sex resulting in an increase in STD's and illegitimate pregnancies.

Also, if you believe that governments or corporations are hiding evidence that vaccines harm children, you're less likely to have your children vaccinated. This results in the rise in epidemics in regional pockets of childhood diseases with even a few deaths in places with low child-vaccination rates.

Psychologists aren't sure whether powerlessness causes conspiracy theories or vice versa. Either way, the current scientific thinking suggests these beliefs are nothing more than an extreme form of cynicism, a turning away from politics and traditional media which only perpetuates the problem.⁴

Humans love intrigue. They feast on mysteries. They can't accept anything on face value especially death, disaster, corruption, war, and other unexplained mysteries of the universe. Most conspiracy theories are based on speculation, and circumstantial evidence. Even in the face of empirical evidence many people feel the evidence is suspect. Conspiracy theorists are naturally negative, cynical, apolitical, uninformed, gullible, and some cases illiterate. They get their information from kooks like Alex Jones and other likeminded conspiracy pimps who perpetuate conspiracy theories.

There was a quote from a movie I saw long ago, entitled *Alamo Bay*. Yet the quote is still valid, "People hate what they fear, and they fear what they don't understand." This is so applicable to conspiracy theorists because they thrive on paranoia. They don't understand what they fear but what's worse is they don't care to understand. They reject our reality and substitute their own. The sad thing is that they try to come across as authorities on various subjects to likeminded fools yet they are perceived by the mainstream population as naïve, gullible and silly. This treatise on conspiracy theories will take a look at several popular conspiracy theories in an attempt to point out that the perception of powerful organizations and elitist individuals as somehow controlling world events is a delusion. No organization or government is powerful enough to control every aspect of our lives. The bigger the organization the more bureaucratic it is and the more difficult it is to control anything including the organization.

Look at the United Nations. It is a bloated bureaucracy that some claim is a dominating world government. Yet they can't even implement a simple peace-keeping operation without screwing it up. What makes people think they can control the world? The US government is a top-heavy bloated, immovable, bureaucracy that likes to think they can make or break a president, congress, or local governments. Yet, eventually they will get caught and they will go to jail. It's not a matter of if but when.

³ The Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male, also known as the Tuskegee Syphilis Study or Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment was an infamous clinical study conducted between 1932 and 1972 by the U.S. Public Health Service studying the natural progression of untreated syphilis in rural African, American men in Alabama under the guise of receiving free health care from the United States government.

⁴ Maggie Koerth, Baker is science editor at BoingBoing.net and author of "Before the Lights Go Out," on the future of energy production and consumption.

Chapter 1. Ethnicity, Race and Religion

Anti-Catholicism Conspiracy Theories

The Catholic Church has been the subject of numerous conspiracy theories ever since the renaissance. It is large, it is rich, it is secretive, and it is powerful especially during the Middle Ages when it was the only kid on the block. They controlled everyone from Kings to peasants. They implemented crusades, inquisitions, and the selling of indulgences and other practices and teachings that controlled the illiterate masses. Then during the renaissance and reformation when Gutenberg published the Bible and Luther nailed his 95 theses to the church door in Wittenberg, Germany the power of the Catholic church began to erode. It is still rich, large, secretive, and somewhat powerful but is more involved in doing good works in poor nations than in the shenanigans of the Middle Ages.

Yet conspiracy theories concerning the Catholic church still survive, usually perpetuated by Protestants who hate the pope and the church and everything they stand for. Some even go so far as to claim the Catholic Church is not a Christian church. Anti-Catholic, Jesuit, and Vatican conspiracy theories vary in their level of extreme stupidity. Less extreme conspiracy theorists assert the more realistic ideas that the Catholic Church as a political entity which exercises control over certain world events or the global economy, especially through Vatican banking; or that the Catholic Church has engaged in and subsequently concealed their involvement in political corruption and other immoral or criminal practices. In the renaissance that was true as the Pope was both political and spiritual leader of the Vatican and held sway over many political leaders.

Other theories that fall on the less extreme side yet still remain unfounded include the belief that the Catholic Church, Jesuits, or Knights Templar are suppressing or have suppressed in the past important religious documents or evidence incompatible with Church teachings, a theory that gained increased traction with the popularity of Dan Brown's the *Da Vinci Code*. Less realistic and more extreme conspiracy theories tend to be more likely to attack Catholic adherents in general as a cohesive group, claiming that Catholics as a religious demographic, rather than just the Vatican, are actively conspiring or influencing world events. This was a popular theory when John F. Kennedy was president.

Common extreme conspiracy theories, many of which have persisted for centuries within anti-Catholic Protestant circles, include theories suggesting that either Catholics as a general group, the Church hierarchy in particular, or certain Catholic orders participate in secretive or evil rituals or secret societies, with accusations varying as to the nature of these secret Catholic activities. Such conspiracy theories may feature accusations that Catholics, Catholic groups, or the Church regularly engage in ritual abuse, Satanism, paganism or pagan rituals, orgies, black masses, bloody human sacrifices, or black magic rituals, or that the pope or the Vatican is the Anti-Christ, Satan, The Whore of Babylon, or The Beast.

More secular or politically-based but still extreme conspiracy theories include the belief that the Vatican, the Jesuits, or Catholic secret societies are seeking to create a state within a state, a strategy of tension, a shadow government, a concentration of media ownership, or they are cabals or Illuminati-like organizations creating a New World Order. Other more recent secular conspiracy theories may speculate the Church or the Pope as part of a secret reptilian takeover conspiracy. In other words, the Pope and other high-ranking officials will turn into reptilian-like creatures and dominate the earth.

One of the examples Anti-Catholics use is The Exultet which has been the subject of numerous online conspiracy theories attempting to show that the Catholic practice is actually devil-worship. These conspiracy theories usually show a recording of a deacon chanting the final portions of the Exultet in Latin, captioned with a purported "translation" of the text into English with these or similar words, selectively translating (very poorly and ungrammatically) everything but the word Lucifer ("light-bearer" or "Morning Star"), which is used in 2 Peter 1 and Revelation 2 and 22 as a title for Christ, attempting to inappropriately use the term as a name for Satan.

The following is the commentary by Bishop Michael J. Flynn on the Catholic bishops' website⁵ on the Easter celebration and the singing of the Exultet. The first major section of the annual Easter Vigil celebration may be the most memorable and engaging to the senses. It certainly includes some vivid symbols and actions which we do not encounter in the liturgy every day. Formerly called simply the "Service of Light," in the present English translation of the third edition of the Roman Missal this introductory sequence of liturgical elements is entitled "The Solemn Beginning of the Vigil or Lucernarium."⁶ The solemn liturgy begins – usually outdoors – with the blessing of the fire followed by the preparation and lighting of the Paschal Candle. As the candle is being carried in procession into the dark church, all those in attendance are given individual candles which have received their light from the one Paschal Candle. When the Paschal Candle is placed in its prominent candle stand in the church, the church's lights are turned back on, the candle is incensed, and the deacon (or a priest, or a lay cantor if need be) intones one of the most evocative and poetic hymns of praise in all liturgy: The Easter Proclamation – also known as the Exultet, named after the first word of the Latin original. The liturgy's symbolic movement has been from darkness to light; now words and music are used to praise and thank God for what the light represents: God's saving activity throughout human history, culminating in Christ's defeat of death and resurrection from the dead.

To appreciate fully the function of this great hymn on this most holy of nights, it is important to note that this portion of the Easter Vigil has not always been the only example of a "service of light." Such services were once commonplace. Imagine how precious a candle, as the only source of light, must have been to families and monastic communities alike as the day came to an end and the sun began to set in Gaul, Spain, and other areas in the early Middle Ages. There were of course no electric street lights, no lamps available at the touch of a switch. Candles were costly, and often a single candle provided the sole source of light throughout the impenetrable darkness of the night. The importance of such a light found liturgical expression in evening lamp-lighting services called lucernaria. In monastic communities, these often served as a kind of prelude to all-night vigils, especially on important feast days. The hymn and prayer texts which accompanied the lucernaria made ready use of the solitary light – this one sign of security and hope enclosed by an otherwise dark night – as a symbol of Christ as the light to the world. It is no wonder, then, that a most elaborate Lucernarium came to climax the opening moments of the Vigil of Easter, the most important vigil of the year.

In texts prior to the early Middle Ages, we find that a lengthy prayer of blessing of the candle was used in Rome and in the areas, most influenced by Roman liturgy. In areas of northern Europe, however, the practice of a deacon intoning a proclamation of praise in the presence of the Easter Light became customary, and during the course of the Middle Ages, this was eventually imported into regular Roman practice as well. It is quite possible that the earliest of these Easter Proclamations were improvised, but by the Middle Ages the text we now know as the Exultet became the standard hymn for the Easter Vigil in the West. In fact, in the important and influential Sacramentary compiled from both Roman and Northern European sources for the 9th century court of Charlemagne, we find the Exultet essentially as we know it today. Despite its antiquity, this 1200-plus year old Latin text is nearly identical to the one in our Missal today, except that the older one is about one third longer. In this early Exultet, there was an entire long section devoted to a rich symbolism drawn from the activities of bees. In our present version, this has been reduced to two references to the role of bees in the production of the wax which makes up the sacred candle – language which has been noticeably restored in the new English translation of the Exultet. In Southern Italy during the later Middle Ages the Exultet was often written out on elaborately decorated scrolls. As the deacon progressed through the long text, the assembly was able to see beautiful illuminations accompanying the various parts of the text. These illustrations on the "Exultet Rolls" were painted upside down in relation to the text and musical notation, so that onlookers would see the figures right side up as the long scroll unfurled.

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⁶ The illiterate language ignoramuses see the first part of this word and think Lucifer.

Despite its antiquity, this text still serves splendidly as a present-day expression of Easter joy and exuberant thanksgiving. Rich with patristic allusions, the Exultet also provides a preview of the scriptural and theological themes that will ground the rest of the Easter Vigil liturgy. Salvation history, especially God's deliverance of his Chosen People from Egyptian slavery and exile are prominent both in the Exultet, and the extended Liturgy of the Word that will follow it. The text poetically recalls the Passover Feast; the candle present before the assembly is likened to the pillar of fire which guided Israel in its desert journey; their miraculous passage through the Red Sea serves as both a sign of deliverance and as a prefiguring of the waters of Baptism, another prominent element of Easter Vigils both ancient and modern. Having recalled key moments of the Old Covenant, the New Covenant between God and humanity is proclaimed eloquently in terms of the brilliant Light of Christ dispelling the darkness of sin and death for all time.

As is fitting for a text of this importance and solemnity, the Exultet should always be sung – unless singing it worthily would be truly impossible. The chant notation in the Missal is not difficult to sing, but the Easter Proclamation is lengthy, so preparation and practice well in advance is essential. It is also important to take note of the rubrical instructions concerning the Exultet which are contained in the Missal. Deciding which of the various options best suits a given community and the capabilities of its ministers will go a long way to ensuring a rendition of the Exultet which is both dignified and evocative of joy. As the rubrics indicate, intoning the Exultet is primarily the responsibility of the deacon. In the absence of a deacon, it may also be sung either by the priest who is presiding, or by a concelebrant. However, if local circumstances suggest it, the instructions also permit the intoning of the Exultet by a lay cantor, with certain indicated portions of the text being omitted. Finally, if the length of text proves daunting, the Missal also contains an abbreviated form of the Exultet. These various options, together with the determination of which ministers will execute them, should be discussed early in the planning stages, and never left to chance at the last minute.

For centuries, the Exultet has served as a liturgical jewel of unsurpassed beauty on this, the “mother of all holy vigils,” as St. Augustine aptly described the Easter Vigil. As the Exultet exhorts us, “Be glad, let earth be glad, as glory floods her, ablaze with light from her eternal King, let all corners of the earth be glad, knowing an end to gloom and darkness.” May this venerable Easter Proclamation serve us and our assemblies as a genuine expression of Easter hope and joy. The following is the Original Latin Version, the current official translation. And a Google Translation by me.

Latin Version

Section 1

Exultet iam angélica turba cælórum:exsúltent divína mystéria:
Et pro tanti Regis victória tuba ínsonet salutáris.
Gáudeat et tellus tantis irradiáta fulgóribus:
Et, ætéрни Regis splendóre illustráta,
Totíus orbis se séntiat amisísse calíginem.
Lætétur et mater Ecclésia,
Tanti lúminis adornáta fulgóribus:
Et magnis populórum vóci bus hæc aula resúltet.
(Quaprópter astántes vos, fratres caríssimi,
Ad tam miram huius sancti lúminis claritátem,
Una mecum, quæso,
Dei omnipoténtis misericórdiam invocáte.
Ut, qui me non meis méritis
Intra Levitárum númerum dignátus est aggregáre,
Lúminis sui claritátem infúndens,
Cérei huius laudem implére perfíciat).

Section 2

V. Dóminus vobíscum.R. Et cum spírítu tuo.)

V. Sursum corda.
R. Habémus ad Dóminum.
V. Grátias agámus Dómino Deo nostro.
R. Dignum et iustum est.
Vere dignum et iustum est,
Invisibilem Deum Patrem omnipoténtem
Filiúmque eius Unigénitum,
Dóminum nostrum Iesum Christum,
Toto cordis ac mentis afféctu et vocis ministério personáre.
Qui pro nobis ætérno Patri Adæ débitum solvit,
Et véteris piáculi cautiónem pio cruóre detérsit.
Hæc sunt enim festa paschália,
In quibus verus ille Agnus occíditur,
Cuius sáanguine postes fidélium consecrántur.
Hæc nox est,
In qua primum patres nostros,
Fílios Israel edúctos de Ægýpto,
Mare Rubrum sicco vestígio transíre fecísti.
Hæc ígitur nox est,
Quæ peccatórum ténebras colúmnae illuminatióne purgávit.
Hæc nox est,
Quæ hódie per univérsum mundum in Christo credéntes,
A vítiis sáeculi et calígine peccatórum segregátos,
Reddit grátiae, sóciat sanctitati.
Hæc nox est,
In qua, destrúctis vínculis mortis,
Christus ab ínferis victor ascéndit.
Nihil enim nobis nasci prófuit, nisi rédimi profuísset.
O mira circa nos tuæ pietátis dignátio!
O inæstimábilis diléctio caritátis:
Ut servum redímeres, Fílium tradidísti!
O certe necessárium Adæ peccátum,
Quod Christi morte delétum est!

Section 3

O felix culpa, quæ talem ac tantum méruit habére Redemptórem!
O vere beáta nox,
Quæ sola méruit scire tempus et horam,
In qua Christus ab ínferis resurréxit!
Hæc nox est, de qua scriptum est:
Et nox sicut dies illuminábitur:
Et nox illuminátio mea in delíciis meis.
Huius ígitur sanctificátio noctis fugat scélera, culpas lavat:
Et reddit innocéntiam lapsis et mæstis lætítiam.
Fugat ódia, concórdiam parat et curvat impéria.
In huius ígitur noctis grátia,
Súscipe, sancte Pater, laudis huius sacrificium vespertínum,
Quod tibi in hac cérei oblatiône sollémni,
Per ministrórum manus
De opéribus apum, sacrosáncta reddit Ecclésia.
Sed iam colúmnae huius præcónia nóvimus,

Quam in honórem Dei rútilans ignis accéndit.
Qui, licet sit divísus in partes,
Mutuáti tamen lúminis detriménta non novit.
Alitur enim liquántibus ceris,
Quas in substántiam pretiósæ huius lámpadis
Apis mater edúxit.
O vere beáta nox,
In qua terrénis cæléstia, humánis divína iungúntur!
Orámus ergo te, Dómine,
Ut céreus iste in honórem tui nóminis consecrátus,
Ad noctis huius calíginem destruéndam,
Indefíciens persevéret.

Section 4

Et in odórem suavitátis accéptus,
Supérnis lumináribus misceátur.
Flammas eius lúcifer matutínus invéniat:
Ille, inquam, lúcifer, qui nescit occásum:
Christus Fílius tuus,
Qui, regréssus ab ínferis, humáno géneri serénus illúxit,

Et vivit et regnat in sácula sæculórum.
Amen.

Current Official Translation

Section 1

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels!
Exult, all creation around God's throne!
Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!
Sound the trumpet of salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendor,
Radiant in the brightness of your King!
Christ has conquered! Glory fills you!
Darkness vanishes forever!

Rejoice, O Mother Church! Exult in glory!
The risen Savior shines upon you!
Let this place resound with joy,
Echoing the mighty song of all God's people!

My dearest friends,

Standing with me in this holy light,
Join me in asking God for mercy,
That he may give his unworthy minister
Grace to sing his Easter praises.

Exult, let them exult, the hosts of heaven,
Exult, let Angel ministers of God exult,
Let the trumpet of salvation sound aloud our mighty King's triumph!

Be glad, let earth be glad, as glory floods her,
Ablaze with light from her eternal King,
Let all corners of the earth be glad,
Knowing an end to gloom and darkness.

Rejoice, let Mother Church also rejoice,
Arrayed with the lighting of his glory,
Let this holy building shake with joy,
Filled with the mighty voices of the peoples.

(Therefore, dearest friends,
Standing in the awesome glory of this holy light,
Invoke with me, I ask you,
The mercy of God almighty,
That he who has been pleased to number me,
Though unworthy, among the Levites,
May pour into me his light unshadowed,
That I may sing this candle's perfect praises.)

Section 2

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.
It is truly right
That with full hearts and minds and voices
We should praise the unseen God, the all-powerful Father,
And his only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.
For Christ has ransomed us with his blood,
And paid for us the price of Adam's sin
To our eternal Father!

This is our Passover feast,
When Christ, the true Lamb, is slain,
Whose blood consecrates the homes of all believers.

This is the night
When first you saved our fathers:
You freed the people of Israel from their slavery
And led them dry-shod through the sea.

This is the night when the pillar of fire
Destroyed the darkness of sin!

This is the night
When Christians everywhere,
Washed clean of sin and freed from all defilement,
Are restored to grace and grow together in holiness.

This is the night
When Jesus Christ broke the chains of death
And rose triumphant from the grave.

What good would life have been to us,
Had Christ not come as our Redeemer?
Father, how wonderful your care for us!
How boundless your merciful love!
To ransom a slave
You gave away your Son.

Section 3
O happy fault
That earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer!
O truly blessed night,
Worthy alone to know the time and hour
When Christ rose from the underworld!

This is the night
Of which it is written:
The night shall be as bright as day,
Dazzling is the night for me,
And full of gladness.

The sanctifying power of this night
Dispels all wickedness, washes faults away,
Restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to mourners,
Drives out hatred, fosters concord,
And brings down the mighty.

On this, your night of grace,
O holy Father, accept this candle, a solemn offering,
The work of bees and of your servants' hands,
An evening sacrifice of praise,
This gift from your most holy Church.

But now we know the praises of this pillar,
Which glowing fire ignites for God's honor,
A fire into many flames divided,
Yet never dimmed by sharing of its light,
For it is fed by melting wax,
Drawn out by mother bees
To build a torch so precious.

O truly blessed night,
When things of heaven are wed to those of earth,
And divine to the human.

Therefore, O Lord,
We pray you that this candle,
Hallowed to the honor of your name,

May persevere undimmed,
To overcome the darkness of this night.

Section 4

Let it mingle with the lights of heaven
And continue bravely burning
To dispel the darkness of this night!
May the Morning Star which never sets
Find this flame still burning:
Christ, that Morning Star,
Who came back from the dead,
And shed his peaceful light on all mankind,
Your Son, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

Receive it as a pleasing fragrance,
And let it mingle with the lights of heaven.
May this flame be found still burning by the Morning Star:
The one Morning Star who never sets,
Christ your Son,
Who coming back from death's domain
Has shed his peaceful light on humanity
And lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

My Google Translation

Section 1

Let the angelic choirs of heaven: but the joyful mysteries of the divine:
Sound the trumpet of victory, and for the salvation of so great a King.
Let us be glad, and the earth was enlightened by the splendor of so great:
And the brightness of the eternal King, Illustrator,
Of the whole world let it know that the cloud.
Let Mother Church,
So, light, adorned with the rays
This royal hall ring with the great voices of the peoples.
(and thereby, I beseech you, my brethren, dearly beloved,
At the admirable brightness of this holy light,
Together with me, please
Mercy of almighty God.
For example, the merit of mine, who did not
Was enrolled among the Levites, did vouchsafe to admit,
His light upon,
To perfect the praise of this wax candle).

Section 2

The Lord you. R. And with your spirit.)
Lift up your hearts.
R. We lift them up to the Lord.
P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. '
It is right and just.
It is truly right and just,

The invisible God, the Father Almighty
His only Son,
Our Lord Jesus Christ,
With full hearts and minds and voices we should praise.
Who for us the eternal Father the debt of Adam,
And the shedding of the blood of the old original sin.
These are the feasts of Easter,
In which the true Lamb, is slain,
Whose blood consecrates the homes of all believers.
This is the night
In which our fathers,
The children of Israel out of Egypt,
Dry-shod through the Red Sea.
This is the night,
Pillar of fire destroyed the darkness of sin.
This is the night
Which at this time throughout the world in Christ, believing, you
Sin and freed from all defilement from our sins of the world,
Restored to grace and grow together in holiness.
This is the night
In which, being defended from all the chains of death,
Christ rose triumphant from the grave.
Have profited us nothing to be born, but we might be redeemed.
Father, how wonderful your care for us!
O inestimable love:
Mightest redeem a slave, thou didst deliver up!
O truly necessary sin of Adam,
The death of Christ is wiped out!

Section 3

O happy fault, which gained for us so great a Redeemer!
O truly blessed night,
Which alone deserved to know the time and hour,
In which Christ rose from the grave He rose again!
This is the night, as it is written:
And the night as the day;
And night shall be my light in my pleasures.
The power of this holy night dispels all evil, washes guilt away,
, restores lost innocence, brings mourners joy.
It casts out hatred, brings us, and humbles earthly pride.
In this sacred night,
Receive, O holy Father, the evening sacrifice of this praise,
Shown you on the Church's solemn offering,
By the hands
From the work of bees, make the most holy Church renders to.
But now we know the praises of this pillar,
Not light a fire that glows to the honor of God.
A person who, even though it is divided into parts,
No loss from its light being lent.
Fed by the melting wax,
Which in this precious candle

Mother bee.
O truly blessed night,
When heaven is wedded to God!
We beseech thee, O Lord,
That this candle, consecrated in honor of Thy name,
To dispel the darkness,
Continue to arise.

Section 4

The odor is accepted,
Heavenly luminaries.
His flames dawning:
He, I say, O Lucifer, who does not know the going down:
Christ your Son,
Who came back from the grave, his peaceful light on all mankind,
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

So, you see there is no Satanic ritual in the Exultet. It is simply an announcement and invitation to all Christians to celebrate Easter. Those who see the word lucifer automatically jump to the conclusion that the word means Satan. However, if they bothered to consult a Latin Dictionary they would see that word means Son of the Morning. This not only refers to Satan but it also referes to Christ as the Light of the Morning.⁷ Yet those who fear the Catholic Church make false accusations against the Church which lead to mass anti-Catholic hysteria throughout the United Kingdom, and other Protestant countries such as the US. The eventual expulsion of numerous Catholics from Great Britain, and the executions of at least 22 men, including Jesuit priests. An English ballad, "*A True Narrative of the Horrid Hellish Popish-Plot,*" exemplifies the anti-Catholic hysteria and conspiracy theories of the time, blaming Catholics for the Great Fire of London and containing verses such as:

"How the Jesuit, Devil, and POPE did agree
Our STATE to destroy, and Religion so old
To murder our KING
A most Horrible Thing!"

Of course, we must remember that the hatred for the Pope began with King Henry the VIII when the Pope Clement VII refused to grant Henry an annulment from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, so that he could marry Anne Boleyn with whom he was having an affair. Later the hatred for Protestants which defined the reign of Queen Mary Tudor did not help quell the anti-Catholic fervor.

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, suspicion of Catholics remained strong, with William Blackstone in his *Commentaries on the Laws of England* suggesting that Catholics constituted an "imperium in imperio,"⁸ or fifth column,⁹ which held a greater allegiance to the Pope than the civil government (a charge similar to that repeatedly leveled against Jews and the 1960 election of John F. Kennedy) British laws of the time, such as the *Popery Act 1698*, collectively known as the Penal Laws, imposed various civil disabilities and legal penalties on disobedient Catholics. Simply, the laws disenfranchised Catholics, non-Anglican Protestant groups such as the Calvinists and Quakers, which made it unlawful for them to hold public office, receive university degrees, become school teachers, or come within five miles of a town.

⁷ 2 Peter:2 and Revelations 2 and 22.

⁸ government in power,

⁹ A fifth column is any group of people who undermine a larger group—such as a nation or a besieged city—from within, usually in favor of an enemy group or nation. The activities of a fifth column can be overt or clandestine.

In the 17th century, Titus Oates fabricated a fictitious Catholic conspiracy known as the Popish Plot, alleging that there existed an extensive Catholic conspiracy to assassinate Charles II. The economic hardships the laws caused forced many in the UK and Ireland to immigrate to America. Maryland was a colony established by Lord Baltimore for Catholics, while many Presbyterians and Quakers settled in Pennsylvania and parts of New England.

The Know Nothings: Anti-Catholicism did not go away once they came to America. Anti-Catholic Protestants continued their vitriol against Catholics even to the present day. One of the early anti-Catholic groups was the No-Nothing party that began the anti-Catholic political group, the Know Nothings, which began in 1845 and dissolved in 1860. They were a political party claiming that the Irish and other Roman Catholic immigrants to the United States were controlled by the Pope to further an anti-American agenda. Later after the civil War other groups such as the Ku Klux Klan were especially anti-Catholic and fearful of an eventual Catholic takeover of the U.S; basing their beliefs in part on a "religious foundation" in Protestant Christianity and a "return" to "White Protestant values" while also hateful of the influx of poor Catholic immigrants for more secular, nativist reasons. It is interesting that the name was quite revealing about the clueless members of the party. The name could also be attributed to those today who spread clueless rumors, gossip, false news, and other nonsense on social media.

Rising fears sparked a rebirth in the well-worn conspiracy claim that the Catholic Church was the Whore of Babylon in the Book of Revelations, bent on bringing about the end times. The Panic of 1893 was used by American Protestants as "proof" of a Catholic conspiracy to destroy the financial institutions of the US, with fringe groups alleging that agents of the Catholic Church had assassinated Abraham Lincoln. The American fear of Catholic and Papal political control also grew with the establishment of Catholic parochial schools.

In response, Congress proposed an amendment to the Constitution in 1874 that provided: "No money raised by taxation in any State for the support of public schools, or derived from any public source, nor any public lands devoted thereto, shall ever be under the control of any religious sect, nor shall any money so raised or land so devoted be divided between religious sects or denominations." The amendment was defeated in 1875 but would be used as a model for so-called "Blaine Amendments" incorporated into 34 state constitutions over the next three decades, which prohibited the use of public funds to fund parochial and private schools.

Rebecca Reed's 1835 novel, *Six Months in a Convent*, described her alleged captivity by an Ursuline order near Boston. Reed's accusations inspired an angry mob to burn down the convent, and her book famously sold 200,000 copies in one month. Reed's book was soon followed by another bestselling yet fictitious exposé, *Awful Disclosures of the Hotel-Dieu Nunnery*, (1836) in which Maria Monk claimed that the nun convent served as a harem for Catholic priests, and that any resulting children birthed by the harem were murdered after baptism. Col. William Stone, a New York city newspaper editor, along with a team of Protestant investigators, inquired into Monk's claims, inspecting the convent in the process. Col. Stone's investigation concluded there was no evidence that Maria Monk "had ever been within the walls of the cloister."

One of the more popular anti-Catholic tracts of the time was written by Samuel Morse, who, in 1835, published a book called *Foreign Conspiracies Against the Liberties of the United States*, which alleged the Catholics were part of a larger conspiracy based in Austria to install a member of the House of Habsburg as the imperial ruler of the US. I have learned over the years that many Protestant writers often publish tracts that attack other religions with some off-the wall accusations that may or may not be true. They put little value on the truth and more often than not the more sensational the better. Anything to destroy the competition to their ability to make money through their collection plates and other donations.

Other Anti-Catholic Conspiracies: Pope John Paul I died in September 1978, only a month after his election to the papacy. The timing of his death and the Vatican's alleged difficulties with ceremonial and legal death procedures fostered several conspiracy theories. In his 1984 book, *in God's Name*, British author, David Yallop, suggested that John Paul I died because he was about to uncover financial scandals allegedly involving the Vatican. John Cornwell responded to Yallop's charges in 1987 with, *A Thief in The Night*, in which he analyzed the various allegations and denied the conspiracy.

On 12 February 2013, Pope Benedict XVI announced his resignation in a speech in Latin before the cardinals, citing a "lack of strength of mind and body" due to his advanced age. His resignation became effective on 28 February 2013. Two Italian publications, the major Italian newspaper *La Repubblica* and *Panorama*, an Italian magazine weekly, have proposed the conspiracy theory that Pope Benedict XVI resigned because he himself was part of the Roman Catholic sex abuse allegations, that he was being blackmailed by those with proof of his complicity, and that he resigned to avoid a scandal. He is the first pope to resign since Pope Gregory XII in 1415, and the first to do so on his own initiative since Pope Celestine V in 1294.

Catholicism as a veiled continuation of Babylonian paganism: in 1858, Alexander Hislop's pseudohistorical work, *The Two Babylons* asserted that the Roman Catholic Church originated from a Babylonian mystery religion and proposed that its rituals and ceremonies are a veiled continuation of Babylonian paganism. Around the same time, ex-priest Charles Chiniquy's *50 Years in The Church of Rome and The Priest, the Woman and the Confessional* (1885) became popular for depicting Catholicism as secretly pagan. *The Two Babylons* was an anti-Catholic religious pamphlet produced initially by the Scottish theologian and Presbyterian Alexander Hislop in 1853. It was later published as a book in 1919. Its central theme is the allegation that the Catholic Church is a veiled continuation of the ancient pagan religion of Babylon, the veiled paganism being the product of a millennia old conspiracy. It has been recognized by scholars as discredited and has been called a "tribute to historical inaccuracy and know-nothing religious bigotry" with "shoddy scholarship, blatant dishonesty" and a "nonsensical thesis."

Particularly Christian apocalyptic and eschatological claims about the end times, the Last Judgment, and the end of the world have inspired a range of conspiracy theories. Many of these deal with the Antichrist (Arabic: Masih ad-Dajjal). The Antichrist, also known as The Beast 666, is supposed to be a leader who will create a world empire and oppress Christians (and in some conspiracies, Jews as well). Countless historical figures have been called "Antichrist" in their times, from the Roman emperor Nero to Adolf Hitler to Ronald Reagan to Javier Solana to Barack Obama to Prince William. Donald Trump is the basis for the latest conspiracy theories. At times, apocalyptic speculation has mixed with anti-Catholicism, believing that the reigning Pope is the Antichrist or the False Prophet.

Another interpretation sees the Antichrist as a world leader involved with the United Nations, who will create a one world government (New World Order) and establish a single monetary system. The latter is identified with the Mark of the Beast, which some believe that people in the end times will need to possess in order to conduct trade.

Anti-Catholic conspiracy theories in majority Protestant countries have since the Reformation, (especially Great Britain, The United States, Australia, Canada, and countries in Northwestern Europe) have opposed the Pope, Roman Catholic rituals, and general "popery" a major political theme, often rallying behind anti-Catholic sentiment by inflaming fears of alleged Catholic conspiracy plots.

Anti-Catholicism and fear of Catholic conspiracies were also a major issue during the presidential campaign of 1928, in which the Irish Catholic New York state governor Al- Smith, the first major-party Roman Catholic candidate in a presidential election, ran against the Protestant Herbert Hoover. Smith's opponents created the phrase "Rum and Romanism" in reference to Smith's campaign, as Smith was not only Catholic but, like many Catholic Americans at the time, was against the mostly Protestant Teetotaler Prohibition movement.

The so-called "Catholic Question," in which Protestant Americans were concerned about Catholic American loyalty to the Pope rather than the United States, once again rose to the forefront in the 1960 campaign of John F. Kennedy. Prominent Protestant ministers, such as Billy Graham, distrusted Kennedy, believing Kennedy to be a potential agent of the Catholic Church, and tried to derail his campaign. The more extreme, paranoid anti-Catholic Protestants employed old anti-Catholic conspiracy theories in response to Kennedy's candidacy and subsequent presidential administration, claiming that Kennedy, as the first Roman Catholic president of the United States, was a pawn of the Catholic Church.

Anti-Catholicism and fears of Catholic or Papal takeover of the historically Protestant United States have been particularly virulent and persistent throughout American history, with historian John Highham described anti-Catholicism as "the most luxuriant, tenacious tradition of paranoiac agitation in American

history" and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr. Describing American prejudice against the Catholics as "the deepest bias in the history of the American people." British anti-Catholicism was exported to the United States with the arrival of British colonists.

Two major types of anti-Catholic rhetoric existed in colonial society: The first, derived from the heritage of the Protestant Reformation, consisted of the "Anti-Christ" and the "Whore of Babylon" variety, claiming the Catholic Church to be these evil entities predicted in the Book of Revelation. The second was a more secular variety which focused on the supposed intrigue of the Catholic intent on extending medieval despotism worldwide. Anti-Catholic fears in the U.S. reached a peak in the 19th century when the Protestant population became alarmed by the influx of Catholic immigrants from Southern Europe.

Author David Yallop followed up his best-selling book, *in God's Name* (1984), which claimed that Pope John Paul I was killed by corrupt Vatican schemers with another conspiracy novel, *The Power and the Glory: Inside the Dark Heart of John Paul II's Vatican* (2007), which claimed that Pope John Paul II was in league with the Soviet powers. Yallop enlarges on claims of priestly sexual abuse and repeats the other standard anti-Catholic clap-trap listed above together with a new one that St Maximilian Kolbe, the Polish priest who died in place of a young married man at Auschwitz, had previously endorsed the anti-Jewish Protocols of the Elders of Zion. There is no reference for this claim and just thirteen footnotes in the entire 530 pages.

Avro Manhattan's books *Vatican Moscow Alliance* (1982), *The Vatican Billions* (1983) and *The Vatican's Holocaust* (1986) advanced the view that the Church engineers wars for world domination. Avro Manhattan's works form part of the basis of a series of tracts by the noted modern anti-Catholic and comic book evangelist Jack Chick who also accuses the papacy of supporting Communism, of using the Jesuits to incite revolutions, and of masterminding the Holocaust. According to Chick, the Catholic Church is the "Whore of Babylon" referred to in the Book of Revelation, and will bring about a Satanic New World Order before it is destroyed by Jesus Christ. Chick claims that the Catholic Church infiltrates and attempts to destroy or corrupt all other religions and churches, and that it uses various means including seduction, framing, and murder to silence its critics. Drawing on the ideas of Alberto Rivera, Chick also claims that the Catholic Church helped mold Islam as a tool to lure people away from Christianity in what he calls the Vatican Islam Conspiracy.

During the Troubles in Ireland, anti-Catholic conspiracy theories and anti-Catholicism in general were frequent among Ulster Scot loyalists and Northern Irish unionists, though generally from a more secular standpoint. However, Protestant loyalist extremists such as Ian Paisley notoriously denounced Pope John Paul II as the antichrist at the time. When Pope John XXIII died in June 1963, Paisley announced to a crowd of his followers that "this Romish man of sin is now in Hell!" Paisley subsequently organized protests against the lowering of flags on public buildings to mark the Pope's death.

Bible conspiracy theory: Bible conspiracy theories suggest that much of what is known about the Bible, in particular the New Testament, is a deception. Many of these theories are propagated by atheists and former Christians.

Jesus and Mary Magdalene: Jesus and Mary Magdalene might have been married, or so says the Gospel of Philip. Sure, it's the basic plot of *The Davinci Code* (the thriller also wraps in conspiracy shibboleths like Opus Dei and the Knights Templar for good measure) — but the theory finds its basis in writings from the Gnostic Gospels, which were discovered in 1945 and whose authenticity religious experts still dispute. In the Gospel of Philip, Mary Magdalene, who is referred to as Jesus' koinonos, a Greek term for "companion" or "partner," is depicted as being closer to Jesus than any other apostle. These theories variously claim that Jesus had a wife, Mary Magdalene, and children, that a group such as the Priory of Sion has secret information about the bloodline of Jesus, that Jesus did not die on the cross and that the carbon dating of the Shroud of Turin was part of a conspiracy by the Vatican to suppress this knowledge, that there was a secret movement to censor books that belonged in the Bible, or the Christ myth theory, proposed for example in *Zeitgeist*, the Movie as a means of social control by the Roman Empire. A fictionalized contrivance of this is portrayed in the novel *The Davinci Code*.

Contrary to this theory is the belief that those who put forth such information against the Bible are themselves part of a grand conspiracy to suppress Biblical prophetic knowledge to keep people ignorant

about Christ's imminent return to earth. Associated with this belief is the conspiracy of the Antichrist, who is to lead the New World Order against Christ. This same theory also proposes that current events, such as global changes resulting from global warming, are fulfillment of Bible prophecies and signs of the Tribulation and the end of days. Rivera also alleged that the Vatican staged an apparition at Fatima (named after Muhammed's daughter) to cozy up to Muslims. He further claimed that the Catholic Church staged the 1981 Pope John Paul II assassination attempt using a Muslim as the marksman "to guilt-induce the Muslim world, bringing them still closer to the Catholic faith.."

According to Alberto Rivera, Muhammad was manipulated by the Catholic Church to create Islam and destroy the Jews and other groups of Christians, and Muhammed's first wife, Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, was actually a Catholic nun in an Arabian monastery who was told by a bishop to marry him and sow the seeds of what was to become Islam. Rivera also believed that Jesuits are responsible for the creation of Communism and Nazism, and are the cause of both World Wars, the Jonestown Massacre, and the assassinations of Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy; that the Catholic Church wants to spread homosexuality and abortion; that the Charismatic Movement is a front for the Catholic Church; that the popes are Anti-Christ; and that the Catholic Church is the Whore of Babylon. He has also claimed that the Jesuits were the masterminds behind the Medieval Inquisition in the 13th century, even though the Jesuits were in fact founded in 1534.

Although extensively footnoted, giving the impression of reliability, commentators, in particular Ralph Woodrow,¹⁰ have stated that there are numerous misconceptions, fabrications, and grave factual errors in the document, and that this book follows the line of thought of works like: Martin Luther: *on the Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520), Titus Oates: *An Exact Discovery of the Mystery of Iniquity* as it is now in Practice amongst the Jesuits (1679), and Conyers Middleton: *Letter from Rome* (1729).

Although scholarship has shown the picture presented by Alexander Hislop¹¹ to be absurd and based on an exceedingly poor understanding of historical Babylon and its religion, his book remains popular among some fundamentalist Christians. The book's thesis has also featured prominently in the conspiracy theories of groups such as The Covenant, The Sword, and the Arm of the Lord and other conspiracy theorists.

In an exchange between Peter and Mary, he admits to her that "the Savior loved you above all other women" a tense moment in the scripture that seems to portray the jealousy that the other apostles might have felt for Mary's relationship with Jesus. The only other evidence used to support the theory is a mention of Jesus kissing Mary often, but some say kissing was the custom and it was typical of Jesus to practice it with those close to him. For example, Judas kissed Jesus in the garden to betray him to the Pharisees. As the basis for the plot of the Da Vinci code, the idea that Jesus wed Mary and now has a physical bloodline made for a good performance at the box office. The theory itself, however, is loosely based on excerpts taken from the Gnostic Gospels whose authenticity is still being disputed.

Anti-Mormon Conspiracies:

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) doctrines and policies have spawned conspiracy theories when outsiders who don't understand and don't want to understand the church speculate about their "true allegiances," and intent for "World and US domination." The conspiracy theories have been propagated by enemies and apostates of the church since the beginning. Most of the enemies are protestants. The most recent example of this is found in the book "*The Mormon Conspiracy*" by Charles

¹⁰ Ralph Woodrow is an Evangelical Christian minister, speaker and presently the author of sixteen books. Woodrow formerly supported the thesis of 19th century Presbyterian churchman, Alexander Hislop, that Roman Catholicism is a syncretistic pagan religion in his book *Babylon Mystery Religion* and gained a certain notoriety when he changed his view and pulled the work from circulation. His new viewpoint is documented in *The Babylon Connection?* Woodrow has been in the ministry since the age of 18, where he has remained for over fifty years.

¹¹Alexander Hislop was a Free Church of Scotland minister known for his criticisms of the Roman Catholic Church.

L. Wood,¹² which attempts to show how the Latter-Day Saints Church (LDS) is organized to restrict individual freedoms, individual thought, independence and democracy. First of all, his credentials are that he is a Navy veteran and a phd in education. Neither credential makes him an authority on Mormonism so whatever he says must be taken with a grain of salt. The book "*The Mormon Conspiracy*" alleges how the Mormon church leaders are involved in a nefarious conspiracy to control the United States government and eventually the world by establishing its "Kingdom of God" on earth. "*The Mormon Conspiracy*" also alleges how The Mormon Church forces members to regard the President (or Prophet) of the church to be infallible, believing that he has direct communication with God, therefore can do no wrong or make a mistake. Members believe that Church Authorities (fourteen apostles in addition to the president of the church) are also infallible.

Therefore, these fifteen Authorities have control of the Mormon Church. There is no democracy in the decision making of the church, since all appointments from the highest to the lowest offices in the church are made under the umbrella of the church president. The hilarious book, *The Mormon Conspiracy*, shows that if the Mormon Church were to gain control of the United States there would be no secret ballot election of congressional representatives, state legislators, or local governmental officials. All of these officials would be appointed by the President of the Mormon Church, with assistance from other church officials.

I read excerpts of the book. It resembles some of the travelogues by early explorers who tried to describe cultures, lands and people they never understood nor had any intention of understanding. They always concluded that these people were heathen because they didn't worship the same god as the explorers. Mr. Wood does the same thing. He describes the rug from the backside where he offers the vague design but misses out on the full beauty and details. Mr. Wood merely shows his own ignorance about the Mormons. Like other so-called Christian religions, he maintains that Mormons can't be Christians because they don't worship like other Christian religions. For this reason, Mormon should be "treated as enemies and driven from the state for the common good."¹³

He states that the words "Kingdom of God" are in quotes, because in reality this is not a Kingdom of God that the Mormon Church wishes to establish, but rather a Kingdom of the Mormon Church, led by fifteen men, the Presidency (three men) and the Quorum of Twelve apostles of the church. This conspiracy theory attempts to gain momentum when concerns are addressed about the Mormon church members.

The book contends The Mormon church members are controlled by an authoritarian organization much like the Monarchies that prevailed in European countries such as France and England before the French Revolution and before democracy was established in England. The Mormon church requires strict religious obedience from members and teaches them that individuals need not think for themselves concerning church doctrine as taught by the Church Authorities, a form of mind control. This is evident even in areas of non-church affairs, such as politics and economics where the church hierarchy expects members to follow its directions. This allegation is laughable. Joseph Smith, the first President and Prophet of the Church in the 1830's taught that he teaches members correct principles and lets them govern themselves.

Here Mr. Wood is wrong, embarrassingly wrong. The Mormon Church teaches us to think for ourselves. That fact that many don't is not the fault of the Church but laziness on the part of individual members. There is no "mind control" in the Mormon Church. We watch the news for current events. We engage in trends in music, clothes, and other current inclinations. Many of these same accusations i've heard for years: Solomon Spaulding, Fawn Brodie, the Tanners, and other enemies of the church past and

¹² Charles L. Wood, a Navy veteran, received his Ph.D. from the University of Iowa and was a professor at the University of Akron. in addition, he held positions as teacher and administrator in elementary, secondary and higher education. He has traveled throughout the world and lived for several years in France and Germany. He authored two books on Education and over thirty articles in national journals prior to writing "The Mormon Conspiracy." He also was editor of the national journal, "American Secondary Education."

¹³ This is quote from Gov. Lilburn W. Boggs of Missouri who issued an extermination order, Missouri Executive Order 44, against the Mormons in October 27, 1838.

present. It's been said that many ex-Mormons can leave the church but none can leave the church alone. They all leave the church because of "a crisis of faith." Then they write books to "expose" the Mormon church which are full of outright intentional lies and distortions meant to destroy the church and turn people against the members. Mr. Wood and others like him attempt to expose the church with just enough knowledge to be dangerous to themselves and others.

The accusations they make against Mormons could easily be made against any of the Protestant churches. For example, if you don't believe the way they do then you can't be Christian. They persecuted each other during the reformation. Even when they came to America they continued their persecution of each other. They persecute not only Mormons, but Jews, Catholics, Jehovah's Witnesses and others. It seems that they are the Christian version of jihadists for Christ. Muslims, Protestant Christians, and Atheists have caused more death and destruction than even the Catholics. They always ask why can't other churches be Christians. I ask them why can't they be Christians? What is it about each of their names, buildings, doctrines, and policies that one can reasonably say that church is a Christian church?

Mr. Wood goes on to list all the ways the Mormons control state and local and the federal government. When Mitt Romney ran for president there were just as many lies about him and the Mormons from conservatives as from the liberal democrats. Many non-Mormons in Utah like to talk about the telephone line between the state capital and church offices. If it wasn't for the "mind control" of the Mormon church, then state government would be a lot different.

As I mentioned earlier, first there is no more mind control over members from the church than there is mind control over conservatives in the republican party. I'd submit that there is more mind control of liberals over their leftist lapdogs. Yes, there are Mormons in state and local government. There is no "telephone line" between church offices and the state capital. I overheard a couple of guys talking about the influence of religion on government. One of them said, "We need to get religion completely out of government." I want to ask him so badly, "The communists, socialist, and fascists got rid of all religious influence in government. We just got rid of America's first atheist president who was hell-bent on getting rid of religion in America. \$20T later how did that work out for us? When many former communist nations overthrew communism, all the leftist socialist countries in Europe, and fascist countries in the Middle East and South America, over threw their socialist and fascist slave masters, are their nations any better off because they got rid of religion from their governments?"

Again, Joseph Smith taught that he teaches the members correct principles and they govern themselves. Therefore, members who serve in government are a reflection of their personal beliefs. They don't need to be told what to think and do. In fact, they also are taught that those "who have to be commanded in all things is not a wise and is a slothful servant."

The other thing outsiders don't understand is that no one is forced practice their religion. There are Mormon at all stages of dedication. Some are Mormons in name only. Other are dedicated in every aspect of the religion. Then there are those who fit on every point in between. Some Mormons lose faith in the leaders or members and leave the church entirely. No one forces them to stay in the church. If someone has a problem with doctrine, policies or procedures they are free to leave. Proof of that are the numbers of people who have left the church over the years from Joseph Smith to present times. In fact, the Polygamists in southern Utah and Texas are people who left the church over polygamy at the turn of the last century. The "plygs" do exercise severe mind control and dictatorial leadership to the point they will kill to keep people from leaving their church or exposing illegal activities. The Reorganized Church (Community of Christ) left the main body over differences in doctrine. Now they bear little resemblance to the LDS Church as they have evolved over the last 150 years to the point they resemble other Protestant churches.

Many outsiders feel Members are forced to live the doctrines and policies of the church. Once again, Joseph Smith taught that he "taught correct principles then let the members govern themselves." Mormons being human have made some mistakes but moreover they are good people just trying to get through life as any other person the best they can. I remember a gentleman told me once he can accept everything about the Mormon Church except the Joseph Smith "garbage."

I told him that if it wasn't for Joseph Smith there wouldn't be any of the other positive things the church represents. Many of the church's detractors make statements about the church they heard from their

minister. One such was a colleague at work who said that the Book of Mormon has 50,000 mistakes¹⁴ in it. I asked him how did his minister come up with that information? I asked had he read the book? My friend stated he didn't have to read the book to know it's rubbish.

I responded, "Well I have read the book. I know it's another witness for Christ. Since you haven't read it we have nothing to discuss." I've used that same argument against people who have never read the Bible or the US Constitution. I've read them. They haven't, therefore, we have nothing to discuss.

Another person who claimed to be a feminist asked me something about church policy. I asked her if she was intending on joining the church. She answered no, so then I said, so what does it matter? If the church is divine, then you can believe that the church policies are inspired of God. If not, it doesn't matter anyway.

One minister told me that he didn't like us Mormon missionaries "fishing out of his fishbowl." Therefore, I submit that the actual reason other churches don't like Mormons is because with every person who joins, means less donations in the plate on Sunday for the other churches. Truth is not an option. Before I go on I must repeat my grandfather's saying, "Don't believe anything you hear and only half of what you see." That goes for gossip, rumors, innuendo and conspiracies. Before we bite we must ask ourselves who is repeating the theory? Where did it originate? What are the person's or organization's motive for repeating the theory? Who is to gain and who is to lose? What are the facts? So, the next time you are tempted to spread a theory check it out and generally you will be glad you did because the facts will reveal it to be a conspiracy theory best left in the for what it's worth column.

The Church of Scientology: Developed by L. Ron Hubbard, Scientology is a religion that offers a precise path leading to a complete and certain understanding of one's true spiritual nature and one's relationship to self, family, groups, Mankind, all life forms, the material universe, the spiritual universe and the Supreme Being. Scientology addresses the spirit—not the body or mind—and believes that Man is far more than a product of his environment, or his genes. Scientology comprises a body of knowledge which extends from certain fundamental truths. Prime among these are:

- Man is an immortal spiritual being.
- His experience extends well beyond a single lifetime.
- His capabilities are unlimited, even if not presently realized.

Scientology further holds Man to be basically good, and that his spiritual salvation depends upon himself, his fellows and his attainment of brotherhood with the universe. Scientology is not a dogmatic religion in which one is asked to accept anything on faith alone. On the contrary, one discovers for oneself that the principles of Scientology are true by applying its principles and observing or experiencing the results. The ultimate goal of Scientology is true spiritual enlightenment and freedom for all.

All told, L. Ron Hubbard's works on Dianetics and Scientology comprise the largest cohesive statement on the human mind and spirit—more than 5,000 writings and 3,000 recorded lectures. Contained therein are answers to life's most profound mysteries: the enigma of existence, the riddle of death, the realization of states not even described in earlier literature. Also from these works come Scientology technologies to rear children, repair families, educate, organize and provide relief in times of illness or suffering.

So that all may avail themselves of these technologies, L. Ron Hubbard directed the rise of Churches all over the world and thus, the birth of a worldwide religion. It is a practical religion. It is applicable to every aspect of human existence and it is religion for the here and now. But at its core and

¹⁴ The Book of Mormon has 520 pages. 50,000 mistakes would mean 96 mistakes per page. Also, the Book of Mormon was translated from ancient plates of Brass and Gold delivered to the Prophet Joseph by an angel from heaven. So, unless that minister had communication with the same angel there is no way he could know unless of course he made it up which wouldn't be the first ministers of the gospel to trump up lies, rumors and false charges against the LDS Church.

within every Church of Scientology lies this enduring invitation from its Founder: “We are extending to you the precious gift of freedom and immortality—factually, honestly.”

From skeptic.com is an article that describes the experiences of two ex-members of the church entitled: L. Ron Hubbard, Dianetics, and Scientology’s Transition to a Religion

Any history of Scientology must begin with the biography of its founder, pulp science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard, who had an extensive record of biographical fabrication and exaggeration such as bronc busting at the age of 35.

Janet Reitman uses the personal accounts of recent ex-Scientologists such as Jeff Hawkins, who discovered Scientology in 1967 in Sierra Madre Canyon after becoming dissatisfied with the hippie scene, and ended up signing a billion-year contract and living on a ship in Hubbard’s Sea Organization before it came ashore in Clearwater, Florida. Hugh B. Urban, on the other hand, identifies precursors of Scientology tenets in Hubbard’s experiences and fiction, arguing that Hubbard was an entrepreneur and “spiritual bricoleur,” using the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss’s term for “a creative recycler of cultural wares who ‘appropriate another range of commodities by placing them in a symbolic ensemble’” (p. 29). Those precursors include excerpts from an unpublished Hubbard work entitled *Excalibur*, written in 1938, which suggests that Hubbard learned the secrets of reality from a near-death experience during an operation (p. 37).

Urban does point out the anti-religious sentiments expressed by Hubbard in some of his early 1950s lectures, which were particularly critical of Christianity. For example, there is a recording of Hubbard stating that there “was no Christ” and that the idea of the crucifixion is part of an “implant,” or fixed false memory designed to be harmful to the recipient, called “R6.” It is worthy of note that Hubbard reported reading arguments for atheism in 1927 while returning to Bremerton, Washington from Guam, writing in his journal that “Dick and I have been reading up on atheism.... Such a terrible thing to make an issue of. Something is at the bottom of it. I’ll find out in the States.” Hubbard wrote in his 1951 book, *Science of Survival*, that “It is an empirical observation that men without a strong and lasting faith in a Supreme Being are less capable, less ethical and less valuable to themselves and society.... A man without an abiding faith is, by observation alone, more of a thing than a man.”

From these precursors, Urban argues that Hubbard’s beliefs shifted as the new “science of mental health” of Dianetics was transformed into the “applied religious philosophy” of Scientology. Dianetics auditing had led to controversy over past lives by 1951, and was beginning to clash with medical regulators over claims of diagnosis and healing, with several Hubbard followers being arrested in the early 1950s (p. 62). Although Hubbard created Scientology while living in Phoenix in 1952, where he formed the Hubbard Association of Scientologists, the first organizations with “church” in their names were formed in New Jersey in 1953 (the Church of American Science, the Church of Scientology, and the Church of Spiritual Engineering). The Founding Church of Scientology in Washington, D.C. received IRS tax-exempt status in 1956, followed by the Church of Scientology of California (CSC) in 1957. In 1958, the Washington, D.C. church had its tax-exempt status revoked on the grounds that it was a “business, a profit-making organization, run by Hubbard for his personal enrichment” ... While Scientology nominally cloaked itself in some trappings of religion (Urban, p. 66), this was somewhat perfunctory, and did not prevent an FDA raid on the Washington, D.C. church in 1963.

In 1965, the IRS began an audit of Scientology’s records, just as Hubbard began to move all of his global assets into the CSC to take advantage of its tax-exempt status. This audit led to a revocation of CSC’s tax-exempt status in 1967, which was followed by increased attempts to put on the trappings of religion, including a February 1969 policy letter calling for staff to wear clerical collars and for all “orgs” to display the Scientology cross and the Scientology Creed in public areas (Urban, pp. 161–163). This still, however, seemed mostly for show. In Nancy Many’s book, *My Billion Year Contract: Memoir of a Former Scientologist*, for example, she writes that when she joined Scientology, she was “told that the religious aspect was for taxes and legal reasons and that no one had to change their personal faith to become a member” and that “I had been to only one church service. Only once in twenty years, and I was in the Sea Org running a large part of Scientology across the entire world for half of that time.” Many also writes: “Hubbard expressed to me the thought that going with the whole church angle for Scientology might have

been a mistake in the first place. He felt that the trouble we were currently having with the IRS would not exist if he had not listened to those around him at the time and just stayed as a for-profit corporation and just made more money to pay the taxes.”

In Richard Behar’s Time magazine cover story from May 6, 1991, he notes that the marketing firm of Trout & Ries was hired by Scientology to improve its image shortly after Hubbard’s death in 1986. “We advised them to clean up their act, stop with the controversy, and even to stop being a church. They didn’t want to hear that,” Behar quoted Jack Trout. Trout & Ries was sued by the Church of Scientology in November 1991 as a result of the Time article, on the grounds that the public statement violated their contract. The lawsuit was settled in August 1994.⁸

Operation Snow White: Sometime during the 1970s, the Church of Scientology decided that they’d had enough. Apparently, the Church of Scientology managed to perform the largest infiltration of the United States government in history. (That’s interesting; in Mr. Wood’s book, he claims the Mormons infiltrated the US government.) 5,000 of Scientology’s crack commandos wiretapped and burglarized various agencies. They stole hundreds of documents, mainly from the IRS. No critic was spared, and in the end, 136 organizations, agencies and foreign embassies were infiltrated.

In 1974, Scientology began “Operation Snow White,” the infiltration of government offices, including the IRS, to steal and “correct” documents about Scientology. This was a program of Scientology’s “Guardian Office,” a division of the church tasked with responding to attacks on the church, which engaged in activities ranging from making public embarrassing information from ex-members’ auditing records to trying to frame journalist Paulette Cooper, author of *The Scandal of Scientology*, for bomb threats (Reitman, p. 116–117; Urban, pp. 109–112). After two Scientologists were caught in the U.S. Courts building in Washington, D.C. and their connection to Scientology was discovered, the FBI raided Scientology locations in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. on July 8, 1977, which uncovered tens of thousands of incriminating documents, including the plots against Paulette Cooper and a plan to portray the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP) as a CIA front group.⁹

Eleven Scientologists, seven of them members of the Guardian Office, were indicted on federal charges, including Hubbard’s wife Mary Sue. Although Hubbard was named as an unindicted coconspirator and was sought by investigators, he went into hiding. His wife took the fall for him and went to jail after a negotiated guilty plea to a charge of conspiracy. Hubbard sought to insulate himself from connections with the church, living under the name “Jack” on a 160-acre ranch in Creston, California. But he continued to issue orders through a few trusted Scientologist intermediaries. These were Pat and Annie Broeker, who lived with him on the ranch, and a young member of the Sea Org’s Commodore’s Messenger Organization (CMO), David Miscavige (Reitman, pp. 124, 142).

Nominal Reform and David Miscavige’s Assumption of Power: in response to the legal troubles surrounding Operation Snow White, a group within CMO called the “All Clear Unit,” which ended up being led by David Miscavige as its self-appointed leader, was tasked with finding a way out of the problems. The primary plan was to “create a legally defensible structure that would give Hubbard and the [CMO] full legal control over Scientology while at the same time ‘insulating] both Hubbard and the CMO from any legal liability for running the organizations of Scientology by lying about the level of control they really had”” (Reitman, p. 129). The Guardian Office was abolished and replaced by the Office of Special Affairs (OSA), and a complex corporate structure was put in place. Scientology’s operations were put under the Church of Scientology International (CSI), while the rights to administer its intellectual property and determine what constitutes official doctrine was put under the Religious Technology Center (RTC). Perhaps the oddest corporate entity, the Church of Spiritual Technology (CST), was founded by one Scientologist and several non-Scientology lawyers, including the late Meade Emory, a law professor at the University of Washington and former Deputy Commissioner of the IRS, who was hired to help create the complex corporate structure as part of Hubbard’s estate planning. This entity is entitled to 90% of the net income of RTC and has the right to seize key trademarks and intellectual property from RTC should it judge that organization to be misusing them. Its primary task appears to be archiving and preserving the works of L. Ron Hubbard in permanent form, which it is doing by inscribing them on stainless steel plates, putting them

in titanium capsules, and placing them in vaults around the world, such as one near Trementina, New Mexico, where the CST logo may be seen from the air or on Google Earth.¹⁰

On January 24, 1986, Hubbard died, and this was revealed to Scientologists at an event at the Hollywood Palladium two days later, where David Miscavige announced: “L. Ron Hubbard discarded the body” and had “moved forward to his next level of research” (Reitman, pp. 142–145). Reitman explains how Miscavige ended up in control of Scientology as chairman of the board of RTC, after removing Hubbard’s wife and dismantling the Guardian Office, removing the Broekers from power by assigning Annie Broeker to the Rehabilitation Project Force (RPF), and appointing allies to key positions, such as Marty Rathbun to Inspector General of the RTC and fellow CMO member Mike Rinder to head OSA (Reitman, pp. 131–156). Both Rathbun and Rinder have now left the church and are actively working to promote the practice of Scientology independent of the organization.

Reitman also makes vivid some of the abuses that have occurred with Miscavige in control, especially at the church’s headquarters at “International Base” or “Int Base” in Gilman Hot Springs, California, where Miscavige and the senior leaders are based. She describes cases of physical battery, hard labor without pay in the RPF, coerced abortions for women in the Sea Org, and the breaking up of families.¹² Scientology has denied these allegations.

Scientology filed about 200 lawsuits against the IRS, to which 2,300 individual members added their own lawsuits. Seventeen individual IRS officials were named personally in Scientology lawsuits, accusing them of illegal acts against the church. Hundreds of Freedom of Information Act requests were filed with the IRS. Private investigators were hired to attend IRS conferences and identify IRS agents who seemed to have problems with alcohol or were cheating on spouses. When Miscavige met with IRS Commissioner Fred Goldberg in 1991, Miscavige told him all the problems could go away with a settlement, and a settlement was reached in 1993 (Reitman, pp. 162–166, Urban, pp. 170–177). That settlement was kept secret by the IRS until it was leaked to the Internet in December 1997. The settlement granted the church’s religious tax exemptions, settled all accounts for a fraction of claimed owed back taxes, and the IRS agreed not to audit any church organizations for anything prior to January 1, 1993. Scientology agreed not to sue the IRS for anything prior to the same date. The settlement also gave Scientologists the right to deduct expenses for fees paid for auditing or any other religious services (contradicting the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Hernandez v. Commissioner*, 490 U.S. 680, 1989), including religious schooling. That last point led to a lawsuit against the IRS by Michael Sklar, arguing that if Scientologists can deduct expenses for religious schooling, he should be able to deduct the portion of payments made to an Orthodox Jewish school for his children that was used for religious instruction. In 2008, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against Sklar (*Sklar v. Commissioner*, 282 F.3d 610, 9th Cir. 2002), a decision that underscores the constitutional problem raised by the different treatment for Scientology.¹³

Internet War and Lisa mcpherson: in 1991, an online Usenet newsgroup called alt. Religion. Scientology was created, and was used mostly by members of the “free zone”—those who practiced Scientology independently of the church—until 1994. In that year, ex-members started posting Scientology “trade secrets,” which led to raids on the homes of Dennis Erlich and Arnie Lerma, followed by three major lawsuits and many more lawsuit threats. The outcome of these lawsuits was that Scientology’s copyrights were upheld, their trade secret claims were overturned, and the right to quote from and criticize Scientology was preserved.¹⁴ The lawsuits led to real-life protests against churches of Scientology around the globe, and responses by the church with litigation threats, hiring private investigators to dig into the personal lives of protesters, and the creation of online websites to attack online critics. Online information critical of Scientology proliferated.

On December 5, 1995, a long-time Scientologist named Lisa mcpherson died in the care of Scientology after being kept at the Fort Harrison Hotel in Clearwater, Florida. Her death received little publicity, no public police report, and not even an obituary (Reitman, p. 231). But over a year later, on December 22, 1996, her death was front-page news in the Tampa Tribune,¹⁵ and her death became a renewed focus of protests online and in front of Scientology orgs, as well as the basis of a criminal

¹⁵ “Scientologist’s Death: A Family Hunts for Answers,” by Cheryl Waldrip

prosecution against the church and a civil lawsuit from mcpherson's family. The Lisa mcpherson Trust was set up by critics of Scientology in Clearwater, and new pressure was directed against the church.

Mcperson's case is the primary focus of Part III of Reitman's book, and she recounts the story more comprehensively than it has been told before. She shows how mcpherson went from a happy, vivacious young lady to a woman who began exhibiting signs of psychosis. After a minor automobile accident, she got out of her car and began taking off her clothes, and was taken to a hospital for observation. But Scientologists came, took her into their care, and held her captive at the Fort Harrison Hotel without proper medical treatment as her behavior became more and more erratic. Then after 17 days she stopped moving. They drove mcpherson past several hospitals to one where a Scientologist physician was on staff, where she was declared dead on arrival.

Reitman points out that David Miscavige personally managed some of mcpherson's auditing sessions and determined that she reached the state of clear (pp. 212–213), and she documents Scientology's destruction and concealment of evidence in the case, including by Marty Rathbun (pp. 224, 237–239). She describes how the church worked hard to keep mcpherson's tragic death quiet by persuading her family to have her cremated, saying that was Lisa's wish. She describes how the family was told that she had died of a "fast-acting meningitis" (p. 228), with no mention of dehydration while behaving psychotically and being held prisoner by the Church of Scientology. But what Reitman doesn't explain is how mcpherson's death became publicly known, a year after she died.

In 1996, Jeff Jacobsen was preparing a Clearwater, FL protest against Scientology for its abuses, when a local policeman who was the liaison for protesters told him that he might find a page on the Clearwater Police Department web page to be of interest. That web page (called "homicide.html") requested the public's help in finding information about three deaths, one of which was Lisa mcpherson's. Jeff did not recognize the name, but recognized her last address as that of Scientology's Fort Harrison Hotel. He posted a note about Lisa's death to the alternative religion newsgroup in November 1996, and contacted Tampa Tribune reporter Cheryl Waldrip about it. Waldrip thought it was strange that there was no obituary, and subsequently contacted mcpherson's family, which led to the publication of the front-page story on December 22nd.

In 2000, the medical examiner in Lisa mcpherson's case, Joan Wood, changed the cause of death from "undetermined" to "accident" and dropped references to her severe dehydration, without an explanation. As a result, the state attorney dropped the charges on the grounds that he could not depend on her testimony in the prosecution. In 2004, the civil case was settled.

Tom Cruise, South Park, and Anonymous: Reitman describes how Marty Rathbun was tasked to bring Tom Cruise back into Scientology after he had drifted away from the church (pp. 283, 286). Cruise subsequently became a more zealous public Scientologist than he had ever been, climaxing in the infamous couch-jumping episode on Oprah (May 23, 2005) and his public criticism of Brooke Shields for using anti-depressants and subsequent on-air argument about it with Matt Lauer on NBC's Today show (June 24, 2005).

The iconic protest mask adopted by the Anonymous group was originally designed by British comic artist David Lloyd for a ten-issue graphic novel series V for Vendetta, written by Alan Moore. The mustachioed visage was based on portraits of Guy Fawkes and traditional festival masks. When the series became a hit film, the image gained even wider recognition. The masks have also been used in many other anti-establishment protests, including "Occupy Wall Street." Ironically the licensing rights to the image are held by a major establishment player, Time Warner.

On November 16, 2005, Comedy Central's animated television series South Park aired an episode entitled "Trapped in the Closet," which focused on Scientology and included a summary of the content of Scientology's Operating Thetan Level III cosmology, as well as playing on rumors about Tom Cruise's sexuality. This content led to the departure of Scientologist Isaac Hayes from the show (who voiced the character "Chef"), and the episode was not aired in the UK. It was also dropped from planned rebroadcasts, though it aired again in 2006 after viewer protests and can be seen on youtube. Documents recently released by Scientology's former RTC Inspector General, Marty Rathbun, reveal that Scientology attempted to dig up dirt on South Park Creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone and their friends as a result of this episode,

allegedly digging through the trash at their office headquarters in search of receipts or any other documents that might be used against them.¹⁵

On January 15, 2008, a video of Tom Cruise that was made for a Scientology event in 2004 was leaked to the Internet and posted on the website of the gossip blog Gawker. The Church of Scientology issued legal threats, but Gawker refused to take down the video, though other sites complied with removal requests. The video was widely parodied, and Scientology's attempt to remove the video from the Internet got the attention of "Anonymous," a chaotic, loosely organized, originally fictional collective centered around the 4chan web forums, in particular /b/.4chan allows posts to be made without registering or logging in, which all show as posted by "Anonymous." This led to jokes about whether or not there really is an entity called "Anonymous," which led to online and real world activity by self-identified members of "Anonymous."

Scientology explains that when the subject holding the cans "pulls in" or "releases" "mental mass," the body's resistance to the flow of electrical energy varies. Mental mass is described as "condensed energy" that will literally register as weight on a scale. (Understanding the E-Meter, P. 50, by L. Ron Hubbard.) Science says that the device measures the ability of the skin to conduct electricity, which varies with the skin's moisture level. Since sweat glands are regulated involuntarily by the sympathetic nervous system rather than by conscious effort, this "galvanic skin response" cannot be controlled by someone experiencing a series of emotions. Simply squeezing the cans to increase the contact area with the skin can also vary the amount of current measured by the meter.

On January 21, 2008, "Anonymous" posted a youtube video entitled "Message to Scientology" stating that the Church's attempts to censor the Internet were not welcome and that actions would be taken to "expel the church from the Internet." A press release the same day entitled "Internet Group Anonymous Declares 'War on Scientology'" complained about Scientology's threat to freedom of speech and made reference to Scientology's prior Internet battles that began in 1994. This was followed by denial of service attacks against Scientology's websites, telephone and fax harassment, and real-world picketing of Scientology organizations worldwide by protesters wearing Guy Fawkes masks from the film V for Vendetta on a scale that dwarfed the protests of the mid-1990s. Scientology predictably responded by accusing "Anonymous" of being a terrorist group.¹⁶

Conclusion: The final chapter of the Church of Scientology has yet to be written, but the organization shows signs of experiencing its worst crisis yet as a result of the exposure of its secrets, the ease of communications between ex-members, the departure of some of its most senior executives, and the competition it faces from practitioners of independent Scientology.

Both Reitman and Urban document the extent to which the Church of Scientology declined between 1989 and 1997. For example, Scientologists completed 11,603 courses in 1989, but only 5,895 in 1997 (Reitman, p. 284). The American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS) estimated the number of self-identified U.S. Scientologists at 55,000 in 2001, and at only 25,000 in 2008 (Urban, p. 206). Marc Headley, who worked at Scientology's Int base, writes in his ex-Scientology memoir, *Blown for Good: Behind the Iron Curtain of Scientology* (p. 194), that Miscavige wanted enough Mark VIII Ultra E-Meters to be made for every Scientologist to purchase two, and 30,000 were produced to match the number of Mark viis that had already been sold. Ex-Scientology marketer Jeff Hawkins estimates the total number of Scientologists globally at "40,000 or 50,000 max" (*Counterfeit Dreams: One Man's Journey into and Out of the World of Scientology*, Ch. 15).

Recent departures include very senior former members such as Marty Rathbun and Mike Rinder. These former Scientology executives have begun speaking out publicly and releasing key documents, as well as promoting the alternative of practicing Scientology independently of the church. Blogs such as *Leaving Scientology* and online forums such as *Ex-Scientology Kids* and the *Ex-Scientologist Message Board* now provide a support structure available for those leaving the church that was not available in the past, as well as a source of continuing new accounts of abuses occurring inside the church.

While the church is still a financially formidable force with extensive real estate holdings, it is now in a very different environment in which its ability to control information flow among its members and ex-

members has been greatly diminished. And there is hope among many outside (and almost certainly inside as well) that Scientology faces a potential revolution, or possibly even collapse.

Mutual knowledge, knowing something and knowing that others also know it, is a condition that can arise from such events as assembling in public protest against a political regime, and can lead to its rapid collapse, as seen in some of the “Arab Spring” countries. See also the RSA animated video on Steven Pinker’s talk on *The Stuff of Thought*, from 7:44 on, as well as John Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality*, 1995, The Free Press, pp. 90–93, 117–119, about how ceasing to accept certain institutional facts leads to their falsification, and vice versa.

Recent high-level departures who each spent decades on staff inside the Church include the former #2 person in Scientology (Inspector General of the Religious Technology Center (RTC)), Mark “Marty” Rathbun; former head of Scientology’s Office of Special Affairs (OSA), Mike Rinder; former heads of the Scientology Celebrity Center Nancy Many and Amy Scobee; Scientology A/V expert and the preclear who was audited by Tom Cruise, Marc Headley; the marketer who devised the campaigns that put Dianetics back on the bestseller lists in the 1980s, Jefferson Hawkins; and an Irish Sea Org member who was Commanding Officer of Scientology Missions International in the UK, John Duignan. Rathbun and Rinder are now independent Scientologists on the receiving end of harassment from the Church; Rathbun writes a blog called “Moving on Up a Little Higher” where Rinder frequently comments. Many, Scobee, Headley, Hawkins, and Duignan have each written books about their experiences, of which those by Hawkins and Duignan (both of whom worked in marketing roles for Scientology) are the best written and most engaging. Most of these individuals have been criticized (or “dead agented,” in Scientology terminology) for alleged ethical failings and incompetence, without addressing the question of why they were permitted to hold positions of significant authority and responsibility in the church if those charges were true.

Many past books on Scientology are available online, see a list that includes Atack’s *A Piece of Blue Sky*, Cooper’s *The Scandal of Scientology*, Miller’s *Bare-Faced Messiah*, and Wallis’s *The Road to Total Freedom*. Atack’s book was probably the best comprehensive overview prior to Reitman’s. Miller’s book is still the most detailed biography of Hubbard, and can be found online along with full transcripts of some of his interviews and copies of relevant source documents, which can be used to compare his account to Scientology’s hagiography. Also see the FBI Archives on Hubbard. Wikileaks provides 2,826 pages of Hubbard and Scientology FBI files.

See pp. 285–286, pp. 365–366 in Reitman, vs. Pp. 178–200 in Urban). The events of Scientology vs. The Internet merit a book of their own, yet to be written. The details through the mid-90s may be found in Jim Lippard and Jeff Jacobsen, “Scientology v. The Internet: Free Speech & Copyright Infringement on the Information Super-Highway,” *Skeptic* vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 35–41; “Scientology Loses Judgment in Internet Case,” *Skeptic* vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 18–19; Jim Lippard, “Scientology v. The Internet: An Update and Response to Leisa Goodman,” 1996; Robert Sheaffer, “Scientology vs. The Internet,” *Skeptical Inquirer* vol. 19, no. 5 (September/ October 1995), pp. 12–13; Wendy Grossman, “alt.scientology.war,” *Wired* 3.12 (December 1995); and in chapter 6, “Copyright Terrorists,” of Wendy Grossman, *net.wars*, 1997, NYU Press. More recent events are covered in Jeff Jacob article, “*We Are Legion: Anonymous and the War on Scientology*,” 2008; and especially in the reporting of Village Voice editor Tony Ortega, at his newspaper’s “*Runnin’ Scared*” blog, online and in several earlier publications for the Phoenix and Los Angeles editions of the *New Times* weekly newspaper.

An extensive list can be found in Miller’s book, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, and on numerous sites online, including the Wikipedia entry for Hubbard. Reitman writes in a footnote on the first page of her first chapter (p. 3) that Hubbard became the youngest Eagle Scout in the U.S. at the age of 12, “according to the Church of Scientology.” This is actually an uncorrected error from Scientology; Hubbard did become an Eagle Scout at the age of 13, which he reported in his diary on March 28, 1924; his actual certificate was dated April 1, 1924, and the Boy Scouts kept no record of the youngest (see Miller, p. 34). One of the few fabrications addressed by Urban is Hubbard’s claim to have been a nuclear physicist; on p. 32 he notes that Hubbard received an F in the molecular and atomic physics course, which was his only ground for such a claim. Hubbard, a civil engineering major at George Washington University, was put on academic probation after getting a D average in his first year, and dropped out after his second year.

The Church of Scientology's response to Reitman's book claims that her book is "filled with inaccuracies" but specifically identifies only one, that she reported the year of his death as 1985 (p. 3), when in fact he died on January 24, 1986. They don't mention the Eagle Scout error for obvious reasons.

As Miller (p. 43) notes, Hubbard's diary of his visit to China in 1928 recorded that "They smell of all the baths they didn't take. The trouble with China is, there are too many chinks here." Hubbard repeated similar racist remarks in the 1950s in recorded lectures available on youtube, e.g., a 1952 lecture referring to "chinks" and making a racist joke. Hubbard identified homosexuality as a perversion and mental illness in both Dianetics (pp. 122–123) and Science of Survival (pp. 88–90, a passage removed from recent editions), placing it at rank 1.1 ("covert hostility") on the Scientology "tone scale." This issue, belatedly discovered by Oscar-winning film director Paul Haggis after 35 years in Scientology when Scientology's San Diego church publicly supported California's Proposition 8 against same-sex marriage, led him to leave in 2009 (reported in detail by Lawrence Wright, "The Apostate: Paul Haggis vs. The Church of Scientology," *The New Yorker*, February 14, 2011).

Many, p. 189, p. 74; see also Urban p. 163. In September 1998 the Mesa, Arizona Org obtained an injunction against Scientology critic Bruce Pettycrew requiring him to not make any noise that might disrupt nonexistent Sunday services, then had a private investigator use that injunction as a basis to contact the Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction to complain about Pettycrew and his wife, then a teacher, for their alleged "antireligious activities."

The U.S. takes an extreme hands-off approach to religion, putting the truth or falsity of religious claims outside the scope of the courts (*U.S. v. Ballard*, 322 U.S. 78, 1944). In this case, Edna and her son Donald Ballard were accused of collecting donations on the basis of religious claims they did not themselves believe. The District Court instructed the jury to find the defendants guilty of fraud if their religious claims were not sincerely held beliefs; the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals overturned on the grounds that this restriction was unnecessary and the jury could rule on the truth or falsity of the beliefs. The Supreme Court majority opinion, authored by William O. Douglas, overturned the Appeals court's position on truth or falsity and remanded the case to the appeals court, but didn't address the question of whether sincerity of belief could be examined. Justice Harlan Stone, joined by Owen Roberts and Felix Frankfurter, dissented, writing that "I cannot say that freedom of thought and worship includes freedom to procure money by making knowingly false statements about one's religious experiences." Justice Robert Jackson took the opposite view in his dissent, arguing that neither "religious sincerity" nor "religious verity" are legitimate topics of legal inquiry. The appeals court affirmed the District Court's original fraud conviction, but it was subsequently overturned on another appeal to the Supreme Court (329 U.S. 187, 1946), on the grounds that there were no women on the grand jury or trial jury. In a later case before the 9th Circuit referencing Ballard, (*Cohen v. U.S.*, 297 F.2d 760, 1962) the court agreed that questions of truth or falsity are inappropriate, but that this does not mean "that a court or jury cannot decide that the profession of a belief is fraudulent."

The IRS, however, despite the lack of any basis in the Constitution or statute, has established a set of 14 criteria for what it means to be a "church" for the purposes of obtaining tax-exempt status:

- Distinct legal existence
- Recognized creed and form of worship
- Definite and distinct ecclesiastical government
- Formal code of doctrine and discipline
- Distinct religious history
- Membership not associated with any other church or denomination
- Organization of ordained ministers
- Ordained ministers selected after completing prescribed courses of study
- Literature of its own
- Established places of worship
- Regular congregations
- Regular religious services
- Sunday schools for the religious instruction of the young

- Schools for the preparation of its members

So, there you have it. I got on their website and the church is a combination of Eastern Religions and the research of Hubbard's own psychology and the body/mind relationship to a spiritual realm. In the beginning, he may have been sincerely interested in helping people. However, as with any organization without a moral compass it evolved into an abusive and corrupt organization. In the church's own words on their beliefs and practices and the words of the skeptics and former members i've tried to paint a fair and honest picture of the church. Now you can decide where the truth lies.

A Few Scientology Policies Associated with Claims of Abuse:

Lawsuits

The three major lawsuits were *RTC v. Netcom*, 907 F. Supp. 1361, N.D. Cal. 1995; *RTC v. Lerma*, 908 F. Supp. 1362, E.D. Va. 1995; and *RTC v. FACT.net*, 901 F. Supp. 1519, D. Colo. 1995. Details may be found in the sources in note 4 including in my SKEPTIC article with Jeff Jacobsen and its web update; the Wikipedia pages on these three lawsuits are also comprehensive.

“The DEFENSE of anything is UNTENABLE. The only way to defend anything is to ATTACK, and if you ever forget that, then you will lose every battle you are ever engaged in, whether it is in terms of personal conversation, public debate, or a court of law. NEVER BE INTERESTED IN CHARGES. DO, yourself, much MORE CHARGING, and you will win.”—L. Ron Hubbard, Magazine Articles on Level 0 Checksheet, p. 54, emphasis in original.

“The purpose of the suit is to harass and discourage rather than to win. The law can be used very easily to harass, and enough harassment on somebody who is simply on the thin edge anyway...will generally be sufficient to cause his professional decease. If possible, of course, ruin him utterly.”—L. Ron Hubbard, Magazine Articles on Level 0 Checksheet, p. 55. “Fair game.” “ENEMY-SP [suppressive person] Order.

The decision in the Sklar case states: “under both the tax code and Supreme Court precedent, the Sklars are not entitled to the charitable deduction they claimed. The Church of Scientology's closing agreement is irrelevant, not because the Sklars are not ‘similarly situated’ to Scientologists, but because the closing agreement does not enter into the equation by which the deductibility of the Sklars’ payments is determined. An IRS closing agreement cannot overrule Congress and the Supreme Court.”

“Fair game.”

“ENEMY-SP [suppressive person] Order. Fair game. May be deprived of property or injured by any means by any Scientologist without any discipline of the Scientologist. May be tricked, sued or lied to or destroyed.”—Hubbard Communications Office Policy Letter (HCOPL), 18 October 1967, Issue IV.

“Dead agenting.” The process of responding to criticism of Scientology by discrediting the critic with counter-accusations. “The technique of proving utterances false is called ‘DEAD AGENTING.’ It’s in the first book of Chinese espionage. When the enemy agent gives false data, those who believed him but now find it false kill him—or at least cease to believe him. So, the PR slang for it is ‘Dead Agenting.’” — Hubbard Board Policy Letter, 30 May 1974.

Ex-Scientologists have claimed that material from their auditing sessions has been used to discredit them in this manner. The technique is somewhat less than effective when used by Scientology in making charges of abuse against its own former senior executives, who were in positions of authority for decades, and who now report on those very abuses.

“Disconnection.”

The process of requiring Scientologists to discontinue communications with family and friends who are seen to be in opposition to Scientology or who are “suppressive.” It is similar to practices of other religious groups such as “disfellowshipping” among Jehovah’s Witnesses. It was established by Hubbard policy in 1965, cancelled in 1968, and restored in 1982 (Attack, pp. 35–36).

“Baby watch.”

Scientology policy is to put individuals exhibiting psychotic behavior on the “Introspection Rundown,” also known as “isolation watch” or “baby watch,” which is intended to find the cause of a psychotic break. Lisa McPherson was undergoing this treatment in the days leading up to her death (Reitman, pp. 208–211, pp. 214–217).

Homosexuality as “Low-Toned.”

“The sexual pervert ([seen in] homosexuality, lesbianism, sexual sadism, etc....) is actually quite ill physically.... But with an effective science [i.e., Dianetics] to handle the problem, a society would continue to endure perversion and all its sad and sordid effects doesn’t deserve to survive.”—Dianetics, pp. 122–123; in 1978 edition, edited out of later editions.

Sexual perversion, including homosexuality, is at 1.1 on the “tone scale”: “the level of the pervert, the hypocrite, the turncoat, ... the subversive.”—L. Ron Hubbard, *Science of Survival*, 1951, pp. 88–90; in 1975 edition, deleted from later editions.

Pressure for Abortion

Scientology opposes sex outside of marriage as “out-2D” (in opposition to the “second dynamic,” which involves sex, family, and children), and Sea Org members have been discouraged from marrying, a 1996 policy bans their having children, and female members have been pressured to have abortions when pregnant (Reitman, pp. 323–324). Early allegations of pressure to have abortions were made in the Declaration of Mary Taboyoyon in the case of *Church of Scientology International v. Steven Fishman and Uwe Geertz* in 1994.

“Rehabilitation Project Force (RPF).”

The Rehabilitation Project Force is a program by which Scientologists who have been unproductive or violated policy can earn redemption through physical labor, potentially for months or even years. Those in the RPF who engage in violations may be sent to the RPF’s RPF, which is even more extreme (Reitman, pp. 330–331; Miller, pp. 321–325; Atack, p. 206; Headley, Many, and Scobee all describe their own time in the RPF; Duignan and Hawkins describe their observations of the RPF)

“Touch Assists.”

Scientology’s practice of spiritual healing through touch, controversially offered by its volunteer ministers at 9/11 Ground Zero, in Japan after its recent earthquakes, and to the crew on the set of *War of the Worlds* (Andrew Morton, *Tom Cruise: An Unauthorized Biography*, 2009, pp. 257–258).

“Purification Rundown. “Also, known as the “Purif” and offered in a putative secular form through Scientology’s Narconon front group, this drug treatment program involves niacin injections, saunas, and running (Reitman, pp. 208–223).

“Xenu.”

From OT III, the evil galactic warlord who is responsible for murdering space aliens and dropping their bodies into a volcano and blowing them up with H-bombs, causing “body thetans” to be additional causes of “engrams” which must be removed through Scientology auditing (Reitman, pp. 99–100).

“Doctrine of exchange.”

An alleged religious doctrine that requires Scientologists to provide something in return for anything given to them, used as a justification in tax court for why Scientology charges fees for its services and that they should be tax-deductible (Hernandez case, see p. 23 of this article).

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Roy Wallis, *The Road to Total Freedom* (1976, Columbia University Press).
Russell Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah: The Story of L. Ron Hubbard* (1987, Henry Holt);
Reitman gives an abbreviated account of "Operation Snow White" and "Operation Freakout" against Paulette Cooper on pp. 111–112;
More detailed accounts are in Urban (pp. 167–168), in Miller (pp. 336, 341–342, 351–352), and especially Atack (pp. 226–241).

The plot against CSICOP, described in a six-page "Guardian Program Order" dated March 24, 1977 and entitled "Program Humanist Humiliation," was reported by Kendrick Frazier, "A Scientology 'dirty tricks' campaign against CSICOP," *Skeptical Inquirer* vol. 4, no. 3, Spring 1980, pp. 8–10. Some of the FBI-seized documents can be found online.

Details of Scientology's formerly secret 1993 closing agreement with the IRS may be found online. Many of these abuses are also vividly depicted in the sources in note 2. Perhaps the most moving case in Reitman's book, which stretches throughout the book, are of the married Sea Org couples Stefan and Tanja Castle and Marc and Claire Headley. Both couples were split up by the church and the husbands escaped uncertain they would see their wives again, but they both successfully managed to help their wives also escape.

Document published on Marty Rathbun's blog (October 23, 2011) and verified by Tony Ortega at the Village Voice's "Runnin' Scared" blog (see note 2) on subsequent days.

The Anonymous press release; many more details may be found at the Wikipedia pages for Project Chanology, Anonymous, and 4chan, as well as in Jeff Jacobsen's article, "We Are Legion: Anonymous and the War on Scientology" (see note 4).

Anti-Semitic Conspiracies and the Holocaust

(This article was originally written in 1994 for a volume that was commissioned by the Council of American Jewish Museums. It is published here with the kind permission of Ori Soltes, editor of that volume)

Antisemitism is an interesting word. Generally, it is used to describe hatred of those of Jewish descent and religion. Yet Arabs are also Semites. Yet this word is very rarely applied to them. Of course, Antisemitism is, for Jews, one of the simplest, yet paradoxically also one of the most complex of phenomena. It is simple in that almost every Jew feels like they either have direct experience or at least an expert knowledge of it, and yet it is so complex that scholars still cannot agree on its exact definition.

The definitions offered range from a broad description of Anti-Semitism "as a term denoting all forms of hostility manifested toward Jews throughout history,"¹ to narrower contexts that refer only to actions that cross certain specified lines (i.e. - legal restrictions, physical violence, etc.).² These descriptions are often modified by reference to a specific type of Anti-Semitism, such as "economic," "racial" or "theological" Anti-Semitism. Although the subject has been studied from many perspectives and disciplines, there is still much that remains uncertain, including questions regarding its origins and the motives of its adherents.

It can be said that from its very beginnings the Jewish people have had to contend with anti-Jewish behavior. Turning to the Bible itself, Jewish thinkers have found in the conflict between Esau and Jacob,

Pharaoh's or Haman's planned genocides, or even Amalek's attack in the desert, that the archetypes of Anti-Semitism are rooted in the depths of Jewish memory. The Scroll of Esther as well as the Apocryphal books of Judith and Tobit have been viewed, in the words of one popular history, as being "the first evidence of those virulent anti-Jewish attitudes that were to become so frequently directed at major Jewish communities" in the Diaspora.

The debate over historical references to Anti-Semitism intensifies when we turn to the classical Greco-Roman period. One expert has written that "Ancient Anti-Semitism was significant and widespread" and came "from governments, mobs and intellectuals."⁴ He concluded that Anti-Semitism of the masses was deep-seated and ready to burst into violence while the Anti-Semitism of the intellectuals was uninfluential in this mass belief and that the masses' belief was motivated by the fear of Judaism as a non-tolerant monotheistic religion that would close down the more tolerant pagan religions. This would be accomplished by the aggressive Jewish proselytization together with Jewish self-organization had created a large and cohesive bloc that usually operated in cooperation with non-Jewish governments (the series of armed rebellions against Antiochus of Syria and Rome were more exceptions than the rule), causing resentment amongst some local populations; when taken all together, this potent combination created the anti-Semitic beliefs that periodically erupted.

Another scholar, Shaye J.D. Cohen, raises an important point. He warns us that the use of the term Anti-Semitism for this period is in itself problematic because it is "not only anachronistic, but misleading." Since there was no concept of race in the ancient world, "Anti-Semitism" makes no sense. There were also no stereotypical pictures of Jews as moneylenders, usurers, or economic exploiters, nor were there charges of dual loyalty, all of which would become mainstays of traditional anti-Semitic typecasting. Some of the anti-Jewish acts that did take place were even understandable as reactions to Jewish rebellions and other actions. Furthermore, there existed a pattern of successful proselytization, which would indicate an openness or even sympathy to Judaism. A survey of classical authors who commented on Jews or Judaism found that 18% were favorable, 59% neutral and 23% unfavorable. Cohen concludes his discussion by saying that "a discussion of Anti-Judaism in antiquity that ignores the other half of the question, the power of the attraction exerted by Judaism in the Greco-Roman world, is lachrymose¹⁶ indeed." This distinction is extremely important to keep in mind. Antisemitism usually does not exist in a vacuum, but rather exists in a context of both balance and nuance.

Whatever one chooses to conclude about the definition of ancient anti-Judaism, there is no question that the birth of Christianity changed the situation dramatically. Many experts find the roots of modern Anti-Semitism to be firmly imbedded in aspects of Christian theology. For Christianity, originating as it did within Judaism, the issue involved both the separation and creation of an identity distinct from Judaism. It also posed the question of how Jews, who accepted the Bible as the authoritative voice of God, did not accept the Messiah and religion that was for Christians, foretold in those scriptures. This meant that either the Christian reading of the Bible was false, or else the Jews consciously and willfully denied the truth of the sacred text. The rivalry between Christian and Jew was not only internal. Both groups had strong proselytizing tendencies, and eventually they competed against each other for the ultimate prize - the Roman Empire. It was this competition that drove Paul to eliminate compliance to Jewish Law as a requirement for conversion; a move which "changed the course of the world's history." The picture derived from those early sources, including the Gospels and the Church Fathers, has been termed "The Teachings of Contempt." These teachings develop three themes:

1. Jews were responsible for deicide, or the murder of the "Son of God" who was Jesus.
2. The Judaism that existed at the time of Jesus was degenerate.
3. The punishment for the crime of deicide was dispersion.

It was not only what was said, but the heavily charged language that helped create this "Adversus Judaeus" tradition. The Book of Revelations described the "Synagogue of Satan" (2:10, 3:9) making explicit

¹⁶ lamentable

a linked identity between the Devil and the Jews that would continue for centuries; and in particular, the language of John Chrysostom (late 4th-early 5th Century) stood out for its invective.¹⁷

Even though early Christians were all Jews, as were the Twelve apostles and Jesus Christ himself, as the Roman world became Christianized, these attitudes were reflected in the legal codes, such as that of Theodosian Code (438). This code forbade Jews from interfering with conversions to Christianity, from owning Christian slaves (and later any slaves; thus, helping remove Jews from all except small subsistence farming), from proselytization amongst Christians, and from building new synagogues, and throughout all this Judaism was referred to as "nefarious," "sacrilegious" and other negative terms. The tradition of anti-Semitism can be traced to a misreading and misunderstanding on the part of the early Christian fathers where they took folklore, foolish traditions, and the philosophies of men mingled with scripture. Then given centuries to develop into a idea of hatred it became the full-blown philosophy that it has become today.

Ultimately, for Christianity, Jews had not only become dispersed (punished) for the crime of deicide committed in their degenerate condition, but Christianity "had polarized the actors of the Bible (Original-Old Testament) into bad Jews and good Hebrews and thought of themselves as the descendants of the Hebrews and the true Israel." in this reading, all of God's promises and blessings were earmarked for Christianity and all the curses and punishments were reserved for Judaism.

Again, as in the classical era, the record was not totally one sided. Popes such as Gregory the Great (590-604) attempted to protect Jews according to the rights that they were allowed while maintaining a balance of not allowing Jews more rights than they were permitted.

This basic pattern would continue to dominate European Jewish history for hundreds of years, well into the medieval period. Robert Chazan, who has studied this period extensively, points out that Anti-Semitism is a combination of both inherited stereotypical themes that combine with the existing majority (in this case Christian) society as well as the Jewish minority to form the specific manifestations of anti-Semitism that are particular to that time and place.

On the positive side, William Shakespeare, in his play, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 3, Scene 1, (1619) introduces Shylock to us. Shylock was a Jewish moneylender who had suffered endless discrimination at the hands of his Christian enemy, Antonio. When they went to court, he asked why he should not be allowed to exact his revenge now that he has been given the chance.

SHYLOCK: He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million, laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction."

In Shakespeare's time, no Jews had been legally present in England for several hundred years (since the Edict of Expulsion in 1290). However, stereotypes of Jews as money lenders remained from the Middle Ages. Historically, money lending had been a fairly common occupation among Jews, in part because Christians were not permitted to practice usury, then considered to mean charging interest of any kind on loans, and Jews were excluded from other fields of work. At the same time, most Christian kings forbade Jews to own land for farming or to serve in the government, and craft guilds usually refused to admit Jews as artisans. Thus, money lending was one of the few occupations still open to Jews.

¹⁷ John Chrysostom, c. 349 – 407, Archbishop of Constantinople, was an important Early Church Father. He is known for his preaching and public speaking, his denunciation of abuse of authority by both ecclesiastical and political leaders, the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, and his ascetic sensibilities.

Anti-Semites have used the *Merchant of Venice* to support their views throughout its history. The Nazis used Shylock for their propaganda. The depiction of Jews in the literature of England and other English-speaking countries throughout the centuries was influenced by the character of Shylock from *The Merchant of Venice* and similar stereotypes. With slight variations, much of English literature up until the 20th century depicts the Jew as "a monied, cruel, lecherous, avaricious outsider tolerated only because of his golden hoard."

For example, in the medieval period, the papacy's call for crusades to retrieve the Holy Land was not, in and of itself, anti-Semitic. But, the reality of an armed crusade against infidels, when faced with the presence of the stereotyped "Killers of Christ" in their midst, resulted in an ideology and outburst of violence aimed at the Jewish communities of Worms, Mainz and Cologne in the German Rhineland during the First Crusade of 1095.

Interestingly enough, the Second Crusade was preceded by calls for protection of the Jews by prominent churchman, such as Bernard of Clairvaux. Even this call, however, was built upon anti-Semitic stereotypes, as Bernard wrote: "the Jews are not to be persecuted, killed, or even put to flight.. For they remind us always of what our Lord suffered. They are dispersed all over the world so by expiating their crime they may be everywhere the living witness of our redemption." Jewish protections were thus linked to Christian witness. It was also around this period that circumstances of economic growth that required fluid capital, along with Church attacks on Christian usury against Christians, combined with the traditional limitations on the Jewish presence in certain professions (agriculture, guilds, etc.) To create a specific Jewish specialization in banking and moneylending that would lead to further stereotyping. (The aforementioned Bernard of Clairvaux was also one of the earliest to use the term "to Jew" in reference to moneylending.)²¹

Various conspiracy theories have been advanced regarding Jews and banking:

1. World banking is dominated by the Rothschild family,
2. Jews control Wall Street,
3. Jews control the U.S. Federal Reserve System.
4. A related theory is that Jews control Hollywood or the news media.

The stereotype of the Jew as the financial manipulator was not the only new anti-Semitic image that developed in this period. Norwich, England in 1144 saw the first recorded case of an allegation of ritual-murder, the charge that Jews tortured and murdered Christian children. A century later, the stereotype of blood-libel grew out of the ritual murder belief. This charge claimed that Jews used the blood of Christian children on Passover for ritual purposes such as in the making of matzah¹⁸, or for drinking instead of wine). At around the same time the allegation of host desecration originated.

This myth claimed that Jews manipulated Christians who owed them money into giving the host or wafer (used in Mass) to the Jews, who then used it to mutilate and torture the body of Jesus as they had done at the time of the Crucifixion. The Catholic belief in transubstantiation, which holds that sacramental elements of the wafer and wine change into the literal body of Christ, made that charge particularly damning. These images would become staples of anti-Semitic stereotyping and would prove to be both deadly and long lived, lasting well into the Twentieth Century. The book *The Fixer*, by Bernard Malamud there is a scene where the fixer, Yakov is discussing Jesus with one of the guards. He asks the guard if he believed that Jesus was king of the Jews. The guard said he did. So then wouldn't being anti-Semitic necessarily also be anti-Christ? I don't think very many Christians have even thought about this.

Negative stereotypes did not only exist in theologically based popular folklore; they would eventually have practical results by entering the realm of law. Restrictions on dress and moneylending (Fourth Lateran Council, 1215), as well as on Jewish religious literature (the burning of the Talmud, Paris, 1240) all combined to place definite limitations on Jewish life, to cripple Jewish economic strength, to separate Jews from non-Jews and to create a more rigid structure of Jewish social inferiority. The old acceptance of Jewish existence was eventually itself questioned. Recently, scholars have pointed out that

¹⁸ Unleavened bread

the early conditional tolerance for Judaism was based on the premise that Judaism had not changed in other words was still the recipient of some Divine promises, thus the Jew was neither heretic nor unbeliever, but, beginning in the twelfth century, that view itself came under question.

The attacks on the Talmud were motivated by the belief that rabbinical, post-biblical Judaism has, in fact changed from the original Biblically centered belief; it now constituted, in its Rabbinic form, a new, man-made heresy. The combination of legal restrictions, deadly suspicion, (the plague of the Black Death (1347-1350) was blamed on Jews poisoning the wells of European Christendom and caused anti-Jewish mob violence that resulted in thousands of deaths, demonization such as the portrait of the Judensau - of Jews being suckled by a sow which became one of the most common caricatures in Medieval art, taken together created a situation where Jews were no longer welcome in Christian society, and consequently were forced into exile.

During this time Jews were expelled from, among other places, France (1182), England (1209) and, of course, from Spain (1492). The Spanish expulsion was, for the Jews of the medieval period, both the most dramatic and traumatic of experiences. Throughout the dark days of medieval European Jewry, the secure and culturally vibrant community of Spain had flourished, producing a "Golden Age." However, the Catholic Reconquista of Islamic Spain resulted in the infamous edict of Ferdinand and Isabella that expelled the Jews of Spain. The expulsion of the Jewish community was not the only result; to help keep Spain free of heretics, the Inquisition was given great power. The role of the Inquisition is often misunderstood. It had no authority to pursue Jews, only to pursue heretics within Christianity. Thus, its target became the "conversos" (also known as "Marranos"), those born Jewish (or to what had once been Jewish families) who had, on the surface, been converted to Christianity; but who secretly retained some sort of practice or belief in Judaism. It was the Spanish experience that introduced the concept of "blood" or "racism" to Anti-Semitism, and made even conversion an insufficient shield to Jews.

The Church's concern with heresy was not unfounded; but when a major challenge came, it came not from the Jews but from Germany, within the heart of Christendom. Martin Luther's attack on Catholicism saw the end of the Catholic Church's position as sole guardian of religious values. In this vein, Luther's early writings included appeals "to accept them (Jews) benevolently;" however, when this approach did not pay off with increased Jewish baptisms, Luther turned vitriolic on the subject of Jews.

"First their synagogues . . . Should be burned . . . Secondly, their homes should be likewise . . . Destroyed . . . Thirdly, they should be deprived of their prayer books and Talmuds . . . Fourthly, their rabbis forbidden under threat of death to teach . . . Fifthly, passport and travelling privileges should be absolutely forbidden. Sixthly, all cash and valuables ought to be taken from them . . . Seventhly, let the young and strong Jews and Jewesses be given (tools) and let them earn their bread by the sweat of their noses . . . (Ultimately) let us apply the same cleverness (expulsion) as the other nations."

The Spanish innovation of "Mala Sangre" (bad blood - referring to Jewish heritage) and Luther's words, when taken together, provide an obvious foreshadowing of Adolph Hitler's program. This basic mixture continued unchanged in its essentials until the rise of the Enlightenment. The adherents of the Enlightenment believed:

"that a universally valid method had finally been found for the solution of the fundamental questions . . . This method consisted in the application of those rational (that is scientific) rules . . . (that overturned the) ignorance and error, superstition and prejudice, much of it deliberately spread by priests through religion, and other ruling classes . . . As a means of keeping men obedient to their will."

The reference to priests using religion as a means of suppression meant that the Bible, and the received traditions associated with it were now viewed critically, especially in comparison with the pagan antiquity of Greece and Rome."

It did not take long before this criticism became an unveiled attack on Judaism, which was seen as the original Biblical religion. Voltaire, the most famous and influential of the "philosophes" of the Enlightenment, described Jews as a people "who have long united the most sordid avarice with the most detestable superstition and the most invincible hatred for every people by whom they are tolerated and enriched." for this type of existence, according to Voltaire, Jews "deserve to be punished." As Arthur Hertzberg has written, Voltaire was the "vital link . . . Who provided a new international, secular anti-Jewish rhetoric in the name of European culture."

Thanks to the Enlightenment and its followers, Anti-Semitism no longer had to rely on religion for its authority. At the same time as Jews were entering Western European society in unprecedented numbers, Jew haters were utilizing all the new tools of culture against them. Karl Marx, in analyzing economics and class, portrayed "Money as the zealous God of Israel, before whom no other God may be." This radical emphasis on Jewish economic interest, publicized by the offspring of a Jewish family (Marx's father was baptized to Christianity in 1817, one year before Karl's birth), often fixated on successful Jewish financiers like the Rothschild's. It played off the medieval image of Jewish moneylending; and played into both the radical Left charges of Jewish dominance through international capitalism and the radical Right charges of Jewish dominance of international Bolshevism AKA communism.

At the same time, (1850) the German composer Richard Wagner was complaining of Jewish "decadence" and influence in music; later Wagner would be one of the first since the Spanish Inquisition to reinject racism into Anti-Semitism. In a letter written in 1891 he writes "that I hold the Jewish race to be the born enemy of pure humanity and everything noble in it. It is certain that it is running us Germans into the ground."

This period also saw the introduction of the term Anti-Semitism. Introduced in 1879 by the German writer, Wilhelm Marr, it was originally meant to "impart a new, nonreligious connotation to the term anti-Jewish" but, within a short period it became "popular specifically among writers and scholars . . . Because of its scientific pretensions (as well as the) uncertainty over the intent (of the user) of hatred of the Jews."

Wagner's anti-Semitic beliefs were tied into the new scientific currents. Scholars investigating the new "science" of race, using writings such as Gobineau's *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Race* (1853-1855), together with the findings of Social Darwinism, created a climate where racism was perceived to rest on "scientific evidence." Wagner's son-in-law, Houston Stewart Chamberlain contributed a work, "*Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*" (1899) which influenced many, including Adolf Hitler (*in Mein Kampf*) Hitler laments the "indifference" with which governments "passed by (Chamberlain's) observations").

Chamberlain was not Hitler's only influence; politically, the mayor of Vienna, Karl Lueger, who helped pioneer political Anti-Semitism, served as Hitler's role model. Lueger was the first politician to be elected to office in Europe on an explicitly anti-Semitic platform. Ruling Vienna from 1897 until his death in 1910, his influence on the young Hitler (who spent 1907-1913 in Vienna) cannot be minimized.³⁴ Lueger showed Hitler the extent to which Anti-Semitism was popularly accepted. The direct effect of this new form of Anti-Semitism consisted of its use of pseudo-scientific authority to create a climate where nothing the Jew could do, including conversion, could change their essence. To the religious, cultural and social stereotypes of the past was now added the authority of science to create a world where a "Final Solution" could be the answer to Europe's "Jewish question." As Raul Hilberg has written "since the fourth century after Christ there have been three anti-Jewish policies: conversion, expulsion and annihilation. The second appeared as an alternative to the first, and the third emerged as an alternative to the second."³⁵

The Holocaust brought together all the strands of past Anti-Semitism, connected them and produced a system devoted to the total annihilation of the Jewish people in Europe (and in other countries that fell under Nazi rule). Jews were dehumanized, by being described as "untermenschen" - subhuman, demonized, and condemned theologically. They were economic manipulators, both capitalist on the left and communist on the right.³⁹ They were sexual corrupters, polluting racial bloodlines, as well as being traitors to Germany, responsible for the German defeat in World War I.

Having offered a diagnosis that relied, in great part, on scientific and medical authority, the proposed Nazi solution followed suit. As one Nazi doctor at Auschwitz put it "The Jews are the gangrenous appendix of mankind. That's why I cut them out."

The art of the Nazi period reflected these themes. Jewish art and artists were banned, as Jews either "corrupted" or produced "degenerate" art. Nazi views of Jews referred back to traditional anti-Semitic caricatures. Newspapers like *Der Steurmer*, children's books like *The Poison Mushroom*, adult books and movies like the *Eternal Jew*, all portrayed Jews as obscene sexual corrupters, obese, uncivilized, financial manipulators or ritual murderers. Sometimes the images were updated from the medieval originals, other times the originals and the new images were featured in the same source to demonstrate the unbridled historical claim of Jewish depravity. For every single anti-Semitic description in print, an equivalent caricature could be found in image. Kiosks in German cities were often decorated with these images, the worst of which came from Julius Streicher's semi-pornographic newspaper and publishing house, both named '*Der Steurmer*.'

Despite the overwhelming and deadly attitude of Anti-Semitism in the Third Reich, there were a small number of individuals and organizations, such as Zygota in Poland, who risked and sometimes lost their lives in the effort to save Jews. Particularly in Eastern Europe, where the heritage of violent local Anti-Semitism was still strong, these efforts stand out as models of positive human conduct.

After the Holocaust, postwar Anti-Semitism in its most extreme forms was frowned upon by Western society with the exception of fringe elements, such as the Neo-Nazis, the KKK, Communists, and Muslims Jihadis. The strongest anti-Semitic traditions and stereotypes were maintained by the Soviet Union and Arab countries. This Anti-Semitism was combined with a virulent anti-Zionism, to form a new hybrid that had its root in Middle Eastern political and religious conflicts, exacerbated by Cold War politics. Recently, the political Anti-Semitism that was sponsored by some communist countries, particularly the Soviet Union, and the Arab countries such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia appears to have lessened with the new political realities. The collapse of the Soviet Union removed a large extent of the ideological and financial support of this political Anti-Semitism, leaving it to flourish in the rhetoric and policies of states such as Libya, Iran and Iraq. While there were earlier stages of Moslem anti-Semites, "the real penetration of Anti-Semitism, however, dates from the nineteenth century" spurred by Christian Arabs and Western Christian emissaries.

In the United States, Anti-Semitism never developed in the same manner as Europe. Despite drawing on the same heritage of European Christian traditions, the United States never saw the establishment of one dominating religion that had the secular authority of the state to back it up. While there certainly were isolated acts of violence, such as the Leo Frank lynching in Georgia in 1916, there is no history of state sponsored or supported mass violence against Jews, as there was in Europe. Further, the creation of a country of minorities meant that Jews would not be bearing the brunt of racism, which, in the United States, has focused more on skin color than on belief.

Nonetheless, Anti-Semitism has been an integral part of the American Jewish experience. While the days of quotas and most overt Anti-Semitism may appear to be past, there still exists a lurking presence of Anti-Semitism on the fringes of American life. Appearing both on the right professional Holocaust deniers, skinheads, and extremist groups like the KKK, the Aryan Nation or Christian Identity as well as on the left: Louis Farrakhan, Black Muslims, the Progressive Left and other left-wing extremists. Anti-Semitism still has the potency to enter the mainstream, as demonstrated by the recent presidential campaigns of Pat Buchanan and David Duke and the Oklahoma City Bombing. Another distributing trend is the growing use of cyberspace and the internet to spread anti-Semitic propaganda such as the "Bible." Of international anti-Semitism, the *Protocols*.

Today, the fight against national and international Anti-Semitism is led by groups such as the Simon Wiesenthal Center and the Anti-Defamation League. Through programs of coalition building, political and social action, education, research, publicity and remembrance, these groups attempt to aggressively confront racism in general and Anti-Semitism in particular. The focus on the history of Anti-Semitism, including the creation of Museums that memorialize the Holocaust, is tied into the oft-repeated maxim of George Santanyana "Those who ignore the past are condemned to repeat it."

Jewish life in the 20th century has fluctuated between the lows of the Holocaust and the highs of the birth of the land of Israel. To either totally ignore, or to minimize the reality of Anti-Semitism, or to dwell on it to the exclusion of the positive experiences of Jewish life is to do a disservice to the totality of the Jewish experience. History especially as the history of human interactions, demands our attention. "Survival," as Abraham Joshua Heschel has written: "means we must carry on our independent dialogue with the past."

However, the Jewish people are caught in a damned if you don't and damned if you do proposition. To quote the Israeli author, Gustavo Perednik writes, "The Jews were accused by the nationalists of being the creators of Communism; by the Communists of ruling Capitalism. If they live in non-Jewish countries, they are accused of double-loyalties; if they live in the Jewish country, of being racists. When they spend their money, they are reproached for being ostentatious; when they don't spend their money, of being avaricious. They are called rootless cosmopolitans or hardened chauvinists. If they assimilate, they are accused of being fifth-columnists, if they don't, of shutting themselves away."

Bibliography

The writings on Anti-Semitism form an immense literature. Almost every work on Jewish history contains references to the subject. The following in no way resembles an exhaustive bibliography.

General Histories

The classical work on the subject remains Leon Poliakov's four volume work *The History of Antisemitism* (New York, 1976-1985). More recent one volume histories include Jacob Katz's from *Prejudice to Destruction: Antisemitism 1700-1933* (Cambridge, 1982), and Robert Wistrich, *Antisemitism, The Longest Hatred* (New York, 1991).

The collection of essays edited by David Berger, *History and Hate* (Philadelphia, 1986) is an excellent introduction to recent scholarship on Anti-Semitism. *Antisemitism Through the Ages*, edited by Shmuel Almog (Oxford, 1988) contains 26 detailed studies.

Theories of Antisemitism

Two well-known, and much debated theories of Anti-Semitism can be found in Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew* (New York, 1948) and Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (part I), *Antisemitism* (New York, 1958). A more recent work that elevates scholarship on the subject to a higher level is Gavin Langmuir's *History, Religion and Antisemitism* (Berkeley, 1990). Also recommended is Langmuir's *Towards a Definition of Antisemitism* (Berkeley, 1990). Another recent work, William F. Buckley Jr.'s *in search of Antisemitism* (New York, 1992) is a highly personal, even idiosyncratic discussion from an unusual perspective. Most Holocaust denial claims imply, or openly state, that the Holocaust is a hoax arising out of a deliberate Jewish conspiracy to advance the interests of Jews at the expense of other peoples, and to justify the creation of the State of Israel. For this reason, Holocaust denial is considered to be an anti-Semitic conspiracy theory. Despite overwhelming evidence and an admission and apology from Germany decades ago, revisionists continue to claim that nearly 6 million Jews were not killed by Nazis during the Holocaust. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, for one, has called the Holocaust a "myth" and suggested that Germany and other European countries, rather than Palestine, provide land for a Jewish state.

It has been reported that some in the Muslim world believe that the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami was caused by an Indian nuclear test that Israeli and American experts participated in. The Venezuelan state-run TV station *Vive* has claimed that the 2010 Haiti earthquake was caused by the Jewish controlled US government testing an "earthquake weapon," and a government cover-up took place.

Antisemitism has, from the Middle Ages, frequently taken on characteristics of conspiracy theory. Anti-Semitic falsehoods continue to circulate. In medieval Europe, it was widely believed that Jews

poisoned wells, had killed Jesus¹⁹, and consumed the blood of Christians in their rituals (despite the fact that human and animal blood are not kosher).

The Dreyfus Affair: One infamous example of anti-Semitism was the Dreyfus Affair. In the late 1800s in France, Jewish artillery officer Alfred Dreyfus was wrongfully convicted of treason based on false government documents, and sentenced to life in prison. The French government did attempt to cover this up, but Dreyfus was eventually pardoned after the affair was made public; an act that is credited to writer Émile Zola. The Dreyfus affair (French: l'affaire Dreyfus, pronounced: was a political scandal that divided France from 1894 until its resolution in 1906. The affair is often seen as a modern and universal symbol of injustice, and remains one of the most striking examples of a complex miscarriage of justice, where a major role was played by the press and public opinion.

The scandal began in December 1894, with the treason conviction of Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a young French artillery officer of Alsatian and Jewish descent. Sentenced to life imprisonment for allegedly communicating French military secrets to the German Embassy in Paris, Dreyfus was imprisoned on Devil's Island in French Guiana, where he spent nearly five years.

Evidence came to light in 1896—primarily through an investigation instigated by Georges Picquart, head of counter-espionage—identifying a French Army major named Ferdinand Walsin Esterhazy as the real culprit. After high-ranking military officials suppressed the new evidence, a military court unanimously acquitted Esterhazy after a trial lasting only two days. The Army then accused Dreyfus of additional charges based on falsified documents. Word of the military court's framing of Dreyfus and of an attempted cover-up began to spread, chiefly owing to j'accuse, a vehement open letter published in a Paris newspaper in January 1898 by famed writer Émile Zola. Activists put pressure on the government to reopen the case.

In 1899, Dreyfus was returned to France for another trial. The intense political and judicial scandal that ensued divided French society between those who supported Dreyfus (now called "dreyfusards"), such as Sarah Bernhardt, Anatole France, Henri Poincaré and Georges Clemenceau, and those who condemned him (the anti-dreyfusards), such as Édouard Drumont, the director and publisher of the anti-Semitic newspaper *La Libre Parole*. The new trial resulted in another conviction and a 10-year sentence but Dreyfus was given a pardon and set free.

Eventually all the accusations against Dreyfus were demonstrated to be baseless. In 1906 Dreyfus was exonerated and reinstated as a major in the French Army. He served during the whole of World War I, ending his service with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He died in 1935.

The Affair from 1894 to 1906 divided France deeply and lastingly into two opposing camps: the pro-Army, mostly Catholic "anti-Dreyfusards" and the anticlerical, pro-republican Dreyfusards. It embittered French politics and encouraged radicalization. The conviction was a miscarriage of justice based upon faulty espionage and blatant Anti-Semitism, as well as a hatred of the German Empire following its annexation of Alsace and part of Lorraine in 1871.

In the second half of the 19th century Conspiracists claimed that Jews and Freemasons were plotting to establish control over the world. The best-known text alleging the existence of this Judeo-Masonic conspiracy theory is *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. A more modern manifestation of such ideas is the theory of a Zionist Occupation Government (ZOG).

Holocaust Revisionism: First edition of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion: Current Arab Anti-Semitism, which is mostly borrowed from Western sources, differs from the past. Bernard Lewis, the great scholar of Islam, has written that "for most of the fourteen hundred years or so of the Arab-Jewish encounters, the Arabs have not in fact been anti-Semitic as that word is used in the West. . . . Because for the most part they are not Christians." Lewis is not telling us that Jewish life under Islam was a paradise; but he is telling us as another scholar put it, to avoid "the misleading analogy or comparison with the European Jewish experience."

¹⁹ People forget that 1. The Romans killed Jesus even though Jewish leaders were partly to blame. 2. All early Christians were Jewish. 3. It doesn't matter that anti-Semitic conspiracies have been debunked. Truth is the first casualty to hatred of the Jews.

Antisemitism under Islam has to be viewed in its own terms, not through foreign perspectives. It also has to be viewed with the understanding that both the Moslem experience and therefore, consequently, the Jewish experience under Islam varied over different times and places, and as a result of varying conditions. The founding period of Islam began with Mohammad and continued until Islam had firmly established itself.⁴⁸ The Koran, which dates from this period, records the initial Jewish opposition to Mohammed, and his triumph over the Jews of Medina. However, Mohammed also recognized a kinship with Jews, and accepted them as a "People of The Book." This created a fundamental ambivalence in the view of the Jew, who on one hand were the descendants of Abraham and on the other were distorters of the Bible. While the Koran contains many anti-Jewish statements⁴⁹ an early "hadith"⁵⁰ has Mohammed saying "He who harms a member of the protected nation - I shall be his prosecutor on the Day of Judgement."

In practice this ambivalence became reflected in the dual applications of tribute and tolerance. Once the Jews agreed to pay tribute, thus acknowledging their humiliation and subjection, they were granted the status of "dhimmi." in return they were extended the right of religious freedom, some forms of civil and political rights, and were able to benefit from some of the economic successes of the later Islamic world. The status of "dhimmi" was not necessarily a positive one.

Restrictions on the "dhimmi" as found in the Pact of Umar (the basic document that spelled out the relationship) included

1. Not to use the Koran in jest or falsify its text
2. Not to speak falsely or contemptuously of the Prophet Mohammed
3. Not to speak irreverently or derisively of Islam
4. Not to touch or marry Moslem women
5. Not to proselytize amongst Moslems or to make any attempt upon their lives or property
6. Not to aid enemies of spies
7. Not building any house higher than those of Moslems
8. Not to ring bells or read their (holy) books aloud
9. Not to ride horses (asses and mules were allowed)
10. Not to drink wine in public (alcohol being forbidden to Moslems) and for Christians, not display their crosses and swine
11. They shall bury their dead in silence and not allow lamentations or sounds of mourning to be heard
12. They shall wear the "ghiyar" (a distinguishing sign), that was yellow for Jews, blue for Christians.

Interestingly, as can be seen from the above, Christians and even Zoroastrians shared in this category. The status was activated upon payment of the tribute (which came as a land tax and a poll tax). This status was the fundamental condition of Jews in the Islamic world. When that world achieved wealth, Jews shared to some extent. When intellectual creativity flourished, Jews participated to some extent. But, despite the toleration extended, Jews never achieved real civil, political or military power. Any sustained attempt to raise their status met in failure. If, after viewing classical Islamic Anti-Semitism on its own terms, then compare it to Christian Anti-Semitism, follow Bernard Lewis' formulation that Jews under Islam "were never free from discrimination, but only rarely subject to persecution; their situation was never as bad as in Christendom at its worst, nor ever as good as in Christendom at its best . . . (unlike Christendom) there were no fears of Jewish conspiracy and domination, . . . Of poisoning wells or spreading the plague, and even the blood libel did not appear among Muslims until . . . The fifteenth century;" when it came from Christian Crusaders.

For Islam, Christianity was the enemy, the target at whom discourses were aimed. Jews were relatively unimportant, even powerless. However, as Islam lost power, Christians, particularly Europeans, began exerting religious and economic interest. While the blood libel was an early precursor, European Christian's anti-Semitic writings, particularly from the French, entered the Moslem world, along with ritual murder accusations, in the nineteenth century. All that was missing was racial Anti-Semitism, which, for obvious reasons, never became popular in the Islamic world; although, in World War II, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem joined the Nazi cause, as did a contingent of Bosnian Moslems who joined the S.S. and fought in Eastern Europe. Some were used to guard the Death Camps.

Today, however, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism includes usage of all the stock stereotypes of Anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism, along with a general anti-Western and anti-secular ideology to fuel its fanaticism against both Jews and Christians. In Europe and the countries that made up the former Soviet Union, many of the traditional extreme nationalist ideologies are making a comeback. Whether it is Pamyat or Zhirinovskiy in Russia, Le Pen in France or the Neo-Nazi movement in the reunited Germany, segments of the population are attempting to bring back aspects of traditional xenophobia, including Anti-Semitism.

Unlike Ahmadinejad, most revisionists do not deny that Jews were interned in prison camps during World War II; rather, they argue that the number of deaths was greatly exaggerated. Gas chambers are a particular sticking point: Holocaust deniers say they were purely a rumor or, if they indeed existed, were not powerful enough to kill,²⁰ though evidence and history indicate otherwise. And the photographs of emaciated and dying Jews? Attorney Edgar J. Steele²¹, a revisionist, says, "All those pictures of skinny people and bodies stacked like cordwood were actually of Czechs and Poles and Germans who died of typhus, which was rampant in the camps." It seems crazy, and it is, but there are actually people out there who believe the Holocaust never happened. They claim that there was no government policy against Jews, that gas chambers were never used, and that the actual number of Jews killed was many times less than the historically accepted figure of 5 to 6 million. These same people are apologetics who give Hitler a pass by making the excuse that he did so many good things for Germany. He invented the Volkswagen and made the trains run on time.

"The title of Austin J. App's²² major work on the Holocaust, *The Six Million Swindle*, is informative because it implies on its very own the existence of a conspiracy of Jews to perpetrate a hoax against non-Jews for monetary gain." Mathis, Andrew E. Holocaust Denial, a Definition, *The Holocaust History Project*, (July 2, 2004. Retrieved May 16, 2007.)

"Jews are thus depicted as manipulative and powerful conspirators who have fabricated myths of their own suffering for their own ends. According to the Holocaust deniers, by forging evidence and mounting a massive propaganda effort, the Jews have established their lies as 'truth' and reaped enormous rewards from doing so: for example, in making financial claims on Germany and acquiring international support for Israel." *The nature of Holocaust denial: What is Holocaust denial? Archived* (July 18, 2011, at the Wayback Machine., JPR report #3, 2000. Retrieved May 16, 2007.)

"Why, we might ask the deniers, if the Holocaust did not happen would any group concoct such a horrific story? Because, some deniers claim, there was a conspiracy by Zionists to exaggerate the plight of Jews during the war in order to finance the state of Israel through war reparations." Michael Shermer & Alex Grobman. *Denying History: who Says the Holocaust Never Happened and why Do They Say It?* (University of California Press, 2000, p. 106.)

"Since its inception.. The Institute for Historical Review (IHR), a California-based Holocaust denial organization founded by Willis Carto of Liberty Lobby, has promoted the anti-Semitic conspiracy theory that Jews fabricated tales of their own genocide to manipulate the sympathies of the non-Jewish

²⁰ I've seen the gas chambers at Dachau. The victims were crammed into the chambers until there was no room for them to fall once they were dead. I've also seen the ovens where they burned the bodies. The soot didn't come from burning any other material other than bodies.

²¹ Edgar James Steele (July 5, 1945 – September 4, 2014) was an American author and disbarred trial attorney from northern Idaho, best known for serving as the defense attorney for Richard G. Butler, the founder of the white supremacist group Aryan Nations. He was a graduate of UCLA Law School and the University of California, Berkeley Haas School of Business. On June 11, 2010, Steele and another man were arrested and charged in connection with an alleged murder-for-hire plot to kill Steele's wife Cyndi and her mother. He was found guilty and sentenced to a 50-year prison sentence. Steele died in prison in September 2014, three years into his sentence.

²² Austin Joseph App (1902 – 1984) was a controversial German-American professor of medieval English literature who taught at the University of Scranton and La Salle University. App defended Germans and Nazi Germany during World War II. He is known for his work denying the Holocaust, and he has been called the first major American Holocaust denier.

world." **Antisemitism and Racism Country Reports: United States** (Archived June 28, 2011, at the Wayback Machine., Stephen Roth Institute, 2000. Retrieved May 17, 2007.)

"The central assertion for the deniers is that Jews are not victims but victimizers. They 'stole' billions in reparations, destroyed Germany's good name by spreading the 'myth' of the Holocaust, and won international sympathy because of what they claimed had been done to them. In the paramount miscarriage of injustice, they used the world's sympathy to 'displace' another people so that the state of Israel could be established. This contention relating to the establishment of Israel is a linchpin of their argument." Deborah Lipstadt. **Denying the Holocaust – The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory**, (Penguin, 1993, p. 27).

"They [Holocaust deniers] picture a vast shadowy conspiracy that controls and manipulates the institutions of education, culture, the media and government in order to disseminate a pernicious mythology. The purpose of this Holocaust mythology, they assert, is the inculcation of a sense of guilt in the white, Western Christian world. Those who can make others feel guilty have power over them and can make them do their bidding. This power is used to advance an international Jewish agenda centered in the Zionist enterprise of the State of Israel." **Introduction: Denial as Anti-Semitism, "Holocaust Denial: An Online Guide to Exposing and Combating Anti-Semitic Propaganda"**, Anti-Defamation League, 2001. Retrieved June 12, 2007.

"Deniers argue that the manufactured guilt and shame over a mythological Holocaust led to Western, specifically United States, support for the establishment and sustenance of the Israeli state; a sustenance that costs the American taxpayer over three billion dollars per year. They assert that American taxpayers have been and continue to be swindled.." **Introduction: Denial as Anti-Semitism, "Holocaust Denial: An Online Guide to Exposing and Combating Anti-Semitic Propaganda"**, Anti-Defamation League, 2001. Retrieved June 12, 2007.

"The stress on Holocaust revisionism underscored the new anti-Semitic agenda gaining ground within the Klan movement. Holocaust denial refurbished conspiratorial anti-Semitism. Who else but the Jews had the media power to hoodwink unsuspecting masses with one of the greatest hoaxes in history? And for what motive? To promote the claims of the illegitimate state of Israel by making non-Jews feel guilty, of course." Lawrence N. Powell, **Troubled Memory: Anne Levy, the Holocaust, and David Duke's Louisiana**, (University of North Carolina Press, 2000, p. 445.)

"Contemporary examples of Anti-Semitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include .. Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms such as gas chambers and firing squads, or intentional genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II AKA the Holocaust." **Working Definition of Antisemitism** (Archived January 25, 2011, at the Wayback Machine. PDF (33.8 KB), Fundamental Rights Agency)

"It would elevate their anti-Semitic ideology, which is what Holocaust denial is, to the level of responsible historiography, which it is not." Deborah Lipstadt, **Denying the Holocaust**, (p. 11.)

"The denial of the Holocaust is among the most insidious forms of anti-Semitism.." Roth, Stephen J. **"Denial of the Holocaust as an Issue of Law"** in the *(Israel Yearbook on Human Rights, Volume 23, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1993, p. 215.)*

"Contemporary Holocaust deniers are not revisionists; not even neo-revisionists. They are Deniers. Their motivations stem from their neo-Nazi political goals and their rampant Anti-Semitism." Austin, Ben S. **"Deniers in Revisionists Clothing"** (Archived November 21, 2008, at the Wayback Machine., The Holocaust/Shoah Page, Middle Tennessee State University. Retrieved March 29, 2007.)

"Holocaust denial can be a particularly insidious form of Anti-Semitism precisely because it often tries to disguise itself as something quite different: as genuine scholarly debate (in the pages, for example, of the innocuous-sounding Journal for Historical Review)." **The nature of Holocaust denial: What is Holocaust denial?** (Archived July 18, 2011, at the Wayback Machine., JPR report #3, 2000. Retrieved May 16, 2007.)

"This book treats several of the myths that have made Anti-Semitism so lethal.. In addition to these historic myths, we also treat the new, maliciously manufactured myth of Holocaust denial, another

groundless belief that is used to stir up Jew-hatred." Schweitzer, Frederick M. & Perry, Marvin. *Anti-Semitism: myth and hate from antiquity to the present*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, p. 3.)

"One predictable strand of Arab Islamic Anti-Semitism is Holocaust denial.." Schweitzer, Frederick M. & Perry, Marvin. *Anti-Semitism: myth and hate from antiquity to the present*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, p. 10).

"Indeed, the task of organized Anti-Semitism in the last decade of the century has been the establishment of Holocaust Revisionism; the denial that the Holocaust occurred." Stephen Trombly, *"Anti-Semitism,"* (The Norton Dictionary of Modern Thought, W. W. Norton & Company, 1999, p. 40.)

"After the Yom Kippur War an apparent reappearance of Anti-Semitism in France troubled the tranquility of the community; there were several notorious terrorist attacks on synagogues, Holocaust revisionism appeared, and a new anti-Semitic political right tried to achieve respectability." Howard K. Wettstein, *Diasporas and Exiles: Varieties of Jewish Identity*, (University of California Press, 2002 p. 169.)

"Holocaust denial is a convenient polemical substitute for anti-Semitism." Igounet, Valérie. *"Holocaust denial is part of a strategy,"* (Le Monde diplomatique, May, 1998.)

"Holocaust denial is a contemporary form of the classic anti-Semitic doctrine of the evil, manipulative and threatening world Jewish conspiracy." Introduction: Denial as Anti-Semitism, *"Holocaust Denial: An Online Guide to Exposing and Combating Anti-Semitic Propaganda,"* (Anti-Defamation League, 2001. Retrieved June 12, 2007).

"Particularly popular in Syria is Holocaust denial, another staple of Arab anti-Semitism that is sometimes coupled with overt sympathy for Nazi Germany." Efraim Karsh, *Rethinking the Middle East*, (Routledge, 2003, p. 104.)

"Holocaust denial is a new form of anti-Semitism, but one that hinges on age-old motifs." Dinah Shelton, *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, (Macmillan Reference, 2005, p. 45.)

"The stress on Holocaust revisionism underscored the new anti-Semitic agenda gaining ground within the Klan movement. Holocaust denial refurbished conspiratorial anti-Semitism. Who else but the Jews had the media power to hoodwink unsuspecting masses with one of the greatest hoaxes in history? And for what motive? To promote the claims of the illegitimate state of Israel by making non-Jews feel guilty, of course." Lawrence N. Powell, *Troubled Memory: Anne Levy, the Holocaust, and David Duke's Louisiana*, University of North Carolina Press, 2000, p. 445.

"The primary motivation for most deniers is anti-Semitism, and for them the Holocaust is an infuriatingly inconvenient fact of history. After all, the Holocaust has generally been recognized as one of the most terrible crimes that ever took place, and surely the very emblem of evil in the modern age. If that crime was a direct result of anti-Semitism taken to its logical end, then anti-Semitism itself, even when expressed in private conversation, is inevitably discredited among most people. What better way to rehabilitate anti-Semitism, make anti-Semitic arguments seem once again respectable in civilized discourse and even make it acceptable for governments to pursue anti-Semitic policies than by convincing the world that the great crime for which anti-Semitism was blamed simply never happened; indeed, that it was nothing more than a frame-up invented by the Jews, and propagated by them through their control of the media? What better way, in short, to make the world safe again for anti-Semitism than by denying the Holocaust?" Reich, Walter. *"Erasing the Holocaust,"* (The New York Times, July 11, 1993.)

"There is now a creeping, nasty wave of anti-Semitism .. Insinuating itself into our political thought and rhetoric .. The history of the Arab world .. Is disfigured .. By a whole series of outmoded and discredited ideas, of which the notion that the Jews never suffered and that the Holocaust is an obfuscatory confection created by the elders of Zion is one that is acquiring too much, far too much, currency." Edward Said, *"A Desolation, and They Called It Peace"* in Those who forget the past, Ron Rosenbaum (ed), (Random House 2004, p. 518.)

"While appearing on the surface as a rather arcane pseudo-scholarly challenge to the well-established record of Nazi genocide during the Second World War, Holocaust denial serves as a powerful conspiracy theory uniting otherwise disparate fringe groups.." *Introduction: Denial as Anti-Semitism*,

"Holocaust Denial: An Online Guide to Exposing and Combating Anti-Semitic Propaganda," (Anti-Defamation League, 2001. Retrieved June 12, 2007.)

"Before discussing how Holocaust denial constitutes a conspiracy theory, and how the theory is distinctly American, it is important to understand what is meant by the term 'Holocaust denial.'" Mathis, Andrew E. **Holocaust Denial, a Definition,** (The Holocaust History Project, July 2, 2004. Retrieved December 18, 2006.)

Muslim Conspiracy Theories

Conspiracy theories are a prevalent feature of Arab culture and politics. Prof. Matthew Gray writes they "are a common and popular phenomenon." "Conspiracism is an important phenomenon in understanding Arab Middle Eastern politics .." Variants include conspiracies involving colonialism, Zionism, superpowers, oil, and the war on terrorism, which may be referred to as a War against Islam. Roger Cohen theorizes that the popularity of conspiracy theories in the Arab world is "the ultimate refuge of the powerless," and Al-Mumin Said noted the danger of such theories in that they "keep us not only from the truth but also from confronting our faults and problems.."

Gray points out that actual conspiracies such as the British-French-Israeli 1956 Suez Crisis encourage speculation and creation of imagined conspiracies. After the 1967 war, conspiracy theories in the Middle East became popular. As with all conspiracy theories the truth takes a back seat to the story. The war was perceived as a conspiracy by Israel and the US or its opposite: A Soviet plot to bring Egypt into the Soviet sphere of influence. Thomas Friedman notes the numerous conspiracy theories concerning the Lebanese civil war. They "were usually the most implausible, wild-eyed conspiracy theories one could imagine .. Israelis, the Syrians, the Americans, the Soviets, or Henry Kissinger; anyone but the Lebanese, in the most elaborate plots to disrupt Lebanon's naturally tranquil state."

Interfaith marriage, especially between Hindus and Muslims, has often been a bone of contention and has resulted in communal riots in India. Love Jihad, also called Romeo Jihad, widely regarded as a conspiracy theory, is an activity under which young Muslim boys and men are said to reportedly target young girls belonging to non-Muslim communities for conversion to Islam by feigning love. What is interesting to me is that even when presented with evidence that Muslims ignore the facts in order to perpetuate their own account. Understanding that the Islamic world has the highest illiteracy rates in the world it's easy to see why Muslims jump at the latest conspiracy theory no matter how outlandish. When the Islamic power brokers control the media, the common man has no choice but to accept the official narrative as fact because they don't know any difference.

Iran's Baha'i minority has been the target of persecution since its inception in 1863 and has been the subject of various conspiracy theories entailing involvement with foreign or hostile powers. Iranian government officials and others have claimed that Baha'is have had ties to foreign powers, and were agents of Russian imperialism, British colonialism, American expansionism, Zionism, as well as being responsible for the policies of the previous Shah of Iran. In Iran, a short book entitled **Khatirat-e Kenyaz-e Dolgoruki** (*The Memoirs of Count Dolgoruki*) details a popular conspiracy theory that the Baha'i goal is to destroy Islam. Attributed to the mid-19th century, it was, in fact, written in the 1930s or 1940s and is filled with historical errors, notably mistakes about the real Count Dolgorukov, a Russian diplomat. These accusations against the Baha'is have been disputed, and described as misconceptions, with no basis in historical fact. However, it doesn't matter what the facts are. The Iranian government has an agenda and nothing will get in the way, not even the truth.

Eurabia: Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci, proposed an anti-Arab conspiracy theory they said was hatched between a cadre of French elites within the European Economic Community and the Arab League in the mid-1970s to form a strategic alliance against the United States and Israel, and to turn Europe into an appendage of the Islamic world.

Exposing Anti-Muslim "Conspiracies"

Elan Journo from the Objective Standard, Vol. 1, No. 1.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini understood the astonishing power that conspiracy theories have over the minds of Muslims. After Islamic fundamentalists seized and occupied the Grand Mosque of Mecca in 1979, Khomeini declared that America and its “corrupt colony, Israel,” were really pulling the strings behind the takeover of the mosque. There followed an upsurge of violent anti-Americanism in Libya, Turkey, India, Bangladesh, Thailand, the Philippines, and Pakistan; in Islamabad, a mob burned down the U.S. embassy.

The destructive influence of anti-Muslim conspiracy theories, though, is graver than the concrete damage caused by rampaging mobs. Suffusing the cultural atmosphere of the Arab–Islamic world, such theories project the fiction that Muslims, their values, and their culture are beleaguered. By doing so, these theories both express and foment hostility toward the supposed enemies of Islam: America, Israel, and the West in general. Conspiracy theories instill and sustain in the public mind rationalizations for waging war in defense of Islam and for rejecting the values of the West. Ideals such as political and economic freedom thus face an arduous struggle to take root in the Middle East even though poverty and despots control the hearts and minds of the Middle East.

Perhaps the most notorious and prevalent anti-Muslim conspiracy theory is *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*. Originating in Russia in the early 1902, this tract purports to reveal the nefarious secret plans of a Jewish sect to undermine the economy, democracies, health, family life, and morality of non-Jews. These elders allegedly seek a monopoly on international finance and thereby to achieve world domination. The Protocols was exposed as forgery based on a parody from an 1864 political satire by Maurice Joly. Philip Graves brought this plagiarism to light in a series of articles in *The Times* in 1921, the first published evidence that the Protocols was not an authentic document. This debunking came at roughly the time that Arabic translations of it began appearing in the Middle East. That it has long been discredited in the West has done nothing to diminish the appeal of *The Protocols* to Muslims. As has been mentioned several times, the truth is not important. The ends justify the means.

Instead, the book has become a fixture of the culture’s intellectual life. It has been reissued many times in Arabic, and there have been more translations and editions of it in Arabic than in any other language. Gamal Abdel Nasser, while he was president of Egypt, gave away copies to foreign journalists; Saudi Arabia’s government likewise distributed copies to visitors and at Saudi Arabian embassies; and Khomeini’s regime brought the book to prominence in Iran. The charter of Hamas, the Islamic terrorist group, explicitly refers to *The Protocols* and recycles its mythic claims. The book has been included in the curriculum of schools in Jordan, and for a period in the 1970s it became a nonfiction best seller in Lebanon. Major television adaptations of it have appeared in Egypt, Syria, and Pakistan. A recent Iranian television program posing as a documentary claimed to prove how, in accordance with *The Protocols*, Jews control Hollywood and use movies to advance a pro-Zionist agenda.

The fabrication of new conspiracy theories, conveying the same general theme expressed in *The Protocols*, continues briskly among Christians and Communists alike: The genocide in Sudan; the bombings on the London underground; and the attacks of September 11, 2001, were supposedly orchestrated by America (or Israel or the Elders of Zion) to defame, undermine, and injure Muslims. Among many people the conspiracies from the Muslims about how they are persecuted by the world has begun to fall on deaf ears as we are starting to see that many of their woes are of their own making; including the anti-Muslim conspiracies. For example, they complain that the Israelis are bombing Gaza without provocation. Then we see that Hamas is continually bombing Israel, it’s hard to believe their claims of innocence. As long as there are gullible idiots in the West who fall for Muslim narrative, Muslims will continue to advance their persecution agenda.

While political and intellectual leaders in the Arab–Islamic world comprehend the power of anti-Muslim conspiracy theories, in the West this malignant phenomenon remains a mystery to the uninformed, gullible, and illiterate. Why do patently false stories, harping on supposedly omnipresent threats, proliferate among Muslims? The answer reveals a profound and ominous insight into the Arab–Islamic mind. I worked in for a year at a private school for the Saudi Royal family and other leaders in the Saudi community. Every time there as a blip on the international radar screen, supposedly educated Arabs would come to accuse me

of helping the Israelis. By law I couldn't say anything in rebuttal for fear of going to jail. So I just shook my head at their ignorance and let them get it out of their system.

In the *Hidden Hand: Middle East Fears of Conspiracy*, Daniel Pipes, a Middle East scholar and columnist, sheds light on a broad range of conspiracy theories and their purveyors. The book, published a decade ago, is valuable as a field guide, because it points to evidence that is important for understanding why conspiracy theories flourish in the Middle East. Pipes presents several case studies and goes on to catalogue the general features of conspiracy theories and their authors. His explanation for the abundance of conspiracy theories is enlightening.

With the help of Pipes' findings, we can uncover the fundamental cause by exploring the character of the Conspiracists mentality, its musings, and motivations. A clue to that cause is the Conspiracists brazen contempt for facts. The Conspiracists tales typically contradict facts. The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion claims to reveal a plot based on little more than racist hostility and innuendo; such as the prominence of Jews in finance. The ridiculous conjectures about the 9/11 attacks arbitrarily concoct a bizarre stew of falsehoods such as the notion that the Bush administration staged the attacks to justify a war. From the scores of alleged plots that Pipes discusses, one can discern a recurring theme that unites them. The theories convey a specific belief to which the Islamic Conspiracists is committed: that forces are working to impoverish, corrupt, subjugate, and destroy the Muslim world.

The Conspiracists emotional commitment to this belief renders evidence and logic to the contrary irrelevant.²³ Scraps of pseudo-evidence, if offered at all, are afterthoughts invoked for the sake of convincing others and rational their violent behaviors against the US, Israel, and Europe. Inconvenient facts are dismissed. As Pipes observes: Focusing on what fits his thesis, the conspiracy theorist ignores everything else. A ferocious war took place in Afghanistan that lasted a decade and pitted the U.S.-backed mujahidin forces against the Soviets and their allies.

The Khomeini regime conveniently disregarded this major conflict on its border and insisted on U.S.-Soviet collusion in Afghanistan. In its fantastical interpretation, the great powers had joined together in a plot "to sow discord among the mujahidin" with the ultimate aim of breaking Muslim solidarity. Muslims also disregarded the assistance the US gave the Bosnian Muslims in Bosnian-Serbian Conflict. Nor did they acknowledge the help the US gave Kosovo and Montenegro Muslims. They completely disregard the facts that the US and Europeans have provided assistance to African and Asian Muslims from natural disasters, famines, drought, and epidemics. The Americans and Europeans have given Muslims refugee status and these same refugees have returned the favor by killing those who gave them refuge from the storms of war. Like the American left they only focus on the rubbish that advances their agenda. Truth be damned.

These theories consist of allegations divorced from reality; they contain gaping holes and evade obvious facts; the result is a heap of arbitrary and contradictory details vaguely advancing the recurring theme. As more allegations of conspiracy are added, the theories become more densely complex and more bizarrely contradictory. The Conspiracist shields his theory from that which to a rational person would be clear counterevidence. His criterion for considering something as supportive of his claim is wildly permissive, but the standard for what would overturn his claims is stringent. And so, not even the patently self-sacrificial actions of Washington can shake the presumption of surreptitious American aggression against Muslims.

The CIA operations during the Soviet-Afghan War, the First Gulf War, Operations Provide Comfort, Operation Provide Promise, Operation Northern Watch, Operation Southern Watch, Operation Restore Hope, Operation Deny Flight, Operation Desert Strike, Operation Joint Guard, Operation Silver Wake, Operation Desert Fox, Operation Infinite Reach, Operation Allied Force, all operations to aid the Muslims. To show their appreciation they initiated the bombing of the Trade Center Twin Towers on September 9, 2001. There was nothing for America to gain in the "humanitarian" deployment of troops to Africa and the Middle East. U.S. troops were sent to save the lives of foreigners, but according to Muslim Conspiracists the missions were nothing but a trick. Pipes reported that a Jordanian newspaper saw mass

²³ Remember Adam Savage's quote, "I reject your reality and substitute my own."

starvation as a new U.S. “scheme aimed at creating further tension” to justify “the dispatch of its war machine.” Iraqi media accused the U.S. government of having “exploited the Somali people’s tragedy” in Somalia and giving American soldiers a “license to kill at will.” The People’s Arab and Islamic Congress, a fundamentalist group, claimed the U.S. purpose was not feeding people but just the reverse: “genocide” against the Somali people. The Conspiracists also saw the other operations as a means for the Crusaders of the Great Satan to further exploit and persecute the Muslims in Africa and the Middle East.

Certain governments regarded such missions as acts of U.S. colonialism, and so did the Iranian-backed Hezbollah terrorist group. According to this organization, “on the pretext of providing food aid and achieving peace, the United States is conducting a new colonial policy in a world approaching the 21st century, using U.N. institutions for the plan.” America’s 1995 military effort in Bosnia, hardly a mission serving U.S. self-interest, was similarly seen as a ruse. Although U.S. bombing raids on Serbs benefited Muslims, Muammar Quaddafi of Libya maintained that only “the naive and simple-minded” would be fooled into believing that this was Washington’s goal. The actual purpose, he explained, was American “revenge on Yugoslavia, the leader of neutrality and the Non-Aligned Movement.”

To orchestrate such massive feints the plotters must be, and so are depicted as, awesomely powerful. There is, seemingly, no limit to the cunning and intricacy of the conspirators’ schemes. The unseen leadership, claims one Conspiracist, “chooses its agents, puppets, and pawns well in advance and motivates and molds them by many methods.” Pipes quotes a young Western-educated Jordanian businessman who explains why Israel expelled a group of four hundred Palestinians in 1992:

“[Israel] created the Hamas organization in order to foil Palestinian nationalism. But Israel’s grip on the leadership was slipping. So, the Israelis selected a new group of leaders and, together with several hundred decoys, shipped them off to Lebanon, where they will become heroes of the struggle. Eventually the Israelis will allow them to return, where they will form the new Hamas power structure. Then Israel will once again be fully in control.”

The plotters are able to do all this in part because they have billions of dollars and copious resources at their disposal, including the “media, industry, technology, oil, military hardware, and the intelligence agencies led by Mossad and CIA.” One of my students in Saudi Arabia even told me that if the US and Europe hadn’t helped Israel, the Arab nations would have wiped them out. The plotters’ agents abound. Israel, allegedly, has “eleven million ambassadors, spies, financiers and company representatives in the world” who, presumably, work covertly.²⁴ But even Muslims, including heads of state, have been accused of being covert Jews or otherwise in league with the plotters. The Egyptian Islamist thinker Sayyid Qutb alleged that there is a “massive army of agents in the form of professors, philosophers, doctors and researchers, ...also writers, poets, scientists and journalists carrying Muslim names because they are of Muslim descent” but working for the Zionist cause.

What motivates the purportedly omnipotent plotters’ hostility toward Muslims? Pipes identifies many motives: wealth, hatred for Islam, lust for power, sheer hatred of democracy, capitalism, constitutional human rights. Commenting on the abundance of conspiracies in revolutionary Iran, Pipes writes that “Despite their mortal differences, the shah, his leftist opposition and Khomeini all agreed that the West seeks to steal Iranian resources. Mohammad Reza Pahlavi worried that ‘as Iran continued to grow and prosper, we would become an increasingly attractive prize for foreign predators.’” Followers of Khomeini claimed that European and American predators are bent on “devouring the rich resources of the Middle East.”

The fundamental factor underlying the motives ascribed to conspirators is a moral educated WAG²⁵. The two dominant groups of plotters: Jews/ Israelis/ Zionists and Europeans/ Americans/ Crusaders. They are all non-Muslim and materialistic, and therefore immoral and hostile to Muslims. Sayyid Qutb explained how the un-Islamic predators believe that the most basic needs of man are those

²⁴ This is very good for a nation of 8M people where only 6M of them are Jews. (6,119,000 according to the 2016 census and 14M worldwide.)

²⁵ Wild Ass Guess

shared with animals, “food, shelter and sex.” Indeed, opposition to the teachings of Islam is frequently emphasized by Muslim fundamentalists as the prime motive for conspiracies. Khomeini claimed that “The Jews and their foreign backers are opposed to the very foundations of Islam and wish to establish Jewish domination throughout the world. Since they are a cunning and resourceful group of people, I fear, god forbid! They may one day achieve their goal.” The supposed enemies of Islam purportedly seek sometimes to Judaize or Christianize the Middle East, and sometimes to act out of a hatred that is an end in itself. Sometimes the “they” who plot remain unnamed; that they conspire against Muslims is enough of an identification.

For these reasons, conspiracy theories are an effective tool for deflecting blame and have been so used. A given regime can invoke a conspiracy implicating foreign interests in order to explain away a crippled economy or some military debacle. In the Iran–Iraq War, for example, both sides alleged that the other was the instrument of a Western/un-Islamic conspiracy. According to Baghdad, Iran was encouraged to launch the war to hobble Iraq’s economy and keep it from modernizing, thus protecting the economic interests of the West; according to Teheran, the war was an arrogant, blasphemous attack against faith engineered by the impious West. Political leaders such as the last shah of Iran, Nasser of Egypt, and Saddam Hussein have frequently originated conspiracy theories to rationalize their failures. The use of conspiracy theories to shrug off responsibility is pervasive and suggests the explanation for their poverty, illiteracy, and totalitarian dictatorships.

Noting that “Arabs and Iranians today blame others for everything from a poor tomato crop to a military defeat,” conspiracy theories serve as a means of coping with inconvenient truths. Muslims find solace by blaming their problems on the evils of the West. However, Pipes observes, “Muslims did not resort to conspiracy theories or other facile explanations to account for their failings until sometime after the year 1800;” in ancient and pre-modern Islamic culture, there was a scarcity of conspiracy theories. This fact is crucial, because it implies that some historical change, some devastating calamity, is responsible for the burst of conspiracy theories in the last two centuries.

That pivotal event was the Islamic world’s awakening, at the close of the 18th century, to the fact of its weak and impoverished status relative to the West. After centuries of basking in the fading afterglow of imperial glory, after centuries of looking down on Europeans as barbarians unworthy of consideration or fear, Muslims found themselves in a world that had somehow gone awry. As the people of Allah, they were promised worldly success; however, they were, and continue to be, mired in stagnant poverty and military inferiority compared with the Western infidels. And so, they dream up their conspiracy theories to rationalize their failures on the world stage.

A cultural crisis ensued “as the Muslims’ traditional sense of superiority vis-à-vis Christian Europeans rapidly turned into pervasive insecurity. An official at the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem captured the plaintive quality of this situation: “Before we were masters of the world, and now, we’re not even masters of our own mosques!” Rather than admit error and adopt rational ideas, many in the Middle East seek ways to justify their traditional beliefs. Their fall from grace, they felt, must be the result of Western treachery: “...were it not for Western intrigues against Islam,” they tell themselves, “Muhammad’s people would still enjoy their former superiority over Europe.” Hence the embrace of conspiracy theories to blame the failures of Islamic culture on outside forces. Pipes writes that this response “reveals more about the Conspiracist unwillingness to take responsibility for himself than about the actual behavior of others.” I saw this when I lived in Saudi Arabia. They had an excuse for everything. My student rationalized their low marks. It was my fault because I was an American and hated Arabs. They couldn’t acknowledge their pattern of cheating, plagiarism, or laziness.

To understand the mass appeal of such fictions, recall their fantastic character. The data that Pipes has gathered suggest a point that remains implicit in his discussion. These conspiracy theories are, in effect, a superficially secular vocabulary for an essentially superstitious outlook. The Conspiracists speculate omnipresent, mysterious, malicious, and awesomely powerful forces that leave no fingerprints and that wield unlimited resources; apparently, nothing is impossible to them. Instead of calling those omnipresent forces jinn (spirits) or the “evil eye,” the Conspiracists conceive transfer those demons to

America or Israel or Britain as the evil force possessing the powers of spirits. And so, these nations allegedly have unlimited powers to wreak havoc and imperil Muslim values.

Conspiracy theories, in short, are infused with mysticism. The theories are not merely perversely irrational, they are contemptuous of the faculty of reason as man's means of knowledge. The Conspiracists "theorizes" in order to bolster a preexisting belief that he regards as true without evidence and in defiance of logic. The absence of evidence, to a Conspiracist, is not a weakness in the theory. Evidence is not his standard. Though it is unsupported by facts or logic, the conspirator steadfastly clings to his belief. The source of his belief is faith or the blind acceptance of some idea sustained by feeling in the absence or defiance of evidence. This philosophy of knowledge founded on unsubstantiated belief, is a fundamental tenet of Islam, as it is of all religions. And this is the very key to understanding the Conspiracists mentality.

But observe that a basic supernaturalism and a commitment to faith are the common, recurring features of these conspiracy theories. That Islam and Zoroastrianism have changed little over the centuries may well be true. Yet it is the continuity of religion's monopoly on the lives and minds of Muslims that is telling. The five pillars of wisdom turn the Muslim into a slave to irrational dogma. There are no free-thinking Muslims.

The reaction of Muslims to the unpleasant reality confronting them, during their historical awakening and ever since, is colored by their fundamental view of reality and of man's place in it; colored, in other words, by their philosophy of life as dictated by the five pillars of Islam. The Muslim world's bitter realization of inferiority was first felt on the battlefield more than two hundred years ago and continues to fester. As one historian observed, for Muslims "military defeat was not defeat only in a worldly sense; it also brought into doubt the truth of the Muslim revelation." Such is an explanation why some Muslims leave the faith and become atheists, yet their hatred of the US, Israel, and Europe, remains unabated.

Only 40 years previously the Arab was desert Bedou. He tended his herds of camels. He revered his traditions and his religion because they gave him meaning to his life. Life was simple but Islam mingled with traditions, gave the bedou meaning to life and answered his questions about the universe. The Conspiracist's belief in the existence of malicious plots seeking to thwart his values, his culture, and his religion is not merely an echo of a superstitious outlook. His entrenched belief and the fear that follows from it are consequences of the fact that he scorns reason and takes faith seriously.

The man who shuns facts and logic has abandoned the means of achieving values and dealing with the world successfully. By relinquishing his means of gaining real knowledge, he renders himself ignorant of the workings of the real world; thus, the world comes to feel like an alien realm to him, a realm in which he does not belong. He rightly feels a lack of control over his life; he feels helpless because, given his faith based beliefs, he is. He regards the world as hostile to his life because his cognitive orientation cripples his pursuit of ideals. He discounts rational explanations identifying earthly causes to which he could learn to react, and instead, imagines supernatural ones that are unavoidably out of his control.

Taking faith seriously, he looks at the wealth of the West and rather than ask, "What knowledge is required to produce such technological advancement and wealth?" He wonders resentfully, "by what stratagems did the West appropriate that wealth?" The presumption is that understanding the world is irrelevant; success or power or wealth comes as a gift from the gods or else is stolen from those who are its rightful heirs. Is it any wonder then, that so many Muslims become socialists and fascists?

The Conspiracists believes that his faith should bring him more success than the infidels, but it is they who surpass him. To contemplate the possibility of error here is to contemplate the inefficacy of faith, which, of course, his religion forbids; thus, he is driven to deflect blame and to conjure alternate explanations. Pipes rightly identifies a drive to find excuses, but it is a consequence of the justified belief in faith. The glaringly irrational excuses are an expression of mysticism taken seriously.

Because the Conspiracists view does not require evidence for belief, he can arbitrarily cast himself as the righteous victim of conspiracies. He freely paints Americans, Israelis, and Europeans as conspiring evildoers because, judged according to Islamic ethics, they are irreligious and thus could not be otherwise. From this irrational "explanation" flows an irrational solution: Since devotion really is the means to strength and prosperity, Muslims must rededicate themselves accordingly and confront the infidels. "Killing them where ever one may find them." (Quran Surah 2:191)

This perverse mentality is hardly confined to Muslims. The militant subjectivism of Muslim Conspiracists is matched, if not surpassed, by that of Christianity. Conspiracy theories of the kind that thrive today emerged during the Church's domination over Europe, in the era of the Crusades. Christians scorned Jews as infidels and thus enemies of the faith; this evaluation spawned accusations of Jewish conspiracies against Christians, hence the fears that Jews desecrated Christian religious objects, hence the calumny that Jews murdered Christian children to use their blood in rituals, hence the charge that they schemed to poison wells and thereby wipe out Christians. This line of anti-Jewish conspiracies has endured in the West and has left a deep imprint on the Arab-Islamic world, where conspiracy theories have burgeoned.

The widespread appeal of conspiracies, not just among fundamentalists but also among ostensibly secular Muslims, is revealing of the intellectual character of the Middle East. As one observed, the presumption of conspiracy is such that for an Iranian to ignore it is "(a) to indicate ignorance of the superior forces around oneself or one's nation and (b) to demonstrate the stupidity, naiveté or insensitivity not to perceive the hidden motive of others."

The public's belief in that presumption enables political leaders such as Arafat, Nasser, Assad, and Hussein; and jihadi leaders such as bin-Laden, al-Baghdadi, and the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem to promulgate conspiracy theories, confident that their arbitrary assertions will be taken seriously. This is a keen indication of the degree to which the widespread acceptance of faith informs the thinking even of those who would consider themselves nonreligious.

The avid consumption of conspiracy theories contradicts the optimistic assumptions of many in the West about the intellectual climate and the prospects for civilized society in the Middle East. Although large numbers of the Muslim public may travel by car rather than on mule, wear blue jeans and business suits rather than flowing robes, eat at mcdonald's rather than at traditional food stands, what they believe remains profoundly pre-scientific, mystical, and dangerous. They may watch television (perhaps even beamed in by satellite) but what they hear on news programs all too often are conspiracy theories echoing an outlook that is hostile to facts, logic, and reason. They want to regard Israel or the United States as a villain, and therefore they do, (The Great Satan and the Little Satan) regardless of what either country actually says or does. They want to regard diplomacy as a pretense, and therefore they do. They want to see themselves as noble victims, and therefore they do. The consumers of conspiracy theories accept these stories because the theme complements their basic philosophic outlook because they take faith seriously.

For U.S. policy-makers and others concerned with the Middle East, this presents a formidable challenge. A culture that laps up conspiracy theories is not only susceptible to political manipulation by dictators and demagogues, it is also stirred to action by calls to defend its faith and culture from the alleged exploitation and victimization from the West. Islamic fundamentalists have found and will continue to find many eager and gullible recruits. New volunteers joining the Islamist jihad against the West are streaming into Iraq from across the Middle East and around the world.

The Conspiracists mentality is widespread and entrenched in the Arab-Islamic world. What engenders and sustains it is the blind belief in faith; armed and unleashed, this mentality is a real threat to the civilized world. Yet the leaders in the West and the US continue to grovel to the Muslims thinking that if they could just have group hug and be nice, the Muslims will stop hating them and we will finally have world peace.

Whenever members of other religions especially Christians bring up the barbarity of the jihadis, invariably Muslims counter with, "What about the Crusades?." Yes, what about the crusades? Yes, there was barbarity on both sides from the 12th to the 14th centuries. Muslims and Christians both killed each other and Jews with extreme prejudice. But that was then. Since then the Christian Church for the most part has gone through a transformation and has become more peaceful and engaged in good works trying to improve the lot of humanity. The Muslims? Muslims are kept in ignorance by their governments and their Imams. They are kept in poverty except for the oil sheiks. They are fed a constant buffet of hatred for the West, the US and Israel. They are brainwashed that destroying democracy, capitalism, constitutional governments, and anyone else who doesn't believe the way they do is looked upon favorably by Allah. They are taught that blowing themselves up in the cause of jihad is a good thing. In fact, it seems to me that the religion of peace has not changed since the Crusades. They still practice barbarity in the cause of jihad

and building the International Caliphate. Where other religions have tried to become more peaceful, Muslims are still barbarians. It's a tossup who has killed more people, Muslims or Atheists.

Anti-Armenian conspiracy: According to The Irish Times, "everywhere from taxi cabs to cabinet offices, conspiracy theories thrive in Azerbaijan and most involve Armenia." on February 28, 2012 during his speech at a conference on socioeconomic development program, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev stated "our main enemies are Armenians of the world and the hypocritical and corrupt politicians under their control. The politicians who don't wish to see the truth and are engaged in denigrating Azerbaijan in different parts of the world. Members of some parliaments, certain political figures, etc. Who live on the money of the Armenian lobby." One must not forget that the Azerbaijanis are Muslims and subject to the same superstitions and dogmatic mentality as other Islamic countries.

Samuel A. Weems (1936–2003), an American writer and a disbarred lawyer from Arkansas, was allegedly paid by the Turkish lobby in the United States. In his book, Armenia: *The Secrets of a Christian Terrorist State* (2002), he argued in favor of the idea that the Armenian Genocide was a gigantic fraud designed to fleece Christian nations out of billions of dollars²⁶. He also claimed that the Armenian Church was a state-owned entity that organizes and funds terrorist attacks (including ASALA²⁷) and that Armenians had infiltrated the United States. His book states that Armenian Diaspora communities in the United States and throughout the world are actually colonies and political bases intended to gain money and support for the Armenian Republic. The book also states that Armenia is founded on land stolen from Muslims and that Armenians have perpetrated enormous massacres against Turks and Azeris, both recently (in the Nagorno-Karabakh War²⁸) and in the past. He has been quoted as saying "The religion of the Armenians is fake" and that his research shows "that there is clearly an Armenian Master Plan that generates Armenian hate around the world." Prior to his death in 2003, he was preparing to write a second book claiming the international Armenian community collaborated with and supported Nazi Germany.

Davud Imanov, an Azerbaijani filmmaker, expanded on this theory in a series of films called the Echo of Sumgait where he accused Armenians, Russians and Americans of plotting together against Azerbaijan and claiming that the Karabakh movement was a plot by the CIA to destroy the Soviet Union. Ah, yes, the US and the CIA, the people everyone loves to hate and on which to blame their troubles.

Two nations often involved in apocalyptic conspiracy theories are Israel and Iraq. The former is the location of both the Temple Mount and Armageddon (Megiddo), places seen as important in prophecy. The latter is the ancient location of Babylon, which also figures in the Book of Revelation. During the Gulf War, some suggested that Saddam Hussein had ordered the excavation and re-population of the city of Babylon, thus casting Saddam as an Antichrist figure. Other interpretations have held that "Babylon" in the Book of Revelation refers to another mighty nation, such as the Roman Empire, the Vatican (Rome) and the Catholic Church, or more recently the Soviet Union or even the United States of America.

"Babylon" and racist oppression: Some Rastafari maintain that a white racist patriarchy ("Babylon") controls the world in order to oppress the African race. They believe that Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia did not die when it was reported in 1975, and that the racist, white media ("Babylon") propagated that rumor in order to squash the Rastafari movement and its message of overthrowing Babylon. Other Rastafari, however, believe in peace and unity, and interpret Babylon as a metaphor for the established "system" that oppresses (or "down presses," in Rasta terminology) groups such as Africans and the world's poor.

²⁶ There is a pattern coming to life here where the conspirators blame the holocaust of the Jews, the Armenians, and other groups on the victims.

²⁷ The Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA): was a leftist Armenian militant organization, that operated from 1975 to 1997.

²⁸ Nagorno-Karabakh is a landlocked region in the South Caucasus, lying between Lower Karabakh and Zangezur and covering the southeastern range of the Lesser Caucasus mountains. Nagorno-Karabakh is a disputed territory, internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but is governed by the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, a de facto independent state with Armenian ethnic majority.

African American Conspiracy Theories

Conspiracy theory, urban legend, and rumor have played an important role in African American culture from its beginnings. Recent decades have seen a spate of conspiracy theories emerge from the African American community concerning everything from the origin of AIDS to supposedly racist clothes designers and restaurant owners. Whatever the possible validity of these stories, these conspiracy theories have served as a way of voicing frustration and suspicion in an increasingly complex social world, one in which racism may not be condoned by the government, but is still acutely felt by many in the black community. But such stories are not products solely of their time; they emerge out of a tradition that began with the first contact between Africans and Europeans.

As folklorist Patricia Turner notes in her book *I Heard It through the Grapevine*, a study of the role of rumor and legend in the African American community, the telling of conspiracy-minded stories has been a central way for blacks (and whites) to understand their circumstances. At the outset of the slave trade, for example, Africans who were taken aboard slave ships had difficulty comprehending both their immediate situation and their captors' intentions. The one explanation they found plausible was that these strange-looking white men were cannibals searching for food. Likewise, the Europeans presumed that all Africans must be cannibals, given their seemingly primitive nature.

From this basis was born a long line of anecdotes, rumors, and beliefs (many of them well founded) among African Americans about the animosity that at least some whites bore toward them, and their powerlessness in the social, economic, and political systems in which they found themselves. In particular, a theme that emerges from the earliest rumors about European cannibalism and continues in recent years through the conspiracy theories about the spread of crack cocaine is the understanding that the black (usually male) body is a site of contention between blacks and whites.

Historical Context for Conspiracy Theories

The events of U.S. history have provided a context in which such beliefs make sense: the institution of chattel slavery itself, in which the black body was the property of a white owner and could be worked and physically punished until it gave out; lynchings that became nearly common events in the South in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (often sparked by a suspicion that a black male had had, or intended to have, sexual relations with a white woman); the stories emerging from World War II of black soldiers being given particularly dangerous assignments more regularly than their white counterparts; the Tuskegee experiments in which black males were intentionally infected with syphilis; the willingness of law enforcement officers in the South not only to deny rights to blacks, but also to attack demonstrators with fire hoses and dogs during the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s; the disproportionate number of poor blacks sent to fight in Vietnam; and the ongoing incidents of police violence against blacks, particularly in the inner cities. In these cases, it isn't simply that blacks are the victims of racism, but that this racism fuels institutionalized physical attacks against individual African Americans, attacks that often end in death. The assassinations of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr., in the 1960s, as well as the Rodney King beating in 1991, have served as representative examples of the violence that may befall blacks who seem to defy or challenge the system.

A Century of Conspiracies the U.S. Civil War and the end of chattel slavery brought increased interaction among African Americans and whites, and with it an increasing number of conspiracy theories among both groups. In fact, one of the most persistent conspiracy theories to circulate in the African American community emerged at the time of emancipation. The threat of possible black ownership of southern land was used by the Confederacy to rally support for its cause among whites. Belief in this possibility spread so widely that by the time the war ended, many former slaves themselves were convinced that the federal government would supply them with a parcel of land. The promise of "40 acres and a mule" to each freed slave was never actually made, but the belief that the government both made and broke this promise became so entrenched in African American culture that it continues to be cited as evidence of the systematic betrayal of African Americans by the U.S. government.

With the abolition of slavery came greater mobility and opportunities for African Americans. Yet, much of the underlying racism and animosity that had allowed slavery to exist in the first place remained. African Americans often found themselves in communities that did not welcome them. Inevitably, racial tensions arose from the fear, suspicion, and animosity felt by both blacks and whites in the postslavery United States.

The migration of many southern blacks during the late 1800s and early 1900s to the large urban areas of the North seems to have sparked a number of incidents in which conspiracy theory and racially motivated violence fueled each other. The riots of East St. Louis, Missouri (1917), and Chicago, Illinois (1919), were both precipitated in part by rumors of racial violence. In St. Louis, a meeting of white laborers concerned about losing their jobs to African Americans led to violence when rumors circulated that a black man had recently killed or assaulted whites (the rumors ranged from an accidental shooting of a white man to the murder of two white girls). A month of sporadic violence followed, with both blacks and whites believing that the other group was planning a wholesale massacre. When the violence erupted into a full-scale race riot, a large number of blacks were killed and mutilated by white mobs. The exact number of fatalities was itself the subject of conspiracy theories: many blacks felt that the official death toll was kept low to minimize the savagery of white violence, while some whites felt blacks were trying to inflate the list of fatalities by claiming that people who had fled the city had been killed and disposed of.

Similar rumors of violence sparked a race riot in Chicago in 1919. After weeks of growing racial tension and suspicion, violence erupted when a black boy drowned at a segregated beach when he accidentally drifted into the white swimming area. Some white bathers threw stones to drive him away, and although there was no evidence that any of these hit the boy, the rumor circulated among African Americans at the scene that the boy had been killed by rock-throwing whites while the police looked on. Several days of violence followed.

Race riots also emerged in Detroit, Michigan, in 1943, as well as Harlem, New York, in 1935 and 1943. Again, rumors of assault, rape, or murder of a member of one group by individuals of the other race served as the spark for the violence. And again, the rumors were found to be either baseless, or at least exaggerated.

These cases of rumors precipitating violence suggest that conspiracy theories have provided a way of giving shape and specificity to free-floating racial anxieties within local communities. However, these rumors also contributed to conspiracy theory becoming a larger theme in African American political discourse. As Turner points out in her work, even blacks who did not have any specific knowledge of the riots in St. Louis, Chicago, Detroit, Harlem, or other similar events still were familiar with the themes expressed in the rumors that emerged from them: that the lives and bodies of blacks were not valued by whites and that violence by whites against blacks was seen as acceptable by society.

From early in the twentieth century, various African American leaders and groups have used conspiracy theories to explain the larger subjection of blacks in U.S. society. Marcus Garvey, Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X, and Louis Farrakhan, among many others, have suggested that the social, political, and economic struggles facing blacks were the result of concerted efforts by the white majority to keep them from their rightful place in society. Such theories became accepted tenets of more militant groups such as the Nation of Islam and the Black Panther Party.

In the 1980s and 1990s, a series of conspiracy theories emerged from the African American community that suggested specific ways in which the racism of U.S. society at large was still affecting blacks. One genre of theory involved supposed ties between companies that catered to the black community and racist organizations, particularly the Ku Klux Klan. One conspiracy theory suggested that the Troop Sport clothing company, a manufacturer of sportswear that was popular in urban areas, was owned and run by the KKK. Versions of this theory suggested that tags or messages hidden on or in the clothing contained racist threats and slurs. The shoe manufacturer Reebok was also alleged to have racist ties. It was suggested that the producer of popular athletic shoes was owned or financially tied to the white government of South Africa and supporters of apartheid.

A related theory emerged in 1991, claiming that Liz Claiborne, the founder of the clothing company of the same name, had appeared on Oprah Winfrey's talk show and made racist comments. She was alleged to have suggested that she did not make clothes for black women because they could not wear the same sizes as white women and that she simply did not like the idea of making clothes for blacks. Although Liz Claiborne had never appeared on Winfrey's show (and was no longer associated with the clothing company at the time of the rumor's appearance), the allegations were repeated as fact by many, including film director Spike Lee, who called for a boycott of Liz Claiborne clothing by African American women. A nearly identical theory surfaced a few years later, replacing Liz Claiborne with Tommy Hilfiger

A second genre of conspiracy theory also suggested links between businesses catering to the black community and racists, but added the assertion that these companies were not simply exploiting African Americans economically but also were causing them physical harm. These included the longstanding urban legend that Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurants served rat meat to some customers. In this case, the allegation was that "Kentucky Fried Rat" was intentionally served to black customers.

Another fried chicken restaurant chain, Church's Fried Chicken, also became the subject of a conspiracy theory. It was suggested that the company (whose franchises were located primarily in urban areas and had a sizable black customer base) was owned by racist whites who added an ingredient to the chicken that would cause black men to become sterile. A parallel theory held that the makers of Tropical Fantasy, a low-cost soft drink marketed principally in largely black urban areas, was owned by the KKK and added an ingredient to its product that would sterilize or cause impotence in black men. Yet another rumor suggested that Kool cigarettes contained an additive that caused sterility in black men.

Although no evidence emerged to confirm these rumors, they remained popular beliefs among many African Americans. Many cited the Tuskegee experiments on black men as evidence that attacks on African American males, particularly in ways that directly affected their reproductive capacity, were a way in which whites attempted to limit or destroy the African American population.

The Government as Enemy: While the conspiracy theories involving private companies suggested ties between them and overtly racist organizations such as the KKK, other theories asserted that the U.S. government itself had genocidal ambitions against blacks. Such theories hark back to the time of institutionalized slavery when the government allowed African Americans to be bought and sold, as well as the "broken promise" of 40 acres and a mule. Contemporary visions of the government as the enemy of African Americans include the theory that the murders of several African American boys and young men in Atlanta from 1979 to 1981 were not the work of Wayne Williams, the black man accused and eventually convicted of the murders. These crimes were believed to have been part of a conspiracy planned by the Center for Disease Control, the FBI, and the CIA to collect interferon from the genitalia of black males for use in medical experiments (a theory that was deemed plausible by comedian/activist Dick Gregory and writer James Baldwin).

Other government-centered conspiracy legends include the allegations that poor black women who visit healthcare centers are routinely sterilized or given long-term birth-control implants without their knowledge, as a means of controlling the black population. A more popular belief is that the AIDS virus is part of a government plan to target the inner cities with a deadly disease to limit their populations. The most widely circulated of such theories is the charge that drugs (crack cocaine in particular) were purposely introduced to inner-city communities by government agencies as a means to destroy the black community.

Variations of each of these conspiracy theories suggest a wide range of government culpability. Those suggesting a weak link between the federal government and conspiracies against African Americans suggest that the government, while not actually creating the problem (e.g., introducing the HIV virus or crack cocaine into the black community as biological weapons), has willingly allowed these crises to run their course without attempting to solve the problem. As long as these phenomena are primarily affecting black Americans, the reasoning goes, the government is content to practice a type of malevolent neglect.

Versions of these theories that suggest the strongest possible connection between the government and attacks against African Americans hold that not only are such acts a willful attempt at genocide, but that government agencies are actually demonic forces of supernatural evil. One such theory alleged that a

numerological analysis of the name “Ronald Wilson Reagan” proves that the president was an agent of the Antichrist. Since each of his three names contains six letters (i.e., “666”), the president was linked to the mark of the beast.

Another genre of conspiracy theory involving oppression of African Americans by the government suggests that the government often attacks the black community indirectly through discrediting high-profile leaders or groups. Again, such theories have historical precedents. It is now known that the FBI routinely carried out surveillance on civil rights leaders, including Martin Luther King, Jr., and actively attempted to destabilize the Black Panthers. Such historical realities lend credence to suggestions that highly visible African Americans are subjected to disinformation campaigns conducted by largely white government agencies. When Washington, D.C., mayor Marion Barry was arrested in a drug-related sting operation, it was suggested that he had been “set up” by whites who wanted to embarrass and harass influential African Americans. Similar allegations surrounded the conviction of boxer Mike Tyson for rape.

During the riots in Los Angeles that followed the acquittal of the police officers charged with the beating of Rodney King, a widely-circulated rumor suggested that the Los Angeles police were allowing the riots to continue in order to make the black community look bad. Perhaps the best-known example of this genre of conspiracy theory is that of the arrest and trial of O. J. Simpson for the murder of his ex-wife. Polls showed that many blacks believed the former football star had been framed by racist members of the Los Angeles Police Department.

A recurring theme in African American conspiracy theories is the physicality of the attacks they describe. The black body itself is portrayed as the site of struggle. The attack may involve the clothes that cover the body (e.g., the Troop Sport, Reebok, and Liz Claiborne theories), or may attack the body itself (e.g., the Church’s Fried Chicken and Tropical Fantasy theories). The physical attacks range from indirect attempts at limiting the black population (as with the theories involving sterilization) to overt murder and genocide (as in the explanation for the Atlanta child murders and some versions of the AIDS-as-biological-weapon theory).

The theories involving crack cocaine and other drugs in some ways combine these various motifs. The drug trade economically exploits poor blacks. It also leads to their death in many cases (through overdoses, drug-related crime, etc.). Finally, it provides an excuse for institutional control of the black body, such as the incarceration of large numbers of African Americans (mostly young males) and mandatory drug tests for inner-city mothers as a prerequisite for prenatal care.

The Popularity and Ramifications of Conspiracy Theory: Surveys suggest that conspiracy theories of one sort or another are taken seriously by a significant percentage of the African American population. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference conducted a survey in 1991 in which 35 percent of the respondents believed that AIDS was a form of genocide, and another 30 percent said they were not sure. A poll done by the New York Times and WCBS-TV found that 77 percent of the black respondents felt that there was at least some truth to the allegation that the government targeted black elected officials for investigations as a way to discredit them. The same poll showed that 70 percent of black respondents believed the government intentionally allowed drugs into urban, largely black neighborhoods as a way of harming those who lived there.

The ramifications of this popularity of conspiracy theories among many African Americans are a point of debate among those who have studied the phenomenon. For some, the distortions and untruths they see at the heart of many such theories are stumbling blocks to true social and political progress. Conspiracy theories undermine the sense of empowerment and responsibility necessary to solve the actual problems. Occasionally, such as in the case of AIDS, the suspicion and misinformation communicated in conspiracy theories can have disastrous effects on both individuals and the larger community.

Others argue that conspiracy theory is a cultural practice that has played an important role in the continuing struggle of African Americans to understand their place in a society that is often hostile. Racism, particularly in its institutionalized forms, has been a conspiracy of sorts that has targeted people of African descent in America from the earliest days of colonial settlement.

Specific conspiracy theories may or may not be supported by the evidence, but even those that are demonstrably false are mistaken only in their particulars. They accurately describe the situation many

blacks find themselves in and provide valuable social knowledge by making explicit (even if in a metaphorical manner) the very real forces of racism that must be recognized and overcome in order to succeed in society.

White genocide conspiracy theory is a white nationalist conspiracy theory that mass immigration, integration, miscegenation, low fertility rates and abortion are being promoted in predominantly white countries to deliberately turn them minority-white and hence cause white people to become extinct through forced assimilation. The phrase "Anti-racist is a code word for anti-white," coined by high-profile white nationalist Robert Whitaker, is commonly associated with the topic of white genocide. It has been spotted on billboards near Birmingham, Alabama and in Harrison, Arkansas. The conspiracy theory had already been purported in Nazi Germany by a pamphlet written for the "Research Department for the Jewish question" of Walter Frank's "Reich Institute" with the title "Are the White Nations Dying? The Future of the White and the Colored Nations in the Light of Biological Statistics."

Beliefs about the causes: in his White Genocide Manifesto, white supremacist David Lane made the claim that the government policies of many western countries had the intent of destroying white European culture and making White people an "extinct species." Lane, a founding member of the organization The Order, criticized race-mixing, abortion, homosexuality, the legal repercussions against those who "resist genocide" and also the "Zionist Occupation Government" that he said controls the U.S. and the other majority-white countries and encourages "white genocide." It is rooted in "doctrines of universalism both secular and religious" according to Lane, and it may have been a factor that led to the murder of anti-Nazi Jewish talk-show commentator Alan Berg in 1984. Prior to his murder, Berg regularly taunted racists on his show.

While opinions may vary on the underlying causes and origins of the phenomenon, Jewish influence, people who hate whites, and liberal political forces are commonly cited by white supremacists as being the main factors leading to a white genocide. This view is held by prominent figures such as David Duke, who cites Jews and "liberal political ideals" as the main cause. White nationalist Robert Whitaker, who coined the phrase "anti-racist is a code word for anti-white," uses "anti-White" to describe those whom he believes are responsible for the genocide of white people, and he has singled out Jews as a contributing force. However, the view that Jews are responsible for a white genocide is contested by other white supremacist figures, such as Jared Taylor.

The manifesto of far-right terrorist Anders Behring Breivik entitled 2083: A European Declaration of Independence makes frequent mention of an alleged ongoing genocide against white Europeans. Discussion threads on the white nationalist internet forum Stormfront often center around the theme of white people being subjected to genocidal policies by their governments.

The notion of racial purity, homogeneity, or "racial hygiene" is an underlying theme of the white genocide discourse and it has been used by people with a neo-Nazi and white supremacist background. The concept of white genocide has been popularized by the alt-right movement in the United States. Notable alt-right figures who promote the idea of a "white genocide" include Brittany Pettibone, and Mike Enoch.

Chapter 2. Politics, Government, New World Order and Secret Societies:

The reverse side of the Great Seal of the United States originated in 1776, contains the Latin phrase "novus ordo seclorum," appearing on the reverse side of the Great Seal since 1782 and on the back of the U.S. one-dollar bill since 1935, translates to "New Order of the Ages," and alludes to the beginning of an era where the United States of America is an independent nation-state; conspiracy theorists claim this is an allusion to the "New World Order."²⁹

Everlasting Lightbulb: Similar to the idea of Big Pharma keeping its disease curing drugs to itself, some people have theorized that the lightbulb industry is keeping the eternal glow of their everlasting lightbulbs from the masses simply to increase their profit margins.

The Federal Reserve Bank: The fundamental promise of a central bank like the Federal Reserve is economic stability. The theory is that manipulating the value of the currency allows financial booms to go higher, and crashes to be milder. If growth becomes speculative and unsustainable, the central bank can make the price of money go up and force some deleveraging of risky investments, again, promising to make the crashes milder. The period leading up to the American revolution was characterized by increasingly authoritarian legislation from England. Acts passed in 1764 had a particularly harsh effect on the previously robust colonial economy. The Sugar Act was in effect a tax cut on easily smuggled molasses, and a new tax on commodities that England more directly controlled trade overall. The navy would be used in increased capacity to enforce trade laws and collect duties. Perhaps even more significant than the militarization and expansion of taxes was the Currency Act passed later in the year 1764.

"The colonies suffered a constant shortage of currency with which to conduct trade. There were no gold or silver mines and currency could only be obtained through trade as regulated by Great Britain. Many of the colonies felt no alternative to printing their own paper money in the form of Bills of Credit." The result was a true free market of currency. Each bank competed, exchange rates fluctuated wildly, and merchants were hesitant to accept these notes as payment.

Of course, they didn't have 24-hour digital Forex markets. England's response was to seize control of the colonial money supply; forbidding banks, cities, and colony governments from printing their own. This law, passed so soon after the Sugar Act, started to really bring revolutionary tension inside the colonies to a higher level. American bankers had learned early on that debasing a currency through inflation is a helpful way to pay off perpetual trade deficits but Britain proved that the buyer of the currency would only take the deal for so long. Following the American Revolution, the "First Bank of the United States" was chartered to pay off collective war debts, and effectively distribute the cost of the revolution proportionately throughout all of the states. Although the bank had vocal and harsh skeptics, it only controlled about 20% of the nation's money supply.

Compared to today's central bank, it was nothing. Thomas Jefferson argued vocally against the institution of the bank, mostly citing constitutional concerns and the limitations of government found in the 10th amendment. There was one additional quote that hints at the deeper structural flaw of a central bank in a supposedly free capitalist economy. "the existing banks will, without a doubt, enter into arrangements for lending their agency, and the more favorable, as there will be a competition among them for it; whereas the bill delivers us up bound to the national bank, who are free to refuse all arrangement, but on their own terms, and the public not free, on such refusal, to employ any other bank," Thomas Jefferson. Basically, the existing banks will fight over gaining favor with the central bank rather than improving their performance relative to a free market. The profit margins associated with collusion would obviously

²⁹ the term New World Order or NWO refers to the emergence of a totalitarian world government. The common theme in conspiracy theories about a New World Order is that a secretive power elite with a globalist agenda is conspiring to eventually rule the world through an authoritarian world government—which will replace sovereign nation-states—and an all-encompassing propaganda whose ideology hails the establishment of the New World Order as the culmination of history's progress.

outweigh the potential profits gained from legitimate business. The Second Bank of the United States was passed five years after the first bank's charter expired. An early enemy of central banking, President James Madison, was looking for a way to stabilize the currency in 1816. This bank was also quite temporary. It would only stay in operation until 1833 when President Andrew Jackson would end federal deposits at the institution.

The charter expired in 1836 and the private corporation was bankrupt and liquidated by 1841. While the South had been the major opponent of central banking systems, the end of the Civil War allowed for (and also made necessary) the system of national banks that would dominate the next fifty years. The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) says that this post-war period of a unified national currency and system of national banks "worked well." Taxes on state banks were imposed to encourage people to use the national banks – but liquidity problems persisted as the money supply did not match the economic cycles. Overall, the American economy continued to grow faster than Europe, but the period did not bring economic stability by any stretch of the imagination. Several panics and runs on the bank – and it became a fact of life under this system of competing nationalized banks. In 1873, 1893, 1901, and 1907 significant panics caused a series of bank failures.

The new system wasn't stable at all, in fact, many suspected it was wrought with fraud and manipulation. The Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis is not shy about attributing the causes of the Panic of 1907 to financial manipulation from the existing banking establishment. "If Knickerbocker Trust would falter, then Congress and the public would lose faith in all trust companies and banks would stand to gain, the bankers reasoned." In timing with natural economic cycles, major banks including J.P. Morgan and Chase launched an all-out assault on Heinze's Knickerbocker Trust. Financial institutions on the inside started silently selling off assets in the competitor, and headlines about a few bad loans started making top spots in the newspapers.

The run-on Knickerbocker turned into a general panic and the Federal Government would come to the rescue of its privately owned "National Banks." During the Panic of 1907, "Depositors 'run' on the Knickerbocker Bank. J.P. Morgan and James Stillman of First National City Bank (Citibank) act as a "central bank," providing liquidity ... to stop the bank run President Theodore Roosevelt provides Morgan with \$25 million in government funds ... to control the panic. Morgan, acting as a one-man central bank, decides which firms will fail and which firms will survive." How did JP Morgan get so powerful that the government would provide them with funding to increase their power? They had key influence with positions inside the Administration.

They had senators, congressmen, lobbyists, media moguls all working for them. In 1886, a group of millionaires purchased Jekyll Island and converted it into a winter retreat and hunting ground, the USA's most exclusive club. By 1900, the club's roster represented 1/6th of the world's wealth. Names like Astor, Vanderbilt, Morgan, Pulitzer and Gould filled the club's register. Non-members, regardless of stature, were not allowed. Dignitaries like Winston Churchill and President McKinley were refused admission. In 1908, the year after a national money panic purportedly created by J. P. Morgan, Congress established, in 1908, a National Monetary Authority.

In 1910 another, more secretive, group was formed consisting of the chiefs of major corporations and banks in this country. The group left secretly by rail from Hoboken, New Jersey, and traveled anonymously to the hunting lodge on Jekyll Island. In fact, the Clubhouse and hotel on the island has two conference rooms named for the "Federal Reserve." The meeting was so secret that none referred to the other by his last name. Why the need for secrecy?

Frank Vanderlip wrote later in the Saturday Evening Post, "...it would have been fatal to Senator Aldrich's plan to have it known that he was calling on anybody from Wall Street to help him in preparing his bill...I do not feel it is any exaggeration to speak of our secret expedition to Jekyll Island as the occasion of the actual conception of what eventually became the Federal Reserve System." At Jekyll Island, the true draftsman for the Federal Reserve was Paul Warburg. The plan was simple. The new central bank could not be called a central bank because America did not want one, so it had to be given a deceptive name. Ostensibly, the bank was to be controlled by Congress, but a majority of its members were to be selected by the private banks that would own its stock. To keep the public from thinking that the Federal Reserve

would be controlled from New York, a system of twelve regional banks was designed. Given the concentration of money and credit in New York, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York controlled the system, making the regional concept initially nothing but a ruse.

The board and chairman were to be selected by the President, but in the words of Colonel Edward House, the board would serve such a term as to “put them out of the power of the President.” The power over the creation of money was to be taken from the people and placed in the hands of private bankers who could expand or contract credit as they felt best suited their needs. Why the opposition to a central bank? Americans at the time knew of the destruction to the economy the European central banks had caused to their respective countries and to countries who became their debtors. They saw the large- scale government deficit spending and debt creation that occurred in Europe. But European financial moguls didn’t rest until the New World was within their orbit. In 1902, Paul Warburg, a friend and associate of the Rothschilds and an expert on European central banking, came to this country as a partner in Kuhn, Loeb and Company.

He married the daughter of Solomon Loeb, one of the founders of the firm. The head of Kuhn, Loeb was Jacob Schiff, whose gift of \$20 million in gold to the struggling Russian communists in 1917 no doubt saved their revolution. The Fed controls the banking system in the USA, not the Congress nor the people indirectly as the Constitution dictates. The U.S. central bank strategy is a product of European banking interests. Government interventionists got their wish in 1913 with the Federal Reserve and income tax amendment.

Just in time, too, because the nation needed a new source of unlimited cash to finance both sides of WW1 and eventually our own entry to the war. After the war, with both sides owing us debt through the federal reserve backed banks, the center of finance moved from London to New York. But did the Federal Reserve reign in the money trusts and interlocking directorates? Not by a long shot. If anything, the Federal Reserve granted new powers to the National Banks by permitting overseas branches and new types of banking services. The greatest gift to the bankers, was a virtually unlimited supply of loans when they experience liquidity problems.

From the early 1920s to 1929, the monetary supply expanded at a rapid pace and the nation experienced wild economic growth. Curiously, however, the number of banks started to decline for the first time in American history. Toward the end of the period, speculation and loose money had propelled asset and equity prices to unreal levels. The stock market crashed, and as the banks struggled with liquidity problems, the Federal Reserve actually cut the money supply. Without a doubt, this is the greatest financial panic and economic collapse in American history and it never could have happened on this scale without the Fed’s intervention. The number of banks crashed and a few of the old robber barons’ banks managed to swoop in and grab up thousands of competitors for pennies on the dollar.

The New World Order: This popular conspiracy theory claims that a small group of international elites controls and manipulates governments, industry and media organizations worldwide. The primary tool they use to dominate nations is the system of central banking. They are said to have funded and in some cases caused most of the major wars of the last 200 years, primarily through carrying out false flag attacks to manipulate populations into supporting them, and have a grip on the world economy, deliberately causing inflation and depressions at will. The people behind the New World Order are thought to be international bankers, in particular the owners of the private banks in the Federal Reserve System, Bank of England and other central banks, and members of the Council on Foreign Relations, Trilateral Commission and Bilderberg Group. Now, although this conspiracy theory was ridiculed for years, it turns out that the Bilderberg does meet and requests no media coverage. They receive no media coverage. The world’s elite meet every year and it goes largely unreported.

Discussions at the meetings include the economy, world affairs, war and in general, world policy. After the financial collapse, the Bilderberg played a key role in proposing that the world prepare for a new world order and have a standard world currency. This was proposed shortly after by almost all attendees of the Bilderberg meeting. During the 20th century, many statesmen, such as Woodrow Wilson and Winston Churchill, used the term “new world order” to refer to a new period of history evidencing a dramatic change in world political thought and the balance of power after World War I and World War II.

They all saw these periods as opportunities to implement idealistic or liberal proposals for global governance only in the sense of new collective efforts to identify, understand, or address worldwide problems that go beyond the capacity of individual nation-states to solve. These proposals led to the creation of international organizations, such as the United Nations and N.A.T.O., and international regimes, such as the Bretton Woods system³⁰ and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade,³¹ which were calculated both to maintain a balance of power as well as regularize cooperation between nations, in order to achieve a peaceful phase of capitalism, and free flow of trade among nations.

In the aftermath of the two World Wars, progressives welcomed these new international organizations and regimes but argued they suffered from a democratic shortfall and therefore were inadequate to not only prevent another global war but also foster global justice. American banker David Rockefeller joined the Council on Foreign Relations³² as its youngest-ever director in 1949 and subsequently became chairman of the board from 1970 to 1985; today he served as honorary chairman until his death in 2017. In 2002, Rockefeller authored his autobiography *Memoirs* wherein, on page 405, he wrote:

“for more than a century, ideological extremists at either end of the political spectrum have seized upon well-publicized incidents ... to attack the Rockefeller family for the inordinate influence they claim we wield over American political and economic institutions. Some even believe we are part of a secret cabal working against the best interests of the United States, characterizing my family and me as ‘internationalists’ and of conspiring with others around the world to build a more integrated global political and economic structure – one world, if you will. If that’s the charge, I stand guilty, and I am proud of it.”

Thus, activists around the globe formed a world federalist movement bent on creating a “real” new world order. A number of Fabian socialist intellectuals³³, such as British Writer H. G. Wells in the 1940s, appropriated and redefined the term “new world order” as a synonym for the establishment of a full-fledged social democratic world government³⁴. In the 1960s, a great deal of right-wing conspiracies’ attention, by groups like the John Birch Society³⁵ and the Liberty Lobby³⁶, focused on the United Nations as the vehicle for creating the “One World Government,” and contributed to a conservative movement for the United

³⁰ The Bretton Woods system of monetary management established the rules for commercial and financial relations among the United States, Canada, Western Europe, Australia and Japan in the mid-20th century.

³¹ General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was a multilateral agreement regulating international trade.

³² The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) is an independent, nonpartisan membership organization, think tank, and publisher dedicated to being a resource for its members, government officials, business executives, journalists, educators and students, civic and religious leaders, and other interested citizens in order to help them better understand the world and the foreign policy choices facing the United States and other countries. Founded in 1921, CFR takes no institutional positions on matters of policy.

³³ The Fabian Society is a British socialist organization whose purpose is to advance the principles of democratic socialism via gradualist and reformist effort in democracies, rather than by revolutionary overthrow.

³⁴ Social democracy is a political, social and economic ideology that supports economic and social interventions to promote social justice within the framework of a capitalist economy, as well as a policy regime involving a commitment to representative democracy, measures for income redistribution, and regulation of the economy in the general interest and welfare state provisions

³⁵ Formed by Robert Welch in December 1958, The John Birch Society takes its name from the legendary World War II Army Captain John Birch. The organization's overall goal, never altered in the 50-plus years of its existence, has always been to create sufficient understanding amongst the American people about both their country and its enemies, so that they could protect freedom and ensure continuation of the nation's independence.

³⁶ Liberty Lobby was a United States political advocacy organization founded in 1958 that went bankrupt in 2001. It was founded by Willis Carto and described itself as "a pressure group for patriotism; the only lobby in Washington, D.C., registered with Congress which is wholly dedicated to the advancement of government policies based on our Constitution and conservative principles.

States withdrawal from the U.N. American writer, Mary M. Davison, in her 1966 booklet *The Profound Revolution*, traced the alleged New World Order conspiracy to the creation of the U.S. Federal Reserve System in 1913 by international bankers, who she claimed later formed the Council on Foreign Relations in 1921 as the shadow government.³⁷ At the time the booklet was published, “international bankers” would have been interpreted by many readers as a reference to a postulated “international Jewish banking conspiracy” masterminded by the Rothschilds and the Rockefellers³⁸. American televangelist Pat Robertson with his 1991 best-selling book, *The New World Order*, became the most prominent Christian adherent of conspiracy theories about recent American history as a theater in which Wall Street, the Federal Reserve System, Council on Foreign Relations, Bilderberg Group, and Trilateral Commission control the flow of events from behind the scenes, nudging us constantly and covertly in the direction of world government for the Antichrist.

After the turn of the century, specifically during the financial crisis of 2007–2009, many politicians and pundits, such as Gordon Brown, Henry Kissinger, and Barack Obama, used the term “new world order” in their advocacy for a Keynesian³⁹ reform of the global financial system and their calls for a “New Bretton Woods,” which takes into account emerging markets such as China and India. These declarations had the unintended consequence of providing fresh fodder for New World Order conspiracies, and culminated in former Clinton administration adviser Dick Morris and conservative talk show host Sean Hannity arguing on one of his Fox News Channel programs that “conspiracy theorists were right.”

In 2009, American film directors Luke Meyer and Andrew Neel released *New World Order*, a critically-acclaimed documentary film which explores the world of conspiracy theorists, such as American radio host, Alex Jones, who are committed to exposing and vigorously opposing what they perceive to be an emerging New World Order. (May 24, 1992 Report on New World Order:)

I don’t trust any of these conspiracy theorists. What authoritative entity made them the experts on anything? They have a microphone and an opinion. They get paid for entertaining their listeners with their delusions of grandeur. If you want a good laugh go ahead and listen to them. If you want the truth do your own homework; go to the organizations themselves to read what they are about in their own words.

The other thing I have to question is if these organizations are so secretive, with no media coverage, no one talking about what really goes on in these secret meetings they have, how do the conspiracy theorists know everything about these organization. It seems to me the more I read the more these jokers rely on strictly circumstantial evidence to explain the conspiracies. Since this is the case this makes the conspiracy theorist more suspect than the organizations they talk about.

Control the World: If you were really a member of the global élite, you'd know this already: the world is ruled by a powerful, secretive few. Many of the rest of us “little people” have heard that in 2004 both candidates for the White House were members of Yale University's secretive Skull and Bones society, many of whose members have risen to powerful positions. But Skull and Bones⁴⁰ is small potatoes compared with the mysterious sects that occupy virtually every seat of power, from the corridors of government to the boardrooms of Wall Street. The substitution of precious metal-based coin currency by paper currency. This process began in the Renaissance, with the beginning of the use of tickets which

³⁷ The shadow government (cryptocracy, secret government, or invisible government) is a family of conspiracy theories based on the notion that real and actual political power resides not with publicly elected representatives (for example, the United States Congress) but with private individuals who are exercising power behind the scenes, beyond the scrutiny of democratic institutions. According to this belief, the official elected government is in reality subservient to the shadow government who are the true executive power.

³⁸ According to his biographers, Rockefeller was of French-German ancestry. Religiously he was a Baptist. So the anti-Semitic conspiracy theories fall short when they accuse Rockefeller of being Jewish.

³⁹ Keynesian economics are the various theories about how in the short run, and especially during recessions, economic output is strongly influenced by aggregate demand (total spending in the economy).

⁴⁰ Skull and Bones is an undergraduate senior secret society at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. It is the oldest senior class landed society. The society's alumni organization, the Russell Trust Association, owns the society's real estate and oversees the organization. Skull and Bones was founded in 1832.

allowed for people to have a tangible good such as silver or gold pieces by paper which was a more virtual, but comfortable, medium which the state was committed to provide the equivalent amount of precious metal if such was required.

It is interesting to me that the conspiracy's attempt to tell the world all about the secrets of the Skull and Bones Secret Society seems so sinister. This begs the question; how did they learn the secrets? How is it they know the secrets when no one else does? It seems to me that if you want to get on the conspiracy theorists radar:

1. Be outside the mainstream of society
2. Be powerful
3. Be rich
4. Have religious overtones
5. Have secrets
6. Have ulterior motives which only the conspiracy theorists know and understand
7. If the data doesn't fit your conclusion, ignore it. You don't have to explain why the people who claimed to have the most damaging goods on Clinton (e.g., Gennifer Flowers, Paula Jones, Kathleen Willey, Linda Tripp, Monica Lewinsky, Kenneth Starr), are still walking around unscathed while dozens of bit players have been bumped off. It's inconvenient for you, so don't mention it.
8. Make sure every inconsistency or unexplained detail you can dredge up is offered as evidence of a conspiracy, no matter how insignificant or pointless it may be. If an obvious suicide is discovered wearing only one shoe, ignore the physical evidence of self-inflicted death and dwell on the missing shoe. You don't have to establish an alternate theory of the death; just keep harping that the missing shoe "can't be explained."
9. Mistrust from the public
10. Most important, don't let facts and details stand in your way! If you can pass off a death by pneumonia as a "suicide," do it! If a cause of death contradicts your conspiracy theory, claim it was "never determined." If your chronology of events is impossible, who cares? It's not like anybody is going to check up on this stuff ...
11. Play word games. Make sure every death is presented as "mysterious." All accidental deaths are to be labelled "suspicious," even though by definition accidents occur when something unexpected goes wrong. Every self-inflicted death discussed must include the phrase "ruled a suicide" to imply just the opposite. When an autopsy contradicts a "mysterious death" theory, dispute it; when none was performed because none was needed, claim that "no autopsy was allowed." Make liberal use of words such as 'allegedly' and 'supposedly' to dismiss facts you can't support or contradict with hard evidence.
12. The only people who know what they know beside the organizations themselves are the conspiracy theorists. No one knows how the theorists know so much but they do. The rest of us are just supposed to trust them. List every dead person with even the most tenuous of connections to your subject. It doesn't matter how these people died, or how tangential they were to your subject's life. The longer the list, the more impressive it looks and the less likely anyone is to challenge it. By the time readers get to the bottom of the list, they'll be too weary to wonder what could possibly be relevant about the death of people such as Bill Clinton's mother's chiropractor.

The suppression claims are: The scientific community has controlled and suppressed research into alternative avenues of energy generation via the institutions of peer review and academic pressure. Devices exist which are capable of extracting significant and usable power from preexisting unconventional energy

reservoirs, such as the quantum vacuum zero-point energy, for little or no cost, but are being suppressed by the big corporations in the energy sector.

The worldwide implementation of an electronic identity card. The great worldwide blackout: A tremendous disaster will take place when, after a great electrical blackout on a planetary scale, the data of all electronic accounts erase simultaneously. After this event, chaos and poverty will immediately ensue throughout the planet; and civilization will revert to its primitive forms of slavery to survive. This is the last aim of the "secret organization" which has spent centuries guiding this process.

The worldwide blackout will be preceded by partial blackouts that would only be tests and "signals" to communicate that different phases of the process are being fulfilled. An example of these partial blackouts would be those that have been produced almost simultaneously in different parts around the world; and, at the beginning of the 21st century, shortly after the September 11, 2001, attacks: the blackouts in the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. This theory is used as the central plot of the 2013 TV series *Revolution*.

There are claims about secret experiments known as the Montauk Project conducted at Camp Hero, Montauk, New York. Allegedly, the project was developing a powerful psychological war weapon. The project is often connected to other alleged government projects such as the Philadelphia Experiment and Project Rainbow, both of which involved the use of unified field theory to cloak vessels. Experiments involving teleportation, time travel, contact with extraterrestrials, and mind control are frequently alleged to have been conducted in the camp. Preston B. Nichols has written five books on the subject, including, *Montauk Project: Experiments in time*.

There are many unproven conspiracy theories of varying degrees of popularity, frequently related to but not limited to clandestine government plans, elaborate murder plots, suppression of secret technology and knowledge, and other supposed schemes behind certain political, cultural, and historical events. Some theories have dealt with censorship and persecution from the law such as Holocaust denial.

Conspiracy theories usually go against a consensus or cannot be proven using the historical method and are typically not considered similar to verified conspiracies such as Germany's pretense for invading Poland in World War II. It has even been alleged that the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami was intentionally caused by a nuclear weapon detonated in a strategic position under the ocean; research into such technology was conducted by the military as far back as World War II.

Likewise, similar studies were conducted in the early 1970s. The U.S. Defense Department had even expressed concern about earthquake-inducing technology in warfare well before the 2004 disaster. In 1997 Defense Secretary William S. Cohen stated: "Others are engaging even in an eco-type terrorism whereby they can alter the climate, set off earthquakes, volcanoes remotely through the use of electromagnetic waves." However, this was in the context of discussing concerns raised by a futurist writer, and providing examples of false threats that might distract the intelligence community; Cohen also indicated other countries might just claim such capabilities as a "false scare of a threat."

Real groups said to be involved in conspiracies:

The Business Plot: in 1933, group of wealthy businessmen that allegedly included the heads of Chase Bank, GM, Goodyear, Standard Oil, the dupont family and Senator Prescott Bush tried to recruit Marine Corps Major General Smedley Butler to lead a military coup against President FDR and install a fascist dictatorship in the United States. Smedley Butler was both a patriot and a vocal FDR supporter. Apparently, none of these criminal masterminds noticed that their prospective point man had actively stumped for FDR in 1932.

Smedley spilled the beans to a congressional committee in 1934. Everyone he accused of being a conspirator vehemently denied it, and none of them were brought up on criminal charges. Still, the House McCormack-Dickstein Committee did at least acknowledge the existence of the conspiracy, which ended up never getting past the initial planning stages. Though many of the people who had allegedly backed the Business Plot also maintained financial ties with Nazi Germany up through America's entry into World War II. In 1934, the Business Plot was publicly revealed by retired Marine Corps Major General Smedley Butler testifying to the McCormack-Dickstein Congressional Committee. In his testimony, Butler claimed

that a group of men had approached him as part of a plot to overthrow Roosevelt in a military coup. One of the alleged plotters, Gerald MacGuire, vehemently denied any such plot. In their final report, the Congressional committee supported Butler's allegations of the existence of the plot, but no prosecutions or further investigations followed, and the matter was mostly forgotten.

On July 17, 1932, thousands of World War I veterans converged on Washington, D.C., set up tent camps, and demanded immediate payment of bonuses due them according to the Adjusted Service Certificate Law of 1924. This "Bonus Army" was led by Walter W. Waters, a former Army sergeant. The Army was encouraged by an appearance from retired Marine Corps Major General Smedley Butler, who had considerable influence over the veterans, being one of the most popular military figures of the time. A few days after Butler's arrival, President Herbert Hoover ordered the marchers removed, and their camps were destroyed by US Army cavalry troops under the command of General Douglas MacArthur.

Butler, although a self-described Republican, responded by supporting Roosevelt in that year's election. In a 1995 History Today article Clayton Cramer argued that the devastation of the Great Depression had caused many Americans to question the foundations of liberal democracy. "Many traditionalists, here and in Europe, toyed with the ideas of Fascism and National Socialism; many liberals dallied with Socialism and Communism." Cramer argues that this explains why some American business leaders viewed fascism as a viable system to both preserve their interests and end the economic woes of the Great Depression. (BBC – Whitehouse Coup: Part 1)

Electronic banking conspiracy: The Theory of Electronic Conspiracy is said to be a variant of modern New World Order conspiracy theories. The theory consists of the belief that a secret group has attempted for centuries to reach world domination, even if the result by design would be world destruction.

Federal Reserve System: The New World Order is said to control the wealth of nations through central banks, via the issuance of currency. The Federal Reserve System is the central bank of the United States, though not a part of the government with a significant share of private control and interests, created in 1913. There is a theory that the Federal Reserve System is designed to transfer wealth from the poor and middle classes of the United States to the international bankers of the New World Order.⁴¹

Consider, for instance, Ricky Donnell Ross circa 1980, a functionally illiterate black high-school dropout in South Los Angeles. These were still the boutique days of the crack epidemic, and Ross was a part-time dealer. Soon, though, he found a new supplier, a Nicaraguan man named Oscar Danilo Blandon, at which point Ross's fortunes began to improve rapidly. Within two years, as drug use exploded and he supplied crack to both the Bloods and the Crips, Ross became one of the dominant dealers in Los Angeles, moving 100 kilos each week, his network extending as far as Southern Ohio.

Blandon was not any ordinary Nicaraguan man. He was a contra, a member of the militias organized and deployed by the CIA to overthrow the left-wing government in Managua. The contras had, it seems, long supplemented the funds Washington sent by helping Colombian drug traffickers ship cocaine north. A few years before he met Ross, Blandon had moved to California and, together with a group of ex-contras, was soon distributing the drug and using some of the revenue to support the movement back home. Ross did not know any of these details about Blandon, then.

But because the CIA's ties to the contras were extensive, and because of Ross's pivotal role in the early crack trade in L.A., this episode soon became fuel for perhaps the last great conspiracy of the twentieth century: that the CIA had spread crack throughout America's inner cities. Ross himself even seemed convinced. "Basically, I was selling drugs for the U.S. government," he explained later, from prison, now a Conspiracist, too.

Adam Weishaupt founded the Illuminati, who some conspiracy theorists believe control the world. The past or present existence of these groups is not disputed, and a variety of theories regarding hidden

⁴¹ This is laughable. The poor and the middle class have no money. Many are so poor they can't even pay attention.

plots and agendas actively guarded from the general public have been proposed. There is dispute as to whether any of these theories are true.⁴²

It has been claimed that the CIA deliberately administered HIV to African Americans and homosexuals in the 1970s, via tainted hepatitis vaccinations. Groups such as Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam assert that this was part of a plan to destroy the black race. Others claim that it was administered in Africa as a way of crippling the development of the continent. Montauk Project, a continuation of the Philadelphia Experiment, to put government-trained psychics (Duncan Cameron) into a program with the intent of mind control, time travel, and even mental manifestation.

Big Brother or the Shadow Government: It is also called the “Deep State” by Peter Dale Scott, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley. A shadow government is a “government-in-waiting” that remains in waiting with the intention of taking control of a government in response to some event. It turned out this was true on 9/11, when it was told to us by our mainstream media. For years, this was ridiculed as a silly, crazy conspiracy theory. It is also called the Continuity of Government. The Continuity of Government (COG) is the principle of establishing defined procedures that allow a government to continue its essential operations in case of nuclear war or another catastrophic event. Since the end of the cold war, the policies and procedures for the COG have been altered according to realistic threats of that time. These include but are not limited to a possible coup or overthrow by right wing terrorist groups, a terrorist attack in general, an assassination, and a left-wing overthrow. Believe it or not the COG has been in effect since 2001.⁴³

After 9/11, it went into action. Now here is the interesting thing, many of the figures in Iran Contra, the Watergate Scandal, the alleged conspiracy to assassinate Kennedy, and many others listed here are supposedly members of the COG. This is also its own conspiracy.

March 1, 2002 News Clip on Secret Government: and yet, as Slate’s Jeremy Stahl points out, millions of Americans hold these beliefs. In a Zogby poll taken six years ago, only 64 % of U.S. adults agreed that the attacks “caught US intelligence and military forces off guard.” More than 30% chose a different conclusion: that “certain elements in the US government knew the attacks were coming but consciously let them proceed for various political, military, and economic motives,” or that these government elements “actively planned or assisted some aspects of the attacks.” Once you bite into the first conspiracy theory, the next one seems that much more plausible.

A decade later, a study of British adults yielded similar results. Viren Swami of the University of Westminster, working with two colleagues, found that beliefs in a 9/11 conspiracy were associated with “political cynicism.” He and his collaborators concluded that “Conspiracists’ ideas are predicted by an alienation from mainstream politics and a questioning of received truths.” But the cynicism scale used in the experiment, drawn from a 1975 survey instrument, featured propositions such as “Most politicians are really willing to be truthful to the voters,” and “Almost all politicians will sell out their ideals or break their promises if it will increase their power.” It didn’t measure general wariness. It measured negative beliefs about the establishment.

The Trilateral Commission: The Trilateral Commission is a private organization, established to foster closer cooperation among the United States, Europe and Japan. It was founded in July 1973 at the initiative of David Rockefeller, who was Chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations at that time. The Trilateral Commission is widely seen as a counterpart to the Council on Foreign Relations. In July 1972, Rockefeller called his first meeting, which was held at Rockefeller’s Pocantico compound in New York’s Hudson

⁴² How is it that the Skull and Bones, the CIA, the Illuminati, the Masons, the Bilderbergs, the Council of Foreign Affairs, the Federal Reserve, Trilateral Commission, the Rockefellers and the Rothschilds all control world events?

⁴³ This doesn’t surprise me. When I heard the Democratic leadership stand in front of the capital building and swore they would make sure that George Bush would fail as a president it makes sense to me that they were behind the shadow government. I believe they are still behind the shadow government that is attempting to overthrow the Trump administration.

Valley. It was attended by about 250 individuals who were carefully selected and screened by Rockefeller and represented the very elite of finance and industry.

Its first executive committee meeting was held in Tokyo in October 1973. The Trilateral Commission was officially initiated, holding biannual meetings. A Trilateral Commission Task Force Report, presented at the 1975 meeting in Kyoto, Japan, called an Outline for Remaking World Trade and Finance, said: "Close Trilateral cooperation in keeping the peace, in managing the world economy, and in fostering economic development and in alleviating world poverty, will improve the chances of a smooth and peaceful evolution of the global system."

Another Commission document read: "The overriding goal is to make the world safe for interdependence by protecting the benefits which it provides for each country against external and internal threats which will constantly emerge from those willing to pay a price for more national autonomy. This may sometimes require slowing the pace at which interdependence proceeds, and checking some aspects of it. More frequently however, it will call for checking the intrusion of national government into the international exchange of both economic and non-economic goods." (March 29, 1981 News Clip on Trilateral Commission: May 2, 1995 News Clip on Trilateral Commission.)

So, the Trilateral Commission's mission is to help nations against external and internal threats to their economic interdependence, and to keep their government from intruding into the nation's international exchange for goods and services. The conspiracy theorists, who see a collusion behind every corner. So, it doesn't matter what the facts are, conspiracy is their perspective and that is their reality.

The Illuminati: Thought to be a secret group attempting to control the world. This conspiracy theory states that a group of international elites control and manipulate governments, industry, and media organizations worldwide. The primary tool they use to dominate nations is the system of central banking. They are said to have funded and in some cases caused most of the major wars of the last 200 years, to carry out false flag attacks, to manipulate populations into supporting them, and to have a grip on the world economy, deliberately causing inflation and depressions at will.

Operatives working for the New World Order are said to be placed in high positions in government and industry. The people behind the New World Order are thought to be international bankers, in particular the owners of the private banks in the Federal Reserve System and other central banks, and members of the Council on Foreign Relations, Trilateral Commission and Bilderberg Group. The New World Order is also said to control supranational and global organizations such as the European Union, United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the proposed North American Union. The term gained popularity following its use in the early 1990s by President George H. W. Bush when he referred to his "dream of a New World Order" in his speech to the United States Congress on September 11, 1990.

Claimed motivations behind the New World Order conspiracy vary but a commonly suggested end goal for the conspiracy is the creation of a one-world government through which the conspirators would exert absolute dominance over the Earth and eliminate all sources of dissent through microchip control. The Order of the Illuminati was an Enlightenment-age secret society founded on May 1st, 1776, in Ingolstadt (Upper Bavaria), by Adam Weishaupt, who was the first lay professor of canon law at the University of Ingolstadt. The movement consisted of freethinkers, secularists, liberals, republicans and pro-feminists, recruited in the Masonic Lodges of Germany, who sought to promote perfectionism through mystery schools.

As a result, in 1785, the order was infiltrated, broken and suppressed by the government agents of Charles Theodore, Elector of Bavaria, in his campaign to neutralize the threat of secret societies ever becoming hotbeds of conspiracies to overthrow the monarchy and state religion. In the late 18th century, reactionary conspiracy theorists, such as Scottish physicist John Robison and French Jesuit priest Augustin Barruel, began speculating that the Illuminati survived their suppression and became the masterminds behind the French Revolution and the Reign of Terror. The Illuminati were accused of being enlightened absolutists who were attempting to secretly orchestrate a world revolution in order to globalize the most radical ideals of the Enlightenment: anti-clericalism, anti-monarchism, and anti-patriarchies.

During the 19th century, fear of an Illuminati conspiracy was a real concern of European ruling classes, and their oppressive reactions to this unfounded fear provoked in 1848 the very revolutions they sought to prevent. Although many say that the Illuminati was disbanded and destroyed long ago, it is well known that the Rothschild dynasty following the family's involvement in the secret order in Bavaria received much attention for its major takeover of Europe's central banks. The Rothschild dynasty owns roughly half of the world's wealth and evidence suggests it has funded both sides of major wars, including the United States Civil War.

The problem I see with this conspiracy is that the theorists assign more power to the illuminati than they deserve. Conspiracies like to think that these secret societies have this incredible power to influence world events and there isn't anything anyone can do about it. If that is true then why worry about it?

The Round Table: British businessman Cecil Rhodes advocated that the British Empire re-annex the United States of America and reforming itself into an "Imperial Federation" to bring about a hyper power and lasting world peace. In his first will, of 1877, written at the age of 23, he expressed his wish to fund a secret society known as the *Society of the Elect* that would advance this goal:

"to and for the establishment, promotion and development of a Secret Society, the true aim and object whereof shall be for the extension of British rule throughout the world, the perfecting of a system of emigration from the United Kingdom, and of colonization by British subjects of all lands where the means of livelihood are attainable by energy, labor and enterprise, and especially the occupation by British settlers of the entire Continent of Africa, the Holy Land, the Valley of the Euphrates, the Islands of Cyprus and Candia, the whole of South America, the Islands of the Pacific not heretofore possessed by Great Britain, the whole of the Malay Archipelago, the seaboard of China and Japan, the ultimate regaining of the United States of America as an integral part of the British Empire, the inauguration of a system of Colonial representation in the Imperial Parliament which may tend to weld together the disjointed members of the Empire and, finally, the foundation of so great a Power as to render wars impossible, and promote the best interests of humanity."⁴⁴

In his later wills, a more mature Rhodes abandoned the idea and instead concentrated on what became the Rhodes Scholarship, which had British statesman Alfred Milner as one of its trustees. Established in 1902, the original goal of the trust fund was to foster peace among the great powers by creating a sense of fraternity and a shared world view among future British, American, and German leaders by having enabled them to study for free at the University of Oxford. Milner and British official Lionel George Curtis were the architects of the Round Table movement, a network of organizations promoting closer union between Britain and its self-governing colonies. To this end, Curtis founded the Royal Institute of International Affairs in June 1919 and, with his 1938 book *The Commonwealth of God*, began advocating for the creation of an imperial federation that eventually re-annexes the U.S., which would be presented to Protestant churches as being the work of the Christian God to elicit their support. The Commonwealth of Nations was created in 1949 but it would only be a free association of independent states rather than the powerful imperial federation imagined by Rhodes, Milner and Curtis.

The Council on Foreign Relations began in 1917 with a group of New York academics who were asked by President Woodrow Wilson to offer options for the foreign policy of the United States in the interwar period. Originally envisioned as a British-American group of scholars and diplomats, some of whom belonging to the Round Table movement, it was a subsequent group of 108 New York financiers, manufacturers and international lawyers organized in June 1918 by Nobel Peace Prize recipient and U.S. secretary of state, Elihu Root, that became the Council on Foreign Relations on 29 July 1921.

The first of the council's projects was a quarterly journal launched in September 1922, called Foreign Affairs. Some believe that the Council on Foreign Relations is a front organization for the Round Table as a tool of the "Anglo-American Establishment," which they believe has been plotting from 1900

⁴⁴ This sounds like a script from a James Bond movie. The villain always states his goal as doing what he does for the good of humanity, when in fact they do it to advance a selfish self-promoting agenda.

on to rule the world. The research findings of historian Carroll Quigley, author of the 1966 book *Tragedy and Hope*, are taken by both conspiracy theorists of the American Old Right (Cleon Skousen) and New Left (Carl Oglesby) to substantiate this view, even though he argued that the Establishment is not involved in a plot to implement a one-world government but rather British and American benevolent imperialism driven by the mutual interests of economic elites in the United Kingdom and the United States.

Quigley also argued that, although the Round Table still exists today, its position in influencing the policies of world leaders has been much reduced from its heyday during World War I and slowly waned after the end of World War II and the Suez Canal Crisis. Today it is largely a ginger group⁴⁵, designed to consider and gradually influence the policies of the Commonwealth of Nations, but faces strong opposition. Furthermore, in American society after 1965, the problem, according to Quigley, was that no elite was in charge and acting responsibly.

Barkun argues that this statement is partly facetious (the claim of “conspiracy” or “treason”) and partly serious; the desire to encourage trilateral cooperation among the U.S., Europe, and Japan, for example; an ideal that used to be a hallmark of the internationalist wing of the Republican Party when there was an internationalist wing. However, the statement is taken at face value and widely cited by conspiracy theorists as proof that the Council on Foreign Relations (itself alleged to be a front for an “international banking unit,” as well as, it is claimed, the sponsor of many “globalist” think tanks such as the Trilateral Commission, uses its role as the brain trust of American presidents, senators and representatives to manipulate them into supporting a New World Order.

Conspiracy theorists fear that the international bankers of financial capitalism are planning to eventually subvert the independence of the U.S. by subordinating national sovereignty to a strengthened Bank for International Settlements with the intent to “create a world system of financial control in private hands able to dominate the political system of each country and the economy of the world as a whole.” In a 13 November 2007 interview with Canadian journalist Benjamin Fulford, Rockefeller countered:

“I don’t think that I really feel that we need a world government. We need governments of the world that work together and collaborate. But, I can’t imagine that there would be any likelihood or even that it would be desirable to have a single government elected by the people of the world ... There have been people, ever since i’ve had any kind of position in the world, who have accused me of being ruler of the world. I have to say that I think for the large part, I would have to decide to describe them as crackpots. It makes no sense whatsoever, and isn’t true, and won’t be true, and to raise it as a serious issue seems to me to be irresponsible.”

Some American social critics, such as Laurence H. Shoup, argue that the Council on Foreign Relations is an “imperial brain trust,” which has, for decades, played a central behind-the-scenes role in shaping U.S. foreign policy choices for the post-WWII international order and the Cold War, by determining what options show up on the agenda and what options do not even make it to the table; while others, such as G. William Domhoff, argue that it is in fact a mere policy discussion forum, which provides the business input to U.S. foreign policy planning.

The latter argue that it has nearly 3,000 members, far too many for secret plans to be kept within the group; if the congress can’t keep secrets with 500 members, then surely these secret societies with 3,000 members would never be able to keep their agenda secret. Also with 3,000 members it would be impossible to find the sources of any leaks. In fact, with the number of bureaucrats⁴⁶ in our government agencies it would also be impossible to find leaks and moles. All the council does is sponsor discussion groups, debates

⁴⁵ A ginger group is a formal or informal group within a political party seeking to influence the direction and activity of the organization as a whole. Ginger groups work to alter the party's policies, practices or office-holders, while still supporting its general goals.

⁴⁶ According to the Washington Times, in 2013 there were only 2.1 million bureaucrats in the federal government. Where our government gets weighed down is all the lobbyists, contract workers, and proxy workers such as the United Healthcare agencies hired by the government to administer Obamacare under the umbrella of federal agencies. with this cluster of federal incompetents, it’s no wonder they can’t keep a secret.

and speakers; and as far as being secretive, it issues annual reports and allows access to its historical archives. They also allow public access to their websites. Of course, with the theorists they say that the annual reports can't be trusted. And I ask the question, we can trust the conspiracy theorists?

Bohemian Grove: for years, many conspiracy theorists were saying that the rich and powerful met every year in the woods and worshiped a giant stone owl in an occult fashion. It turns out, ABC, CBS, NBC, and many other credible news agencies investigated this and found out, it's true. It is said to be just all fun and games, like brotherhood style fraternity stuff. Bohemian Grove is a 2,700-acre campground located at 20601 Bohemian Avenue, in Monte Rio, California, belonging to a private San Francisco-based men's art club known as the Bohemian Club. In mid-July each year, Bohemian Grove hosts a two-week, three-weekend encampment of some of the most prominent men in the world.

The Bohemian Club's all-male membership and guest list includes artists, particularly musicians, as well as many prominent business leaders, government officials, including former U.S. presidents, senior media executives, and other people of power. The main encampment area consists of 160 acres of old-growth redwood trees over 1,000 years old, with some trees exceeding 300 feet in height. The primary activities taking place at the Grove are varied and expansive entertainment, such as a grand main stage and a smaller, more intimate stage. Thus, the majority of common facilities are entertainment venues, interspersed among the giant redwoods.

Sleeping quarters, or "camps," are also scattered throughout the grove, of which it is reported there were a total of 118 as of 2007. These camps, which are frequently patrilineal, are the principal means through which high-level business and political contacts and friendships are formed.

The conspiracies have this overwhelming need to show the world that these secret societies have a sinister agenda of trying to control world. They are so goofy they can't just accept the fact these people just want to get together away from the snooping eyes of the paparazzi for a few days of fun and friendship.

Operation Paperclip: Operation Paperclip was the code name for the 1945 Office of Strategic Services, Joint Intelligence Objectives Agency recruitment of German scientists from Nazi Germany to the U.S. after VE Day. President Truman authorized Operation Paperclip in August 1945; however, he expressly ordered that anyone found "to have been a member of the Nazi party and more than a nominal participant in its activities, or an active supporter of Nazi militarism" would be excluded. These included Wernher von Braun, Arthur Rudolph and Hubertus Strughold, who were all officially on record as Nazis and listed as a "menace to the security of the Allied Forces." All were cleared to work in the U.S. after having their backgrounds "bleached" by the military; false employment histories were provided, and their previous Nazi affiliations were expunged from the record. The paperclips that secured newly-minted background details to their personnel files gave the operation its name.

I don't see this as a problem. There was a joke going around in the late 60s. Why did the Americans get to the moon before the Russians? Answer: Because our German scientists were smarter than the Russian's German scientists. The Germans had missiles before the rest of the world in the form of the V-1 and V-2 rockets. Both the Russians and the Americans wanted to develop rocket technology before the other. To do that they had to get the German rocket scientists to their countries to help the Russians and the Americans get into outer space. The president wanted them and the military brass made it happen. The end result, it paid off. The German scientists rewarded their appropriate masters with complete loyalty.

The BCCI Scandal: The Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) was a major international bank founded in 1972 by Agha Hasan Abedi, a Pakistani financier. The Bank was registered in Luxembourg. Within a decade, BCCI reached its peak. It operated in 78 countries, had over 400 branches, and had assets in excess of US\$20 billion making it the 7th largest private bank in the world by assets. In the late 1980's BCCI became the target of a two-year undercover operation conducted by the US Customs Service. This operation concluded with a fake wedding that was attended by BCCI officers and drug dealers from around the world who had established a personal friendship and working relationship with undercover Special Agent Robert Mazur.

After a six-month trial in Tampa, Florida, key bank officers were convicted and received lengthy prison sentences. Bank officers began cooperating with law enforcement authorities and that cooperation caused BCCI's many crimes to be revealed. BCCI came under the scrutiny of regulatory bodies and intelligence agencies in the 1980s, due to its perceived avoidance of falling under one regulatory banking authority, a fact that was later, after extensive investigations, proven to be false. BCCI became the focus of a massive regulatory battle in 1991 and was described as a "\$20-billion-plus heist." Investigators in the U.S. and the UK revealed that BCCI had been "set up deliberately to avoid centralized regulatory review, and operated extensively in bank secrecy jurisdictions. Its affairs were extraordinarily complex. Its officers were sophisticated international bankers whose apparent objective was to keep their affairs secret, to commit fraud on a massive scale, and to avoid detection." (from a report of July 23, 1991 on the BCCI)

I think this story is sufficient proof that banks, no matter how hard they want to hide their operations, the appropriate authorities will find out and someone will go to jail. When I tried to be a teacher after I retired from the Air Force, I used to tell my students that they can cheat and I may not catch them today, or tomorrow, but if they keep cheating, eventually I will catch them. The same goes for criminals. They keep breaking the law eventually the cops will catch them.

Operation Northwoods: in the early 1960s, American military leaders drafted plans to create public support for a war against Cuba, to oust Fidel Castro from power. The plans included committing acts of terrorism in U.S. cities, killing innocent people and U.S. soldiers, blowing up a U.S. ship, assassinating Cuban émigrés, sinking boats of Cuban refugees, and hijacking planes. The plans were all approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but were reportedly rejected by the civilian leadership, then kept secret for nearly 40 years. Author James Bamford, *"A Pretext for War,"* discusses the declassified "Operation Northwoods" documents revealing that in 1962, the CIA was planning to stage phony terrorist attacks on the US and blame it on Cuba to start a war. It amazes me that the CIA is still in operation. They have a history of moles, traitors, double-agents, and failed missions. Yet they still keep getting funded and planning operations. They can't keep their secrets, secret. It has come to light that Obama used them to spy on Americans and conduct undercover operations in the US which is against the law. The only reason I see the CIA is still going is that they are the one agency in the government everyone loves to hate.

The Manhattan Project: The Manhattan Project was the codename for a project conducted during World War II to develop the first atomic bomb. The project was led by the United States, and included participation from the United Kingdom and Canada. Formally designated as the Manhattan Engineer District (MED), it refers specifically to the period of the project from 1942–1946 under the control of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, under the administration of General Leslie R. Groves. The scientific research was directed by American Physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer. The project's roots lay in scientists' fears since the 1930s that Nazi Germany was also investigating nuclear weapons of its own. After the war, it came to light that the Japanese had also been trying to develop an atomic bomb.

Born out of a small research program in 1939, the Manhattan Project eventually employed more than 130,000 people and cost nearly US\$2 billion (\$22 billion in current value). It resulted in the creation of multiple production and research sites that operated in secret. With the total involved, this makes it one of the largest secret operations in history. Entire towns were built for short periods of time, employing people, all under secrecy and top national secrecy at that. There were the scientists and their families. Then the army watched the scientists, and the army also watched each other to make sure no one had loose lips. The government never admitted to it, the media never reported on it, and people had no idea for over 25 years.

Project research took place at over thirty sites across the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. The three-primary research and production sites of the project were the plutonium-production facility at what is now the Hanford Site on the Columbia River in Washington State; the uranium-enrichment facilities at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and the weapons research and design laboratory now known as Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico. The MED maintained control over U.S. weapons production until the formation of the Atomic Energy Commission in January 1947. The project culminated

in the production and deployment of the two atomic bombs Fat Man and Little Boy against Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan August 1945.

The conspiracies like to call this operation a conspiracy but in effect it was a top-secret project that was important because it was necessary to save millions of both allied and Japanese lives. The alternative to the bomb was a direct landing on Japanese shores. WWII revisionists like to say that the war against Japan was a racist war against the peace-loving Japanese. However, like most theorists they disregard the facts in order to promote their revisionist agenda.

Surveillance, espionage and intelligence agencies: Throughout history, governments have used intelligence agencies to promote national policies in secretive ways. Consequently, conspiracy theories related to intelligence agencies abound, including theories on incidents of sabotage, propaganda, and assassination.

The CIA and AIDS: Since the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention first reported the HIV/AIDS epidemic in 1981, rumors have persisted that the deadly virus was created by the CIA to wipe out homosexuals and African Americans. Even today, the conspiracy theory has a number of high-profile believers. South African President Thabo Mbeki once touted the theory, disputing scientific claims that the virus originated in Africa and accusing the U.S. government of manufacturing the disease in military labs. When she won the Nobel Peace Prize, Kenyan ecologist Wangari Maathai used the international spotlight to support that theory as well.

Others insist that the government deliberately injected gay men with the virus during 1978 Hepatitis-B experiments in New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Still others point to Richard Nixon, who combined the U.S. Army's bio-warfare department with the National Cancer Institute in 1971. Though the co-discoverers of HIV, Dr. Robert Gallo of the National Cancer Institute and Dr. Luc Montagnier of the Pasteur Institute in Paris, deny this theory of origin, most members of the scientific community believe the virus jumped from monkeys to humans sometime during the 1930s.

The concentration of the worldwide bank into few hands, by means of continuous international banking fusions. The concept of this shadow government predates 1990; it is accused of being the same group of people who, among other things, created the Federal Reserve Act (1913), supported the Bolshevik Revolution (1917), and supported the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany, all for their own agenda. The World Bank and national central banks are said to be the tools of the New World Order; war generates massive profits for central banks because government spending (hence borrowing at interest from the central banks) increases dramatically in times of war and distress.

Many conspiracy theorists believe that Denver International Airport is the western U.S. headquarters of the New World Order, and a massive underground base and city is believed to exist underneath the airport. Reasons for this include the airport's unusually large size (larger than some major cities), distance from the Denver, Colorado city center, the set of environmentally themed murals by artist Leo Tanguma depicting burning cities, gas-mask wearing soldiers and girls in coffins, and the capstone of the Great Hall which includes Masonic symbols and strange writing. Several documentaries have been filmed investigating the theory. This was all debunked but the conspiracy keeps going.

Take the Illuminati, a sect said to have originated in 18th century Germany and which is allegedly responsible for the pyramid-and-eye symbol adorning the \$1 bill: they intend to foment world wars to strengthen the argument for the creation of a worldwide government (which would, of course, be Satanic in nature). Or consider the Freemasons, who tout their group as the "oldest and largest worldwide fraternity" and boast alumni like George Washington. Some think that despite donating heaps of cash to charity, they're secretly plotting your undoing at Masonic temples across the world. Or maybe, some theorize, the guys pulling the strings aren't concealed in shadow at all. They might be the intelligentsia on the Council on Foreign Relations, a cadre of policy geeks who allegedly count their intentions as publishing a scholarly bimonthly journal and establishing a unified world government, not necessarily in that order.

That conclusion hasn't passed muster with the public. A 2003 ABC News poll found that 70% of Americans believe Kennedy's death was the result of a broader plot. The trajectory of the bullets, some say, didn't square with Oswald's perch on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository. Others suggest

a second gunman, perhaps on the grassy knoll of Dealey Plaza participated in the shooting. Others believe in an even broader conspiracy. Was Kennedy killed by CIA agents acting either out of anger over the Bay of Pigs or at the behest of Vice President Lyndon Johnson? By KGB operatives? Mobsters mad at Kennedy's brother for initiating the prosecution of organized crime families? Speculation over one of history's most famous political assassinations is such a popular parlor game that most people have taken the rumors to heart: just 32% of those polled by ABC believe Oswald carried out the killing on his own.

The "Frozen Envelope Theory" suggests that the NBA rigged its 1985 Draft Lottery so that Georgetown University standout Patrick Ewing would land with the New York Knicks, who had the first pick in that year's draft. Conspiracy theorists argue that the Knicks' envelope was placed in the freezer so that when NBA commissioner David Stern reached into a bowl containing the envelopes of all the teams participating in the draft lottery, he would be able to identify that particular envelope by its being colder than the others. The people who push these theories have way too much time on their hands. When it comes to the NBA, it's just a basketball game with overpaid jocks playing dribbling a basketball down a wooden court.

The 2013 global surveillance disclosures, particularly by Edward Snowden, revealed the extent of government surveillance projects that until then had been viewed by mainstream media as merely conspiracy theories. These disclosures indicated that government mass computer surveillance systems track a significant percentage of the world's telephone and internet traffic, using agencies that employ large numbers of agents. For example, according to The Guardian report on the Snowden leaks, 850,000 people have access to the Internet communications tracked by the Tempora system operated by the British Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ). Prism and xkeyscore are related systems that are operated by the United States National Security Agency (NSA) to track enormous volumes of communications.

The alleged suppression of intelligence is claimed to be going on for a long time and perpetrated by government agencies, special interest groups, fraudulent inventors and a non-demanding public. The special interest groups are usually claimed to be associated with the fossil fuel or nuclear industry, whose industries would be threatened by government regulation. Yet lobbyists who support liberal causes don't usually get mentioned because they fall in line with the leftist members of congress.

The American Mafia: The Mafia appeared in the turn of the last century with the immigration of people from Italy. The mafia had exploited their people for centuries. They also got into every criminal activity they could: prostitution, bribery, extortion, numbers, gambling, illegal alcohol, drugs, weapons, identity theft, assassinations, and any other illegal money making criminal activity. Bobby Kennedy prosecuted them in the 60s. Everyone in the government believed they went away. No, they just went underground, infiltrated state and local governments, and expanded their operations into other countries. In America, the members of the Mafia now include organized crime syndicates from many other countries: The Chinese Traid, the Japanese yakuza, The Jamaican, the Russian, the Albanian, the Nigerian, the Bulgarian, the Indian, as well as the Italian Mafia. Then there are the street gangs, in the inner city, and on the Indian Reservations. They've infiltrated all levels of society, corporations, government, and even some religions. There is so much corruption worldwide, it's hard to trust anyone anymore.

Operation Ajax: for years, Britain had a lucrative trade deal with Iran regarding their prodigious oil fields. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company was basically a giant money machine for the Anglo half, while the Iranian half got shafted. That all changed in 1951 when Iran nationalized the AIOC and the Iranian parliament elected Mohammed Mossadegh as Prime Minister. Mossadegh was relatively secular, something that pissed off Iranian clerics, but he was also very nationalistic. He was a democratically elected, pro-American figure but the West saw his nationalizing of the oil fields a communist move; something Mossadegh thought was the right of the people with which to profit and pay for services in the country.

Those oil fields were under the control of British Petroleum, but unfortunately Mossadegh overruled this long-standing business control. The United States sent Kermit Roosevelt, FDR's nephew and CIA coordinator in to straighten out the mess. The best he could come up with was to confront Mossadegh and have him overthrown and this was accomplished by bringing in what the agency refers to as "jackals."

The United States backed the return of the Shah of Iran, one of the most brutal dictators the country had ever seen and had intentionally overthrown the democratic leader, Mossadegh. Until 1979, that is, when an angry Iranian populace finally revolted and replaced the monarchy with an anti-West Islamic Republic. The result was a violently anti-American revolution lead by the Ayatollah Khomeini which overthrew the Shah and took hostage US Embassy workers. Americans were told this was due to the rise of radical Islam who hated democracy loving Muslims. In the last Iranian election, the people voted for a democratic government but the powers that be in the Revolutionary Council overturned the results of the election. The people attempted to demonstrate but the authorities broke up the demonstrations and many people were arrested and some executed

Chapter 3: US Presidency Conspiracy Theories:

Some conspiracy theories have been directed at American Presidents. The first one was involving the Lincoln Assassination. Others involved the gilded age, Woodrow Wilson and the 1913 tax law, the federal reserve, and WWI. Then there were theories about Harding and the Teapot Dome Scandal, Hoover and the Great Depression, FDR and the attack at Pearl Harbor.

Where the conspiracies went crazy was the Assassination of John F. Kennedy. Then the Vietnam War and LBJ; Nixon and Watergate; Jimmy Carter and the Iranian Revolution; Reagan and the Contras and the assassination attempt on his life; George HW Bush and the Gulf War, Skull and Bones, and the New World Order; Clinton and the Death List on top of his list of scandals; George W. Bush and 9/11, Gulf War II, and the 2007 economy and the 2008 bailouts; then there was Obama and his list of scandals, the conspiracy of his birth certificate, and his background of communist inspired parents, the questions of his Yale education, and his own enemies list. Finally, there is Donald Trump.

He was known to espouse conspiracy theories, and now that he is president he is the subject of conspiracy theories perpetrated by the Obama shadow government whose objective is to overthrow his administration even before he finished his first 100 days in office. So far the enemies of the state have been frustrated because the more they try to tarnish his name the more he gets vindicated when the theories are debunked.

Lyndon B. Johnson: Conspiracy theories about LBJ involve the assassination of JFK. Decades of investigations, hearings, documents, records, books and interviews have failed to satisfy conspiracy theorists⁴⁷ with a definitive answer to the question: Did Lee Harvey Oswald act alone when he shot the President? At one time or another, doubters of the lone gunman theory “have accused 42 groups, 82 assassins and 214 people of being involved in the assassination,” said author Vincent Bugliosi. That’s a lot of paranoia.

Kennedy assassination conspiracy theorists, Perry said, come in all degrees of interest and levels of obsession. They may believe that the government was behind the 9/11 attacks or that the moon landings were fake. Those folks comprise the “off the wall” crowd. The others, he says, read the books, watch the documentaries and come to less extreme conclusions. Ahead of the 50th anniversary of JFK’s assassination in 2013, a flood of books about the tragedy have been re-released, along with the publication of new books examining various conspiracies. The king of Kennedy conspiracy films, Oliver Stone’s “JFK,” was also re-released on disc.

Conspiracy theorists gathered to compare notes at special symposiums, like the one at Pittsburgh’s Duquesne University. The event, which included Oliver Stone as a panelist, seemed more like a revival meeting at a religious revival than an academic conference, according to a reporter who was there. “Replace ‘Amen’ for ‘That’s right!’ and it would have basically been a church,” recalled Rebecca Nuttall. Nuttall said the crowd ranged from those who believed the government was involved in some kind of cover-up, to extremists who appeared to think “everything the government tells you is a lie.” She said many still blame the media for failing to uncover the truth.

And Perry, a 70-year-old retired former insurance claims adjuster from Massachusetts, has been digging through JFK assassination records since 1976 to address those skeptics. Doubters ask him to check out the odd stories that pop up: Somebody claimed to be the Grassy Knoll shooter. Nope, he wasn’t. Perry says he located and verified the authenticity of Oswald’s long-lost wedding ring. “I don’t do the sexy stuff,” Perry said. “I don’t come out and say, ‘I know who the Grassy Knoll assassin is!’ I’m the guy that goes into the county records building and looks up deed records. Most people don’t get too wound up over that.”

⁴⁷ The interesting thing about conspiracies is that there is no satisfaction. The reason is that they don’t want to find the “answer.” to find the answer would mean that they no longer have a monopoly on the theory. They have to be the only ones with the inside track on the theory.

Over the years he's come to know several people who found themselves embroiled in the investigation, including ex-Dallas detective Jim Leavelle and Oswald's co-worker Buell Frazier. Perry guesses he spends a "couple hundred hours" each October and November doing research and consulting. After all that, you can imagine he's heard a lot of theories.

The School Book Depository where Oswald shot Kennedy is now the Sixth Floor Museum, featuring exhibits surrounding the tragedy. "The conspiracy theories are still around because people don't know what to believe," said museum curator Gary Mack, who admits he's "not satisfied with the official story." If Oswald didn't act alone, who was behind the shooting in Dallas's Dealey Plaza on November 22, 1963? Some conspiracy theorists believe "the oil people" may have organized a hit on the President; others suspect "people who didn't like the way Kennedy handled civil rights." Perry shared five conspiracy theories he believes rank among the most popular:

1. "LBJ had it done:" Perry has shot this one down. "It's based primarily on statements made by Madeleine Brown," who Perry described as a "crackpot." Brown, who died in 2002, claimed to have had an affair with Johnson. She also claimed that LBJ had attended a party with ex-Vice President Richard Nixon, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and others the night before the attack. According to Perry, Brown said LBJ whispered into her ear, "After tomorrow, those Kennedys will never embarrass me again. That's no threat. That's a promise."

"That's absolutely not true," said Perry, who said his research proved LBJ couldn't have been at the alleged party that night, debunking Brown's story. "A lot of Texans didn't like Johnson — they thought he was a crook, so as a result, they started creating this fiction after the assassination where he wanted Kennedy out so he could be president," Perry said. "But we've found no evidence, and we know that all the stuff that Madeleine Brown said was contrived."

2. The "military industrial complex" did it: Nope, that doesn't wash either, said Perry. "The claim is that Kennedy was going to pull American troops out of Vietnam and that the military wanted to pour more people into Vietnam. That's technically not correct. He talked about trying to resolve the situation, but he never made a claim that he was going to pull out of there."

3. "The mob" did it: Sorry, said Perry, no veracity to that. "There's at least three different groups that they claim independently did this: There's the Chicago mob, the Miami mob, and the New Orleans mob. But it's all hearsay."⁴⁸

4. "Oswald acted alone as part of an unknown conspiracy": It's possible there were individuals who helped Oswald, but who weren't part of any larger group or perhaps unaware of what he was planning. "Remember John Wilkes Booth shot Lincoln and four were hung, including the first woman ever to be hung by the federal government, Mary Surratt," he said.

5. "The CIA did it": This is the conspiracy theory that interests Perry the most. "The problem is, of all of them, this is one I can't debunk," he laughs.⁴⁹ "Supposedly Kennedy was fed up with the shenanigans that the CIA was pulling," Perry said. "He found out the CIA was trying to kill Cuban leader Fidel Castro, which is a fact. So, the argument is that the CIA felt that Kennedy was going to disband them. And as a result of that, they were the ones that ordered the killing of Kennedy." Perry points out that a former head of the CIA, Allen Dulles, was a member of the Warren Commission, the special Johnson-appointed panel tasked with the official investigation of the assassination. The commission determined that Oswald acted alone.

⁴⁸ Like most conspiracy theories; all based on hearsay or circumstantial evidence. Others are based on science, so to speak, yet when one crunches the numbers, one will find that the theory doesn't stand up to the facts of the numbers.

⁴⁹ of course, when all else fails, blame the CIA. The guys everyone loves to hate.

Oswald was a supporter of Soviet-backed Cuba. “We know Oswald was in the Russian embassy in Mexico City,” Perry said. “We even know who he talked to. But we don’t know what was said. Then a few weeks later, he shoots Kennedy.”

“It may have been something that they overheard involving him and the Russians. Or, maybe the CIA had Oswald on the payroll. He might have been a double agent.” Is it possible that the Russians ordered Oswald to do it? Not likely, said Perry. The Russians would never have ordered Oswald to kill Kennedy because of his well-known links to Russia and his pro-Cuban sympathies. Russia’s leaders knew they would have been the first suspects if they’d engineered an assassination by Oswald. It would have been an act of war, which could have triggered a nuclear attack.

“We need to know what happened in Mexico City,” Perry said. The answer, he said, may be contained in still-classified CIA documents. The U.S. National Archives currently holds a number of unreleased CIA documents related to the assassination. Those papers are scheduled to be made public in 2017 as part of the 1992 Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act. “CIA has followed the provisions of the JFK Assassination Records Collection Act, and the National Archives has all of the agency’s documents and files on the Kennedy assassination,” said CIA spokesman Edward Price. “The classified information contained in the files remains subject to the declassification provisions of the Act.”

So, either we already know the truth, Oswald acted alone, or, worst-case scenario, we may never know the whole truth, prompting one more question surrounding the killing of JFK: Would America be OK with that? Roger Stone wrote a book connecting LBJ to the assassination. Stone said that on the eve of Kennedy’s trip to Dallas, LBJ was facing political ruin and potential prison time. In fact, President Kennedy’s secretary Evelyn Lincoln claims that JFK told her that Lyndon Johnson would not be on the ticket when he ran for reelection.

“(LBJ) was greedy, he was corrupt, he was ambitious,” Stone said. “in 1963, he was a man staring into the abyss. He had two major scandals threatening his place on the ticket.” Stone, a former aide to Nixon, claims that Nixon also believed LBJ was responsible. Nixon recognized Jack Ruby, the man who killed Lee Harvey Oswald, as a man introduced to him “as one of Lyndon Johnson’s boys.”

“Nixon says in the Watergate tapes that the Warren Commission is the greatest hoax ever perpetrated. Nixon is in Dallas the day of the assassination, and he is actually leaving Dallas as JFK is arriving. When he gets to New York, he hears on the radio in his cab that Kennedy has been shot. When he gets to his apartment, the doorman tells him that the president is dead,” Stone explains. “He goes to his apartment. He calls J. Edgar Hoover,” he continued.

“So, he says Edgar, was it one of those right-wing kooks? ‘No,’ Hoover says, ‘Dick, it was a communist.’”

“Well, Nixon believes that for 48 hours, until he sees Jack Ruby blow away Oswald on national television, and then he says I know that guy. In fact, we know from records that are cited in my book that Lyndon Johnson as a congressman asked Congressman Richard Nixon to hire Jack Ruby as a part-time informant for the House un-American Activities Committee, and he is introduced to Nixon in 1947 as a Johnson man, a man Lyndon would like on the payroll. So, I think it speaks to why Nixon says the Warren Commission is a hoax.”

Watch Stone lay out his theory below: Glenn said he would hand off Stone’s book to a friend of his who likes to uncover the truth in history and bust myths. In the next segment, Glenn spoke with Brad Meltzer, author of *History Decoded*, at Dealey Plaza. Meltzer had a much different opinion about what happened that day in Dallas. “This is literally where the seeds are planted. And we all know once you plant a seed of doubt in someone’s mind, especially America’s mind, it’s almost impossible to uproot.”

Meltzer said. First off, both Glenn and Meltzer were clear in their belief that Lee Harvey Oswald was the shooter. And Glenn emphasized that all of the early reporting named Communism as Oswald’s motivation. “Let’s just put blame where it really does belong, a guy named Jack Ruby, right?” Meltzer said. “If Jack Ruby, and listen, there are questions to be asked, right? What is Oswald doing for two years in Russia that nobody knows about, two years unaccounted for? How does Jack Ruby get past an entire police station full of policeman who at that moment should be guarding this guy like he’s the ultimate person, you

know, to be protected on the earth. And in that moment, Jack Ruby robbed history of the truth, because the only man who knows what's going on is Lee Harvey Oswald."

Meltzer also said the Kennedy family's insistence of secrecy with the autopsy obscured the facts and led to the growth of conspiracy theories. So where do all the theories of who really masterminded the assassination come from? Fear. "It's the big question, right? That's the one. It's the grand conspiracy of all. Fifty years we've been asking this question. What's interesting is when you look at the 50 years of answers," Meltzer said. "So, in the 1960s, you know who we thought killed JFK? We said it was the communists. We said it was the Russians. It was the Cubans. It was our great enemy at the height of the Cold War. We also said it was the establishment. It was the 60s, distaste for the establishment. It was rich Texas millionaires who did it. They're the ones who did him in."

"If you look historically in the 70s though, a time of Watergate and Vietnam, you know who killed JFK? It was our own government. The CIA did it."

"and now if you look in the 80s, the height of the Godfather movies and giving way to Scarface, who killed JFK? It was the mob. It was the Mafia." "So, decade by decade, if you want to know who killed JFK, it's whoever America is most afraid of at that moment in time."⁵⁰

Richard M. Nixon: Watergate: Republican officials spied on the Democratic National Headquarters from the Watergate Hotel in 1972. While conspiracy theories suggested underhanded dealings were taking place, it wasn't until 1974 that White House tape recordings linked President Nixon to the break-in and forced him to resign.⁵¹

Historians trying to explain the Watergate break-in usually point to an earlier break-in at the Beverly Hills office of a psychiatrist who had treated Daniel Ellsberg, the man who gave the New York Times the Top-Secret Defense Department history of Vietnam that became known as the Pentagon Papers. Both break-ins had the same "masterminds," former CIA agent E. Howard Hunt and former FBI agent G. Gordon Liddy. Both break-in crews included CIA assets recruited from Florida's Cuban-American community. Both were carried out on Richard Nixon's behalf, but it remains uncertain whether the President knew of plans for either crime before it was committed. The break-in at the psychiatrist's helps explain Watergate, but what explains the break-in at the psychiatrist's? Below is an attempt to explain the conspiracy theories that Richard Nixon formed, and acted on, in the aftermath of the Pentagon Papers' publication.

In tracing the origins of Watergate, most historians rely heavily on two members of Nixon's Inner Circle who ultimately went to prison for conspiracy, obstruction of justice and perjury, that is, for crimes they committed while trying to prevent the truth about Watergate from coming to light. H.R. "Bob" Haldeman, the White House chief of staff, and John D. Ehrlichman, the President's chief domestic policy adviser, both blamed the only member of the Inner Circle who was never charged or convicted, Henry A. Kissinger, the national security adviser.

"The Pentagon Papers affair so often regarded by the press as a classic example of Nixon's paranoia," Haldeman wrote in his 1978 memoir, *The Ends of Power*, "was really Kissinger's premier performance." The Pentagon Papers was a classified 7,000-page study, and the Times started a multi-part series of articles on June 13, 1971. Haldeman describes Nixon's initial reaction to this largest leak in U.S. history as "muted." Kissinger, however, made "angry speeches" to the President, one of which Haldeman witnessed: "As I remember, it ended with charges against Ellsberg by Kissinger that in my opinion go beyond belief. Ellsberg, according to Henry, had weird sexual habits, used drugs, and enjoyed helicopter flights in which he would take potshots at the Vietnamese below."

⁵⁰ Source: <http://www.glennbeck.com/2013/11/20/was-lbj-involved-in-the-kennedy-assassination/?utm.source=glennbeck&utm.medium=contentcopy.link>

⁵¹ A ROUGH GUIDE TO RICHARD NIXON'S CONSPIRACY THEORIES
by Ken Hughes

Haldeman places the responsibility for Nixon's subsequent actions on Kissinger. "by the end of this meeting Nixon was as angry as his foreign affairs chief," Haldeman wrote. "Unfortunately for Henry, it was recorded, and may someday be played to standing room audiences."

The Presidential Recordings Program has transcribed Kissinger's anti-Ellsberg rant for the first time and posted it online. In *The Day, the Presses Stopped: A History of the Pentagon Papers Case*, David Rudenstine notes that the "charges were obviously hyperbolic and in some cases false. Ellsberg, for example, had been Kissinger's colleague, not his student, at Harvard. Nor is there any evidence that Ellsberg ever shot at peasants." Ehrlichman, in his 1982 memoir, *Witness to Power*, also blames Kissinger's passionate denunciations.."

Kissinger fanned Richard Nixon's flame white-hot," Ehrlichman wrote. "Without Henry's stimulus during the June 13-to-July 6 period, the President and the rest of us might have concluded that the Papers were Lyndon Johnson's problem, not ours. After all, there was not a word about Richard Nixon in any of the forty-three volumes."

He's got a point. President Lyndon B. Johnson's defense secretary, Robert S. McNamara, had initiated the historical study, and it climaxes in the spring of 1968, when Johnson announced in the wake of the Tet Offensive that he would not seek reelection.

Haldeman speculated about Kissinger's motives: "Henry had a problem because Ellsberg had been one of his 'boys.'" He had lectured at Kissinger's Defense Policy Seminars at Harvard in the 1960s. Ehrlichman mentions that Ellsberg "had been one of Henry Kissinger's collaborators during the transition period after Nixon won the 1968 presidential election and earliest White House days." Kissinger had given Ellsberg two major assignments: to conduct an independent study by the Rand Corporation, the national security think tank where he was employed, of the new President's Vietnam options; and to draft probing questions about Vietnam for the new national security adviser to address to the bureaucracy for the first National Security Study Memorandum, NSSM-1.

Haldeman and Ehrlichman tell a compelling story complete with a dramatic reversal, vivid dialogue, and an irony-laden subtext. Small wonder historians have found it irresistible to retell. It is, unfortunately, wrong. The matchless record of the Nixon administration, complete with the largest and most comprehensive set of White House tapes, shows that the President set his course toward self-destruction before Kissinger ranted. Historians with no biases in favor of Haldeman or Ehrlichman have nonetheless been their unwitting accomplices in blame placing.

A notable exception to this trend in historiography was Stanley I. Kutler, who wrote in 1990 that "certainly, the President needed little guidance from Henry Kissinger." Kutler played a vital role in making it possible to set the record straight. In 1992, he sued the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) to release the Nixon tapes. Nixon contested the lawsuit, and when he died in 1994, his estate continued the fight for two more years before agreeing to settle.

Nixon was the sixth and last president to secretly record White House conversations, but his tapes outnumber all of the others combined, for the very simple reason that they used on/off switches, while his system was voice-activated. Whenever anyone made a sound in Nixon's presence in the Oval Office from February 16, 1971, to July 13, 1973, the tapes started rolling, immortalizing more than 3,000 hours of conversations. This makes the Nixon tapes an unrivaled historical resource.

With the lawsuit's settlement, the way was clear to making them public, but a congressional mandate required that before any complete conversations were released, NARA had to find, excerpt and make public all the Watergate first. So, in 1996 NARA released 201 hours of conversation segments detailing Nixon's abuses of presidential power. These formed the basis for Kutler's next Watergate book, 1997's, *Abuse of Power: The New Nixon Tapes*, which remains to this day the most extensive collection of Nixon tape transcripts published.

Kutler's transcripts book begins, logically, with the first excerpt following the publication of the Pentagon Papers, a June 17, 1971, conversation in which Nixon orders a break-in at the Brookings Institution, a Washington think tank. This wasn't the President's first Pentagon Papers discussion, just the first one in which he ordered a crime committed. The Times started publishing the Pentagon Papers four days earlier, and Nixon had discussed it every day since. The conversations he had in the Oval Office, the

Executive Office of the President (EOP) in the building next to the White House, and on phones in these two offices and in the Lincoln Sitting Room were captured by Nixon's taping system. But since he didn't order crimes committed in all of them, they didn't become public until NARA started releasing the tapes in chronological order in 1998. Most of them have never been transcribed.

The Abuse of Power tapes may tell us what crimes Nixon committed, but the chronological tapes are essential to understanding his reasons, which were both more rational and more irrational than we knew. Since then, NARA has released generally another 1,800 hours of Nixon tapes, in chronological order starting from the day Nixon began taping. Historiography has not kept up with the expanding record.

In their first conversation after the Pentagon Papers story broke on June 13, 1971, the national security adviser reacted more calmly than the President. Both joined in their habitual denunciation of the New York Times for publishing classified information, but Kissinger saw political benefits as well. "It just shows massive mismanagement of how we got there," Kissinger said. "and it pins it all on Kennedy and Johnson." Nixon laughed and said, "Yeah!"

"So, from that point of view it helps us," Kissinger said. "from the point of view of the relations with Hanoi, it hurts a little, because it just shows a further weakening of resolve." Nixon was worried about something else. The Pentagon Papers study had revealed, indirectly, that the procedures Nixon and Kissinger had set up to protect their own secrets might not be enough. The authors of the Pentagon Papers had relied mainly on documents in the State and Defense Departments, without access to the Johnson White House or National Security Council files, yet the portrait they painted of presidential decision-making was devastating.

Nixon and Kissinger had shut the State and Defense Departments out of the most important foreign policy decisions, but Nixon had to at least inform the departments of some of his decisions. They had reduced their paper trail outside the White House, but not eliminated it. "Look, our file as far as the White House is concerned, we're pretty damn secure. On the other hand, of course, naturally whenever I've had to call Secretary of State William P. Rogers and Defense Secretary Mel Laird in on some of these, on Laos and Cambodia, you can be sure all that's in some file."

Laos and Cambodia, the two nations on South Vietnam's western border, unwillingly provided the "Ho Chi Minh Trail" that Hanoi used to infiltrate soldiers and supplies into the South. Shortly after Nixon took office, he ordered the Air Force to start bombing the Trail through Cambodia. Nixon kept the bombing of Cambodia secret from the American people. A "dual bookkeeping" system hid the B-52 missions to Cambodia by falsely indicating that they targeted Communists in South Vietnam.

In his memoirs, Nixon tries to explain why he kept the bombing secret from the American people, when it was certainly no secret to the Cambodians or the North Vietnamese. By not acknowledging that he was bombing Cambodia at the time, Nixon wrote, he gave its leader, Prince Sihanouk, a way to maintain his official neutrality on the war, and he made it harder for the North Vietnamese to lodge a protest. It's not clear how North Vietnam could lodge a protest, since it would have to acknowledge that it had troops in Cambodia, something it officially denied.

By the day the Pentagon Papers story broke, Nixon's foreign policy rationales for secrecy no longer applied. Cambodia was no longer neutral; a coup had replaced Prince Sihanouk with an openly pro-American government. Besides, Nixon had stopped the B-52 missions in Cambodia in May 1970. The only reason left to keep the bombing secret was political. Nixon knew that revealing it would cause a public outcry.

From the first day of the Pentagon Papers series, Nixon was worried about what their publication meant regarding his own secrets. Kissinger's deputy, Alexander M. Haig, couldn't have realized it, but his speculation about the source of the leak to the Times was bound to make Nixon fear the exposure of another, more damaging, foreign policy secret, one dating back to his 1968 presidential campaign. "Well, I'm sure it came from Defense, and I'm sure it was stolen at the time of the turnover of the administration," Haig said.

"Who in the Pentagon?" Nixon asked. "I will fire the SOB's."

"They are all gone now," Haig replied. "Clifford, Halperin, Gelb."

Leslie H. Gelb had run the Defense Department study that became the Pentagon Papers, Deputy Assistant Defense Secretary, Morton H. Halperin was Gelb's boss, and former Secretary of Defense, Clark M. Clifford, had presided over the completion of the study, which began under his predecessor, McNamara. Haig was wrong. Clifford, Halperin and Gelb did not take part in the Pentagon Papers leak.

However, the three names, Clifford, Halperin and Gelb, had special meaning for Nixon. They had appeared together in print once before, however, in a two-part New York Times series on how President Lyndon B. Johnson switched his Vietnam strategy in 1968 from escalation to negotiation. Clifford, along with "a nest of 'hidden doves' at the Pentagon" that included Halperin and Gelb, got much of the credit in the articles for the strategy change, which culminated, just days before the presidential election, in a development that nearly derailed Nixon's candidacy.

In a televised address to the nation, on October 31, 1968, Johnson announced that the North Vietnamese had backed down from their refusal to engage in peace talks with the South, and he had stopped bombing the North. Nixon had begun the final month of the campaign with a landslide lead over his Democratic rival, Hubert Humphrey, who as Johnson's Vice President had suffered in the polls by association with the Vietnam War. As Johnson's negotiating strategy began to bear fruit, Nixon watched his lead shrink from 15 points in early October to 8 points in late October and finally, on the weekend before the election, to just 2 points. In the end, he won, but by less than 1 percent.

To the Republican presidential candidate and his partisans, the timing of the Bombing Halt, less than a week before Election Day, could not have been more suspicious. The Republican candidate felt certain the negotiation was a political move by Johnson to elect the Democrat, Vice President Humphrey. But Johnson didn't abandon his conditions, diplomatically phrased as "understandings" so the North Vietnamese could say the Bombing Halt was unconditional, in the days prior to the election.

The President had insisted that in addition to sitting down to talk with the South Vietnamese, Hanoi had to stop crossing the Demilitarized Zone and stop shelling South Vietnamese cities. As Election Day grew closer, however, the Soviet Union urged the North to accept them. The Soviets were worried by Nixon's reputation as a hard-liner; four years later, however, the Republican would be their preferred presidential candidate. Johnson didn't back off from his demands; the North finally accepted them.

So why is it that the only break-in that you can hear President Nixon order on tape is an attempt to seize Johnson administration Bombing Halt files from a Washington think tank? During Watergate, Nixon expected people to believe he was too smart to try to bug the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee. It was too big a risk to take for too small a potential payoff in information. So how could he fail to be smart enough to realize that a break-in at the Brookings Institution, a Washington think tank, to steal his predecessor's files was an even bigger risk with an even smaller potential payoff?

"What good will it do you, the Bombing Halt file?" Kissinger asked on June 17, 1971, after Nixon ordered the break-in.

"to blackmail [Johnson]," Nixon said. "Because he used the Bombing Halt for political purposes."

"Remember, I used to give you information about it at the time," said Kissinger, who had been in a position to know about the negotiations. Before Nixon became President, Johnson had employed Kissinger, then a prominent foreign policy intellectual and Harvard professor, in an earlier, failed Vietnam peace initiative.

The contacts Kissinger made within the Democratic administration enabled him to act as an informer to the Republican presidential candidate during the 1968 campaign. He won the Republicans' trust by abusing the Democrats. "to the best of my knowledge," Kissinger reminded Nixon, "there was never any conversation in which they said we'll hold it until the end of October. I wasn't in on the discussions here. I just saw the instructions to former head of the U.S. delegation to the Paris Peace Talks, Ambassador-at-Large W. Averell Harriman."

Nixon repeated the order to break into Brookings in the following days. Why? He had no reason, other than his own suspicions, to believe that the Bombing Halt files would prove Johnson timed the negotiating breakthrough for political reasons. But even if they had, what good would that do Nixon now? The 1968 election was long over, and Johnson would never run for President again. Why commit a criminal, impeachable, offense just to get dirt on a retired politician? There was something Nixon couldn't tell his

Inner Circle. The Johnson administration's Bombing Halt files contained dirt on Nixon's presidential campaign.

Three days before the 1968 election, Johnson had phoned the highest-ranking Republican in the federal government at that moment, Senate Minority Leader Everett M. Dirksen of Illinois, and delivered an ultimatum. The President brandished FBI intelligence regarding attempts by a Nixon campaign official to thwart Johnson's peace conference. If the attempts didn't cease, Johnson said, he would go public. "I think it would shock America if a principal candidate was playing with a source like this on a matter this important," Johnson said.

The President didn't go into too much detail. The National Security Agency had intercepted some damning communications between the South Vietnamese embassy in Washington and its home government in Saigon. "on October 23 and October 27," 1968, according to the State Department's official history of the Bombing Halt period, South Vietnamese Ambassador "Bui Diem reported to Saigon the advice of the Nixon campaign to abort the understanding reached in Paris by refusing to attend the expanded peace talks." South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu announced his refusal to take part in the peace negotiations on the same day that Johnson delivered his ultimatum to Dirksen.

Thieu's refusal stopped Nixon's freefall in the polls. Johnson, however, had ordered an FBI wiretap and surveillance on the South Vietnamese embassy, and he had a name: Anna C. Chennault, widow of General Claire Chennault, the World War II commander of the Flying Tigers, a Republican fundraiser and a pillar of the "China Lobby," who had blamed Democrats for the rise of Communist Mao Tse-Tung.

Johnson told Dirksen that Thieu had agreed earlier to take part in the peace conference, but "then we got some of our friends involved, some of it your old China crowd, and here's the latest information we got. The FBI agent says that she's; they've just talked to the 'boss' in New Mexico, and he says that 'you must hold out, just hold on until after the election.'" Johnson wanted the political interference with his negotiations to end. "If they don't want it on the front pages, they better quit it," he said. "They ought to stop this business about trying to keep the conference from taking place."

Johnson never did go public with the information he had. He couldn't, not unless he was willing to disclose intelligence methods, such as the National Security Agency's monitoring of communications between Saigon and its embassy. And if Johnson couldn't reveal that, he'd have a hard time explaining what led him to order an FBI tap on the phone of the chairwoman of the National Republican Women's Finance Committee which was one of Chennault's several campaign roles. The tap was justified on national security grounds, since Chennault was interfering with the President's constitutional authority to negotiate an end to a war, but Johnson couldn't explain how he reached that conclusion without publicly confirming that the NSA eavesdropped on an ally.⁵²

Besides, proof of Chennault's involvement was not proof of Nixon's. Only in 1980, years after Johnson's death and Nixon's resignation, did Chennault reveal that during the 1968 campaign, the Republican candidate had held a meeting in New York with her, Bui Diem, and John N. Mitchell, who was then Nixon's campaign chairman and later his Attorney General. Chennault quoted the candidate as saying, "Anna is my good friend.. I know you also consider her a friend, so please rely on her from now on as the only contact between myself and your government. If you have any message for me, please give it to Anna and she will relay it to me and I will do the same in the future." In other words, when the South Vietnamese heard from Chennault during the campaign, they knew the message came from Nixon himself. Johnson suspected Nixon's role, but he couldn't prove it. He had the goods on Chennault, but not on the Republican candidate, which may be another reason why he didn't carry out his threat to go public.

After the election, FBI Director, J. Edgar Hoover told Nixon that Johnson had ordered the FBI not only to wiretap Chennault, but also to bug the Republican candidate's plane. Hoover was, as his deputy, Cartha "Deke" DeLoach, later wrote, "embellishing." The FBI never did bug Nixon's plane. But Nixon didn't know that. He did know that the government's Bombing Halt files contained intelligence regarding

⁵² It's interesting that Nixon got busted when presidents before him did the same thing he did; spying on allies and political rivals using the federal intelligence gathering agencies, like the FBI, the CIA and the NSA. That doesn't release either from liability. Both were corrupted by the lust for power and control.

Chennault's efforts on his behalf to block Johnson's peace conference, and Hoover had led him to believe that the nonexistent bug on his campaign plane had captured his own private, candid words on this and other campaign matters. Understandably, Nixon became obsessed with getting his hands on these files. In his first month in office, he ordered his chief of staff to make a complete report on the Bombing Halt with all the government documents.

Tom Charles Huston, who later became notorious for the "Huston Plan" to use wiretaps and illegal break-ins for domestic intelligence, got assigned to write the Bombing Halt report. It was Huston who claimed, in a heretofore unpublished memo, that Gelb and Brookings had vital documents.

"After six months of screwing around with the National Security Council (NSC) staff, I have done a little digging on my own and have found that there exists within the Department of Defense (DOD) a report which was prepared on the instructions of former Assistant Defense Secretary, Paul Warnke by the International Security Affairs (ISA) staff on all events leading up to the bombing halt," Huston wrote Haldeman on March 13, 1970.²¹ "I have also learned that Clark Clifford, Paul Warnke and the Brookings Institution have copies of this report.... A fellow by the name of Les Gelb who was a top aide to Warnke is now at Brookings and apparently is the one responsible for securing these documents." It's worth noting that no evidence has emerged that this report even exists.

"Huston swears to God there's a file on it at Brookings," Haldeman reminded Nixon on June 17, 1971. "Bob, now you remember Huston's plan?" Nixon said. "Implement it... I mean, I want it implemented on a thievery basis. Goddamn it, get in and get those files. Blow the safe and get it." This is a crazy thing to do just for files that could damage Lyndon Johnson politically, but not as crazy a thing to do for files that could damage Richard Nixon politically.

As closely as Leslie Gelb was associated with the Bombing Halt in the Nixon White House, the second name on Haig's list, Morton H. Halperin, was even more closely associated with the secret bombing of Cambodia. Kissinger had hired the former Johnson administration official onto the NSC staff and had informed him of the secret bombing. When the New York Times ran a story in May 1969 on the initial Cambodian bombing runs, Nixon had the FBI tap Halperin's home phone.

Nixon kept the wiretap going for 21 months, even after Halperin resigned from the NSC in September of 1969, even after he ended his consultancy with the NSC in April 1970, and even after he became a foreign policy adviser to a Democratic presidential candidate, Senator Edmund S. Muskie, D-Maine, also in April 1970. The wiretap lasted until February 1971 and never turned up any evidence that Halperin had ever leaked anything. Halperin sued over the wiretap shortly after it was disclosed in 1973 pursued for nearly 20 years until Kissinger gave him a formal apology.

As for the third name on Haig's list, former Defense Secretary, Clark M. Clifford, was not only a reminder of Nixon's near-political-death experience with the 1968 Bombing Halt, but more recently of his biggest foreign policy secret, his "decent interval" exit strategy from Vietnam. Nixon's announced strategy was "Vietnamization and negotiation," his slogan for training the South Vietnamese military to defend its government itself and for securing the Communists' agreement to abide by the results of elections in the South. The goal was a self-defending, self-governing South Vietnam, and Nixon stood firmly behind those goals in public, even as he abandoned them in private.

By the time of the Pentagon Papers leak, he had settled on a "decent interval" strategy. Since Vietnamization was not going to achieve the goal of self-defense, Nixon secretly decided not to bring the troops home until shortly before or after the 1972 presidential election. And since he couldn't force Hanoi to abandon military conquest of the South, he was trying to negotiate a "decent interval," a period of a year or two between his final, election-timed troop withdrawal and Hanoi's final military victory.

This way he could arrange the appearance that his "Vietnamization and negotiation" strategy had succeeded, even though he expected it to fail. Publicly, he claimed great political courage for prolonging an unpopular war, but really it was political calculation. If he admitted that he added several years and several thousand casualties to the war and still lost it, he would go down in the 1972 election and in history as a President who lost a war. He was determined to avoid that, even if it cost American lives.

So, the President spent the years leading up to his reelection battling attempts by congressional Democrats to force him to bring the troops earlier than politically convenient. Clifford touched a nerve the

week before the publication of the Pentagon Papers when he made a speech in Washington saying that the United States could reach agreement with Hanoi to end American involvement in the war by the end of 1971 and get American prisoners of war released in 30 days. This wasn't that far from Nixon's private view.

"Henry, i've never been much for negotiation, but I think when we finally get down to the nut-cutting, it's very much to their advantage to have a negotiation to get us the hell out and give us those prisoners," Nixon told Kissinger on March 19, 1971, when they were alone in the Oval Office. "If they'll make that kind of a deal, we'll make that any time they're ready."

"Well, we've got to get enough time to get out," Kissinger said. "We have to make sure that they don't knock the whole place over... We can't have it knocked over brutally, to put it brutally, before the election."

"That's right," Nixon said. "That's the Democratic National Committee!" By the morning of June 14, 1971, the second day of the Times' Pentagon Papers series, Nixon was ready to lash out. He told his chief of staff to tell someone in Congress or in the press to accuse Gelb and the Brookings Institution. "Charge Gelb. Use his name. Had the information. He leaked it," Nixon said. "and charge Brookings. Let's get Brookings involved in this." Halperin, like Gelb, was a senior fellow at Brookings. "How much does Halperin know?" Nixon asked. "for example, does he know about the Menu series?" "Menu" was the codename for the secret bombing of Cambodia.

"I'm not sure," Haldeman said.

"Henry talks an awful lot," Nixon said. "Chrissakes, he went over and talked to Brookings people himself. I warned him about it. I said, 'Henry, don't go over there.' You know, I said, 'Those people, that's, that's the Democratic National Committee!'"

Haldeman reminded the President that Huston had suggested dispatching officials to Brookings for a routine security check and have them confiscate classified documents. This approach, unlike a break-in, would at least arguably be legal.

By lunchtime that day, Nixon had the name of the man who actually did give a copy of the Pentagon Papers to the Times, Daniel Ellsberg. It came from none other than Johnson's former national security adviser, Walt W. Rostow. Haig had checked his suspicions with Rostow. "He said he doesn't think it's Gelb," Haig told Nixon. "It may be, he says he doesn't think so. And he doesn't think it's Halperin." Nixon was unconvinced. "Gelb was in on it, wasn't he? Wasn't he in charge?"

Gelb ran the Pentagon Papers study and was strongly against the war, Haig said, but Rostow had "said whoever did this could not be a good Democrat. He said he would have to be a radicalized individual." Only someone who was willing to lose his security clearance forever, to never work in government on foreign policy again, would engineer the largest leak in U.S. history. Halperin and Gelb were both advising Democratic presidential candidates, would both serve in future Democratic administrations.

Ellsberg was a former Marine. He'd gone to Vietnam himself, looking for ways to win the war. He didn't find them. When he came back, he worked on the Pentagon Papers study, trying to figure out how things had gone wrong. He got permission from Halperin and Gelb to read the entire study and became convinced that getting it out to the public was essential. There's no evidence he informed either man about his plans to leak the study, and it would have been stupid for him to tell them, since they'd have a strong incentive to turn him in just to protect themselves.

Rostow had told Nixon all he needed to know. If Nixon had listened, he might have saved his presidency. But this President was a conspiracy theorist. Among the many people in public life to comment on the Pentagon Papers was Olof Palme, the prime minister of Sweden. "He said that this proves that it was a war prepared by deceit," Kissinger informed the President on June 15, 1971, the third day of the series, "that the American government has undermined democracy, and it must withdraw unconditionally from Vietnam." Kissinger suggested recalling the American ambassador.

"Also," Nixon said, "it shows that that's part of the conspiracy, in my opinion."

"Oh, yeah," Kissinger agreed.

“He wouldn’t otherwise pay any attention to it,” Nixon said. “Somebody got to him.” The President didn’t explain why anybody would want to get to the prime minister of Sweden. “Henry, there is a conspiracy. You understand?”

“I believe it now. I didn’t believe it formerly, but I believe it now,” Kissinger said. “Well, the whole syndrome, Clifford, the New York Times, the veterans; they don’t all happen at once by accident.”

Nixon didn’t confide all his fears to Kissinger. On June 17, 1971, after the news media had started zeroing in on Ellsberg as the source of the leak, Nixon said, “Incidentally, I hope to God he’s, he’s not Jewish, is he?” The only Jewish member of Nixon’s Inner Circle, Kissinger, a refugee from the Nazis who returned to Germany during World War II as a soldier in the American army, was not in the room. Present were Chief of Staff, Haldeman; political operative, Charles W. “Chuck” Colson; and White House Press Secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler; none of them Jews.

“I’m sure he is,” Haldeman said, chuckling. “All the spies up to now have been Jewish. Why the hell wouldn’t he be?”

“Oh, I know, I know, I know, I know,” Nixon said. “But it’s a bad wicket for us.” The President recalled his youthful days on the House Un-American Activities Committee, when he had played a leading role in the Alger Hiss investigation. The later antics of Joe McCarthy would make the words “Communist spy” sound slightly ridiculous, but Hiss was a genuine Communist spy, a member of a real spy ring that had given classified documents to the Soviet Union.

“We had the goods on all these people, but who the hell, Nathan Silvermine. John Abt. Also, Victor Perlo. They were all of them Jews. It was a whole Jewish ring,” Nixon said. “The only two non-Jews were spy-turned-informant, Whitaker Chambers and Hiss. Many thought that Hiss was. He could’ve been a half, but back a-ways, but he was not by religion. The only two non-Jews. Every other one was a Jew. And it raised hell with us. But in this case, I hope to God he’s not a Jew.”

“Well,” Haldeman said, “I suspect he is.” (Ellsberg had Jewish ancestors, but he was raised as a Christian Scientist, the same religion as Haldeman.)

“I know,” Nixon said, chuckling to himself now, “except you can’t tell by the name.”

“Mort Halperin.”

“Halperin is, yeah,” Nixon said.

“Gelb is.”

“Is Gelb a Jew?” Nixon asked. “Hell, well, then, by golly, we’ve got to—what is Defense Secretary, Laird doing and what is Secretary of State, Rogers doing about cleaning up their own security situations?”

“Well, what are we doing about cleaning up our own here?” Haldeman asked.

“Well, that’s what I mean,” Nixon said. “I mean Henry’s shop.” The National Security Council staff. “Just don’t know when one of ’em’s gonna run out and take a lot of papers.”

“We are in no position to criticize State or Defense on security leaks or on disloyal personnel,” Haldeman said. “I thought we’d cleared ’em all out,” Nixon said.

As we’ve just seen, Haldeman had no business blaming Kissinger for inflaming the President’s paranoia. The chief of staff himself encouraged Nixon’s paranoia about Jews, and did so before Kissinger delivered his anti-Ellsberg tirade. The memoirs of Haldeman, Ehrlichman and Nixon himself are predictably silent on the role that anti-Semitism played in their collective downfall.

To compare the Pentagon Papers passages of RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon with the White House tapes is to witness the collapse of an elaborate plea bargain with history. The memoirist repeatedly cops⁵³ to lesser charges to evade more serious ones, especially when it comes to explaining the beginning of his presidency’s end.

The literary challenge he faced was indeed most daunting: how to come up with a plausible explanation for his self-destructive behavior without mentioning either his rational fears such as the potential disclosure of his politically damaging secrets regarding the secret bombing of Cambodia and Laos, the sabotage of the 1968 Bombing Halt negotiations might leak, or contingency plans to bomb and mine North Vietnam or his irrational fears of Jews and others. He knew that one day his tapes would become

⁵³ Plea bargain

public, over his dead body, if he had any say in the matter, which he did, and that his memoirs provided his best chance to defuse the bombshells he knew were lurking in the archives.

Nixon admits to having had a conspiracy theory about the Pentagon Papers, but doesn't really explain what it was. To understand him and his theory, we must turn to Richard Hofstadter, the great 20th century historian who wrote the classic essay on conspiracy theorists, *"The Paranoid Style in American Politics."* Hofstadter wrote before Nixon's presidency and died during it, before Watergate, so it's remarkable how well Nixon fits his classification. When Hofstadter mentions "secret organizations set up combat secret organizations," he could not know that within a few years a president, convinced that there was a conspiracy poised to leak his politically damaging foreign policy secrets, would try to combat it by setting up a secret police organization in violation of the Constitution.

Hofstadter coined a witty phrase for this kind of behavior: "Imitation of the Enemy." This is the key to understanding Nixon. Before Nixon victimized others, he convinced himself that they were victimizing him. By telling himself that he was acting in self-defense, Nixon could go from condemning the idea that the end justifies the means to embracing it in a matter of moments: "We're up against an enemy. A conspiracy. They're using any means. We are going to use any means. Is that clear? Did they get the Brookings Institute raided last night? No. Get it done. I want it done. I want the Brookings Institute safe cleaned out."

Conspiracy theories, as Hofstadter noted, can target any demographic group. Nixon's, as I've written elsewhere, targeted three: Jews, intellectuals, and Ivy Leaguers. Nixon privately called all three groups "arrogant" and said they placed themselves "above the law." By telling himself that Jews, intellectuals and Ivy Leaguers were immoral, even criminal, Nixon gave himself permission to do immoral, even criminal, things to any Jew, intellectual or Ivy Leaguer whom he feared could cause him political harm.

Of course, he didn't say this in his memoirs. "from the first," he wrote, "there had been rumors and reports of conspiracy." Rumors and reports aren't much to base life-changing decisions on, but at least they sound better than prejudice and irrational hatred. "We learned that an aide to Elliot Richardson at the State Department had given Ellsberg access to the current Vietnam documents in 1970. Even after the information in them was leaked, presumably by Ellsberg, Richardson had refused to remove the aide." This leak was much smaller than Nixon makes it sound.

The unnamed aide was Charles M. Cooke (not the famous admiral in charge of U.S. naval planning during World War II, but his son). Cooke freely acknowledged at the time that he had showed Ellsberg his file on South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu's decision to jail a political rival, Tran Ngoc Chau, a member of the National Assembly. Cooke said he brought Ellsberg in as a consultant to help prepare a memo on the Chau case. Cooke showed Ellsberg his Chau file. Most people would not refer to a single file as "the current Vietnam documents in 1970," but Nixon did. It is true that cables from the file that Cooke showed Ellsberg eventually appeared in the Washington Star.

"Cooke volunteered the fact that he had shown the papers to Ellsberg," Haldeman reported to Nixon, "and that in his opinion Ellsberg could very well have been the leak on it." Ellsberg had a security clearance at the time Cooke showed him the cables, so, as Haldeman put it, "There was no security violation in any way, shape or form."

The President, however, suspected the worst. "He's one of these Harvards, isn't he?" Nixon asked. "I checked his record. He's a Harvard, class of '63." Actually, Cooke is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. An imaginary Ivy League background was enough for Nixon. "The guys from the best family are most likely to develop that arrogance that puts them above the law," Nixon said. "They all are that way. All these Harvard people." Later," he added, "Remember that any intellectual is tempted to put himself above the law. That's the rule that I've known all my life. Any intellectual, particularly; watch what schools they're from. If they're from any Eastern schools or Berkeley, those are particularly the potential bad ones."

Ellsberg, Halperin and Gelb were all think tank intellectuals with Ivy League degrees, and Nixon privately referred to them as "the three Jews.... Basically, who the hell are these people that stole the papers? It's too bad. I'm sorry. I was hoping one of them would be a gentile."

Nixon inflated the “rumors and reports of conspiracy” in his memoirs, the alternative being to admit that he judged people based on their religious and ethnic backgrounds and where they went to school. “The earliest report, later discounted, centered on a friend of Ellsberg, a former Defense Department employee who was then a Fellow at the Brookings Institution.” Actually, Nixon decided to have a senator, representative or newspaper columnist accuse Gelb of involvement in the Pentagon Papers leak on the basis of no report at all, merely Haig’s speculation.

“I was told that a copy of the bombing halt material and other secret documents had been taken from the Pentagon to Brookings by the same man.” Nixon doesn’t mention that the source of this bad information was Huston. Elsewhere in his memoirs, Nixon had defended the Huston Plan as a necessary tool for fighting domestic terrorism. He did not admit that he wanted to use it to break into a think tank to steal politically explosive files from a former official of a Democratic administration. “When I was told that the Bombing Halt file was still at Brookings, I was furious and frustrated.” Nixon didn’t receive any independent confirmation or new report that the file was at Brookings. Haldeman just reminded him of what Huston had said over a year earlier.

“in early July,” Nixon writes, “John Mitchell reported that the Justice Department had continuing indications that Ellsberg had acted as part of a conspiracy.”⁴⁵ Translation: Justice found out that various peace activists had helped Ellsberg distribute the Pentagon Papers to the newspapers. Nixon had earlier dismissed such reports as politically unhelpful. “We’ve got a real break in this regard, I think, Mr. President,” Colson said on June 23, 1971. “The revelation that an organized peace group has been distributing these documents to the newspapers.” Colson suggested the peace group would make a “perfect enemy.”

“A peace group is not good,” Nixon said. “If you can hang it on an anti-American peace group or some damn thing . . . Communist peace group.” The memoirist continues, writing that “we received a report that the Soviet Embassy in Washington had received a set of the Pentagon Papers before they had been published in the New York Times.” There was an FBI report, never confirmed, that the Soviet Embassy had received a copy of the Pentagon Papers on June 17, 1971; four days after, not before, the Times started publishing. The White House got the report on June 25 but didn’t request further FBI investigations.

Once he’s through enumerating his “rumors and reports of a conspiracy,” Nixon still has to explain why he didn’t just hand them over to the federal agency with the authority to investigate criminal conspiracies. Why set up an illegal secret police agency like the SIU when you already have a legal police agency like the FBI?

The memoirist claims Director Hoover was “dragging his feet.” The tapes, however, reveal that Hoover was willing to take the investigation farther than Nixon was willing to go. “Well, I’d like to check some of the other people around him,” Nixon told Hoover during a July 1, 1971, telephone call. “I think there’s a conspiracy involved here.”

“Exactly,” Hoover replied. “of course, this fellow, Neil Sheehan of the New York Times is involved.” Sheehan was the reporter who got the Pentagon Papers from Ellsberg. Nixon wouldn’t touch that hot potato. “of course, he’s guilty as hell,” he told his aides the next day, “but you prosecute a newspaper man, you’re in a difficult proposition. But, good God, if you go after an Ellsberg or that fellow Cooke that’s working for this Richardson...”

In his memoirs, Nixon implied that the FBI director feared a media backlash: “He evidently felt that the media would automatically make Ellsberg look like a martyr, and the FBI like the ‘heavy,’ if it pursued the case vigorously.” On the tape, Hoover does indeed fret about Ellsberg’s potential media martyrdom, but only in advising Nixon to be careful about the public statements he makes on the case. It was Hoover, not Nixon, who was willing to prosecute one of the proverbial men who buy ink by the barrel. Nixon lists other reasons for doubting Hoover, who died in 1972 and could no longer defend himself.

But the memoirs leave out the real reason why Nixon knew the FBI would not do what he felt had to be done. The President wanted to leak the information the FBI collected to the news media. “Try Ellsberg in the press,” Nixon told the Attorney General. “Everything, John, that there is on the investigation, get it out. Leak it out. I want to destroy him in the press” This is a crime, obstruction of justice. Mitchell agreed that it had to be done, but not that he was the one to do it, saying, “I don’t want to go to jail.”

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is best known by its nickname, “The Plumbers,” but it’s a misleading one. Plumbers fix leaks; one of Nixon’s motives for creating the SIU was to engineer leaks. Nixon needed it not for law enforcement, but for law breaking. “I don’t give a shit about the law,” he said. “Forget the law.” His imaginary conspiracy couldn’t top this for arrogance or putting oneself above the law.

His imitation of the enemy was Nixon didn’t limit his conspiracy theorizing to the politics of foreign policy. Domestically, rising unemployment and inflation dogged the economy and threatened him politically. No wonder his imaginary conspiracy of Jews, intellectuals, and Ivy Leaguers soon encompassed the federal agency that calculates the unemployment and inflation rates (the Bureau of Labor Statistics) and the one official other than himself who wielded the greatest influence on the economy (the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board).

The President had expected favorable press coverage on July 2, 1971, when the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) announced a big drop in the unemployment rate from 6.2 to 5.6 percent. When Nixon learned that the front page of Washington’s Evening Star said, “The Labor Department warned that the dip might have been caused by a statistical quirk,” he ordered an investigation to find out who was responsible. “He’s got to be fired,” Nixon said.

A statistical quirk did cause the drop, and Nixon knew it.⁵⁴ It was the result of the standard seasonal adjustment BLS makes to the unemployment rate. Summer vacation for students changes the employment picture dramatically. There’s a big influx of students into the job market in June and a big exodus in September. It has nothing to do with the health of the economy, what economists call the “underlying” job market. It’s just students starting and ending their summer jobs. Here’s the tricky part: BLS conducted its unemployment survey during “the regular survey week, defined to be the week including the 12th day of each month.”

In other words, officials look at the calendar, see which week contains the 12th, and do the survey from Sunday to Saturday of that week. In June 1971, the 12th fell on a Saturday, so the survey came early in the month, June 6–12, before many students had started vacation. Since there were fewer students looking for jobs at the time, the unemployment rate was lower. If the 12th had fallen on a Sunday, then the survey week would have been June 12 to June 18, there would have been more students out of school looking for jobs, and the “seasonal adjustment” would not have made it look like there was a big drop in unemployment.

In fact, when the Office of Management and Budget Director, George P. Shultz informed the President of the drop-in unemployment two days earlier, he’d described it, in these exact words, as “a statistical quirk.”

“I understand statistical aberrations,” Nixon told Colson the day after the announcement. “Why didn’t they say there were statistical aberrations when it went up?” Well, they did. The same kind of statistical quirk arose the previous September, when the students were leaving their summer jobs to head back to school. Once again, the 12th had fallen on a Saturday, so the survey week was September 6–12. In September 1970, there had been a big jump in unemployment, from 5.1 to 5.5 percent, its highest point in six years. “But officials of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, traditionally insulated from the political arena, were quick to explain,” the Washington Post reported on its front page on October 3, 1970, “that the big increase could be attributed in large part to a quirk in timing.”

BLS had treated the big rise in unemployment the same way it treated the big drop. Newspapers had used the same word for both, a “quirk.” This made no difference to Nixon, who focused his wrath on the assistant commissioner of labor statistics, Harold Goldstein. Nixon had been wanting to get rid of Goldstein for months. When unemployment fell two-tenths of a percent in January 1971, Goldstein said the drop was “marginally significant” during the regular news briefing on the unemployment rate. The next month, Goldstein described another two-tenths drop as “sort of mixed,” and the administration canceled the regular news briefings altogether. Again, it didn’t matter that Goldstein had also made little of small rises in unemployment, like a two-tenths rise in July 1969.

⁵⁴ CAUTION: The following contains math.

“I think the one thing, Mr. President, that you should insist upon,” Colson said, “is that they reorganize that Bureau. Now, in the process of reorganizing it, I think we’ll get this guy’s resignation. And we’ll put in a politician. That’s what we ought to have in there.”

Nixon agreed and summoned Shultz and Labor Secretary James D. Hodgson into the Oval Office. “I want them to do it even-handed. And they’re not doing it that way,” Nixon said. “Every press release has been loaded against us. And deliberately.”

The President asked for a plan. “Well,” Shultz said, “I think the only kind of organization that would be sensible under these circumstances is a reorganization that separates Goldstein from the employment, uh, unemployment figures and gets him into something else entirely.” One of Shultz’s aides already thought BLS needed reorganizing.

“I don’t think the President would ever have any confidence,” Colson said, “in any other arrangement.” Later, after Shultz and Hodgson had left, Nixon said, “Well listen, are they all Jews over there?”

“Every one of them,” Colson said. “Well, a couple of exceptions.”

“See my point?”

“You know goddamn well they’re out to kill us.”

“You Can’t Trust the Bastards”

Before lunch, Nixon gave his chief of staff an order. “Now, point: White House Personnel Director Frederic V. Malek, is not Jewish.”

“No,” Haldeman said.

“All right, I want a look at any sensitive areas around where Jews are involved, Bob. See, the Jews are all through the government, and we have got to get in those areas. We’ve got to get a man in charge who is not Jewish to control the Jewish . . . Do you understand?”

“I sure do.”

“The government is full of Jews,” Nixon said. “Second, most Jews are disloyal. You know what I mean? You have a White House Consultant, Leonard Garment, and a Kissinger and, frankly, a White House Speechwriter William L. Safire, and, by God, they’re exceptions. But, Bob, generally speaking, you can’t trust the bastards. They turn on you.” It would have been more accurate to say that Jews couldn’t trust Nixon, that he turned on them.

On July 23, 1971, the Times ran a front-page story revealing the administration’s bargaining position in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) with the Soviet Union. Nixon was livid enough to make a private comment revealing that he understood full well that the Pentagon Papers leak had caused America no harm: “This SALT leak does affect the national security. This particular one. This isn’t like the Pentagon Papers. This one involves a current negotiation.”

On July 24, Haldeman and Ehrlichman gave the President an update on the conspiracy investigation. By then, the SIU was in place, along with the machinery for trying Ellsberg, along with his imaginary co-conspirators in the press. Ehrlichman reported that Deputy Attorney General, Robert C. “Mardian was giving me raw data” from the Pentagon Papers investigation on Gelb.

“That’s great,” Nixon said. He instructed Ehrlichman to leak it to the press. “I am not interested in the legal things,” the President said. “Does Mardian understand?”

“I haven’t let Mardian get into that at all,” Ehrlichman said. “We’re going to put that out here through Colson and Hunt.” Nixon then expanded his conspiracy theory. Colson had told him that 16 people on the Bureau of Labor Statistics staff were registered Democrats, only one a registered Republican.

“The point that he did not get into that I want to know, Bob, how many were Jews?” Nixon asked. “There’s a Jewish cabal, you know, running through this, working with people like Federal Reserve Chairman Arthur F. Burns and the rest. And they all only talk to Jews.”

Political paranoids can’t get enough of the Fed, but Nixon is probably the only one ever to form a conspiracy theory about a Fed chairman he had personally appointed. Burns was a Nixon man, the chief conservative economist on the White House staff before Nixon nominated him to the Fed in 1969. Congress set up the Fed to be independent of politics, but that didn’t stop Burns from secretly assuring Nixon that he

would use its power over the economy to reduce unemployment for his reelection year. The only official Burns was conspiring with was Richard Nixon.

But the Fed chairman had incurred his patron's displeasure. Nixon had wanted a conservative economist at the Fed but grew angry when he got one. As unemployment rose to politically harmful levels, Nixon wanted the Fed to follow an "easy money" policy that would reduce interest rates, making it easier for businesses to borrow money, expand operations and hire more employees. Burns, however, warned that this would fuel inflation. On the morning of Nixon's "Jewish cabal" comment, the Times ran this front-page headline: "Burns Says Inflation Curb Is Making Scant Progress."

Typically, if Nixon said you were conspiring against him, he was about to conspire against you. "Now, what do you want to do with Arthur Burns?" Nixon asked Haldeman and Ehrlichman that afternoon. "Raise his salary?" The President asked for a press leak suggesting that the President's advisers had recommended increasing the membership of the Federal Reserve Board.

On July 28, the United Press International newswire ran an exclusive story: "President Nixon is considering a proposal to double the size of the Federal Reserve Board, it was learned today. The suggestion, if put before Congress, could touch off a controversy rivaling President Franklin D. Roosevelt's attempt to "pack" the Supreme Court.

"Administration officials also disclosed that Nixon rejected a request from Arthur F. Burns, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, for a \$20,000 a year pay raise. Burns currently makes \$42,500. "Burns, however, denied he had 'lobbied for an increase in salary.'"

Meanwhile, Haldeman tried to find out how many BLS employees were Jews. "What's the status of your analysis of the BLS," he wrote to Personnel Chief Malek on July 26, "specifically of the 21-key people. What is their demographic breakdown?"

Malek replied the next day. "We were able to obtain political affiliation checks on 35 of the 50 names listed on their organization chart." There were 25 Democrats, 5 unregistered, 4 independents, and 1 Republican.

"in addition, 13 out of the 35 fit the other demographic criterion that was discussed." There was a handwritten note: "Most of these are at the top."

Later that day, the President asked, "Did you ever get the number of Jews that were in BLS?" "I got their biographies yesterday. I'm having them analyzed," Ehrlichman said. "Oh, the radio and the wires are full this morning that Arthur Burns wanted a salary increase."

"I wonder where that came from," Nixon said. "I'll never forget Arthur sitting in here telling us a year ago there shouldn't be a salary increase and that the Cabinet officers should give it back."

Burns got smeared; Goldstein got forced out. "Harold Goldstein will be moved to a routine, non-sensitive post in another part of BLS," Malek reported to Haldeman on September 8, 1971. "He has been told of this and will move quietly when the reorganization is announced.

"A sensitive and loyal Republican is also being recruited for the employment analysis function being vacated by Goldstein. "Peter Henle, Associate Commissioner for Economic and Social Research, and Leon Greenberg, Associate Commissioner for Statistical Standards and Operations" two other Jews, "will be transferred when the reorganization is announced."

Goldstein, Greenberg, and Henle weren't the only victims of Nixon's conspiracy theory in September 1971. On September 3, the SIU broke into the office of Lewis J. Fielding, Ellsberg's psychiatrist. After SIU codirector, Egil "Bud" Krogh, pled guilty to violating Fielding's civil rights, he made a statement explaining the burglary's aims. At the top was "to ascertain if Dr. Ellsberg acted alone or with collaborators." Following the break-in, Liddy showed Krogh the Browning knife he had drawn outside the psychiatrist's office, ready to kill, "if there were no other recourse." Luckily, the police didn't arrive in time to stop this crime.

The break-in produced nothing, of course, on the conspiracy theory, and according to members of the SIU, they didn't even find Ellsberg's file. One week later, Ehrlichman urged Nixon to abandon plans for a congressional investigation of the conspiracy theory. "Henry is tied in so close," he said, "to Gelb, Halperin and even Ellsberg, that I don't know where it'll end."

“i’ve had a feeling all along that that deep down was the problem,” Nixon said, “and that Henry is desperately concerned about that.” Guilt by association is a poor political weapon if it leads back to one’s own associates. But Kissinger’s associations weren’t news. They were an excuse to give up, not a reason. Even after putting themselves above the law in pursuit of an imaginary conspiracy, the President and his men had come up empty. Naturally, they blamed their failure on the Inner Circle’s sole Jew, intellectual, and Ivy League professor.⁵⁵

Jimmie Carter: The Conspiracy theories involving Jimmy Carter include the American Embassy in Tehran that was overrun by Iranian students. At the time, the Carter administration was deeply split on what to do about the crisis in Iran, with many senior officials in denial about the Shah’s deteriorating position. The US ambassador, William Sullivan, had accepted the Shah’s demise and was planning a political transition and building bridges to the opposition. Zbigniew Brzezinski, the national security advisor, had lost faith in the state department’s reporting on Iran and was open to the idea of a military takeover. Cyrus Vance, the secretary of state, was preoccupied by the SALT II and the Egypt-Israel peace process, and recoiled at the idea of a coup: he advised that the Shah should either offer sweeping reforms or make way for a government of national unity.

But Sullivan had persuaded Vance to send an emissary to meet Khomeini in Paris. Theodore Eliot, a senior American diplomat who had served in Iran, was selected but at the last moment Brzezinski managed to persuade Carter to veto the meeting for fear that it might weaken the resolve of the fledgling government of Prime Minister Shapour Bakhtiar. An incandescent Sullivan sent a berating memo to Washington on 10 January, calling this intervention a “gross and perhaps irretrievable mistake.” Vance had to persuade Carter not to fire Sullivan for insubordination.

Carter had not yet given up on the Shah or Bakhtiar. Brzezinski was deeply suspicious of the reporting coming out of the US Embassy in Tehran, believing it overly sympathetic to the Shah’s opposition. The relationship between Brzezinski’s staff in the White House and the state department’s Iran desk had broken down. Sullivan, meanwhile, pursued his contacts with the opposition and kept the full extent of his plans to himself. Few of his colleagues shared Sullivan’s optimism that Khomeini could be persuaded to cooperate with the military. In short, there was no coherent US policy for how to respond to the Shah’s imminent departure.

When Carter’s foreign policy advisors gathered on 11 January, the majority accepted that the Shah was probably finished and Khomeini would almost certainly return and dominate the process of establishing an Islamic Republic. The United States would have to do what it could to rebuild its position in Iran. Carter A meeting between an American diplomat in Paris, Warren Zimmerman, and one of Khomeini’s chief aides, Ibrahim Yazdi. Was this the moment when Carter gave Khomeini the green light? It appears not.

When Zimmerman met Yazdi in Paris, rather than acquiesce to Khomeini’s triumphant return, he tried to persuade Yazdi that Khomeini should delay his departure. The Americans hoped to buy time for Bakhtiar’s government to succeed. There was an element of blackmail in Zimmerman’s message. The US wanted to give the impression it was trying its best to prevent a military coup and that the ayatollah’s caution was vital.

Zimmerman told Yazdi that “the left would be the only force to gain from a religious-military clash.” The records of these meetings suggest Khomeini’s camp feared a military coup and believed that the revolution would not succeed unless the US persuaded the Iranian military to allow him to safely return. The Carter administration did not encourage the army to seize power and quash the opposition, but this hardly amounts to a conspiracy to topple the Shah and pave the way for Khomeini. The idea of a bloody military takeover was anathema to Carter, who had placed human rights at the center of his foreign policy.

⁵⁵ in any dictatorship, the intellectuals, Jews, and political rivals have always taken a hit. We especially see this in the Clinton and Obama Administrations. However, in many administrations the intellectuals are usually Ivy leaguers especially Yale and Harvard. This goes for both parties. The Jews seems to be everyone’s scapegoats. It seems that political rivals have become increasingly vicious. “The politics of personal destruction.”

Moreover, not even the Shah supported a military crackdown, which he feared would lead to the disintegration of the armed forces and the end to any legitimacy for even a constitutional monarchy.

Instead, Carter sent a military envoy to Tehran, General Robert Huyser, to encourage the Iranian generals to remain in Iran, keep the military united and support Bakhtiar's civilian government. After Khomeini's return on 1 February and the collapse of Bakhtiar's government on 11 February, the Americans were out of ideas and unable to understand a revolution led by a 76-year old cleric who wanted to establish an Islamic state.

Like much of the secular opposition to the Shah, they did not expect religious seminarians to be able to run a modern country. They assumed that sooner or later more liberal secular elements of the revolutionary movement would come to power and pursue a foreign policy cognizant of Iran's vulnerability to communist subversion and Soviet invasion.

For a brief moment, American officials were encouraged when the newly appointed prime minister, Mehdi Bazargan, voiced alarm at the communist threat and requested secret intelligence briefings from US intelligence officials. These hopes were finally dashed, however, with the seizure of the US Embassy in Tehran in November 1979 and the resignation of Bazargan's government.

Many criticisms can be levelled at the United States for the incoherence of its policy during the Iranian Revolution, but the idea insinuated by BBC Persia that there was a coherent US policy of abandoning the Shah and paving the way for Khomeini's return is not supported by the documentary record. The Carter administration was slow to come to terms with the crisis in Iran, unable to agree on how to respond to it, and desperately hoped that some peaceful outcome that preserved US interests would somehow materialize. But the United States was neither omniscient nor omnipotent. Panic, confusion, infighting, and wishful thinking should not be confused with a conspiracy.

Ronald Reagan: Conspiracies concerning Reagan were: Iran-Contra, Star Wars Defense System, His assassination attempt was actually orchestrated by George HW Bush, he was under the influence of aliens and astrologists. Ronald Reagan, the Fortieth President of the United States of America, was elected in 1981. Reagan was a member of the Republican party and he selected George Bush Senior as his Vice-Presidential Candidate. During his career President Reagan was very successful and well liked. Over his two terms Reagan did many things to help America as a nation, including strengthening defense, putting an end to inflation, and even beginning increases in employment.

President Ronald Reagan has many Conspiracy theories that surround some of the things he was involved with during his time in office. Two of the main events of his presidency that interest Conspiracists happened around the same time, in 1983 he began his plan to create the Strategic Defense Initiative, and in 1984 he developed a program that was called the Readiness Exercise. Rex 84 was a program established that said that there are concentration camps, ready to use, around America. These camps would be used if there were an issue with illegal aliens or dissenters. There were even believed acts, as in preparation for the use of these camps.

The Christic⁵⁶ Institute no longer uses the "Secret Team" slogan, but for the first several years of the Silkwood case, the Christic Institute's existence used the term "Secret Team" to describe the legal conspiracy they alleged in court. The "Affidavit of Daniel P. Sheehan" filed on December 12, 1986 and revised on January 31, 1987, refers frequently to the "Secret Team," and states explicitly that the term came from right-wing sources. ..."I was contacted by Source #47, a right-wing para-military specialist, former U.S. Army pilot in Vietnam and military reform specialist in January of 1986. Source #47, the Specialist, who was unaware of my investigation, informed me that he had met--at a right-wing function--a former U.S. military intelligence officer, Source #48..this source began to discuss with Source #47 the existence of a "Secret Team" of former high-ranking American CIA officials, former high-ranking U.S. military

⁵⁶ The Christic Institute was a leftist public interest law firm founded in 1980 by Daniel Sheehan, his wife Sara Nelson, and their partner, William J. Davis, a Jesuit priest. In 1992 the firm lost its non-profit status after having a federal case dismissed by the court in 1988 and being penalized for filing a "frivolous lawsuit." The group was succeeded by a new firm, the Romero Institute and like their predecessor has taken up liberal causes.

officials and Middle Eastern arms merchants--who also specialized in the performance of covert political assassinations of communists and "enemies" of this "Secret Team" which carried on its own independent, American foreign policy--regardless of the will of Congress, the will of the President, or even the will of the American Central Intelligence Agency.

Critics of the Christic thesis say the "Secret Team" was not a cabal operating against the will of the president or the CIA, but was an illegal, secret government-sponsored operation established by CIA director William Casey and coordinated by White House aide Oliver North, with assistance from a network of ultra-right groups who were determined to circumvent the will of Congress. This "Enterprise" at times worked closely with the Mossad and carried out clandestine counterinsurgency missions. Some of these counterinsurgency missions were based on the same model of pacification used by U.S. Special Forces and clandestine CIA operations in Vietnam.

It is just this emphasis on counterinsurgency and clandestine operations rather than direct military battles that forms the basis of criticism in Fletcher Prouty's book *Secret Team*. Prouty criticized the CIA for promoting covert action techniques which he traced to the influence of the British intelligence service MI5 on the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), precursor to the CIA. Prouty said such meddling and convoluted efforts at fighting communism resulted in the needless deaths of American servicemen. There is no evidence of any obvious anti-Jewish conspiracy theories in the original Prouty book.

Some of the undocumented conspiracy theories regarding the CIA and U.S. foreign policy that were widely circulated in progressive circles before the Iran-Contra scandal hit the headlines seem to have appeared first in the Larouchian's Executive Intelligence Review or New Solidarity (later New Federalist), or in the pages of Liberty Lobby's Spotlight newspaper. The Spotlight for instance carried the first exclusive story on "Rex 84" by writer James Harrer. "Rex 84" was one of a long series of readiness exercises for government military, security and police forces. "Rex 84" --Readiness Exercise, 1984--was a drill which postulated a scenario of massive civil unrest and the need to round up and detain large numbers of demonstrators and dissidents. While creating scenarios and carrying out mock exercises is common, the potential for Constitutional abuses under the contingency plans drawn up for "Rex 84" was real. The legislative authorization and Executive agency capacity for such a round-up of dissidents remains supposedly operational.

The April 23, 1984 Spotlight article ran with a banner headline "Reagan Orders Concentration Camps." The article, true to form, took a problematic swipe at the Anti-Defamation League of b'nai b'rith along with reporting the facts of the story. The Harrer article was based primarily on two unnamed government sources, and follow-up confirmations.

Mainstream reporters pursued the allegations through interviews and Freedom of Information Act requests, and ultimately the Harrer Spotlight article proved to be a substantially accurate account of the readiness exercise, although Spotlight did underplay the fact that this was a scenario and drill, not an actual order to round up dissidents.⁵⁷ Many people believe that Christic was the first group to reveal the "Rex 84" story. According to the 1986 Sheehan "Affidavit" revised in 1987:

During the second week of April of 1984, I was informed by Source #4 that President Ronald Reagan had, on April 6, 1984, issued National Security Decision Directive #52 authorizing the Federal Emergency Management Agency director Louis O. Giuffrida and his Deputy Frank Salcedo to undertake a secret nation-wide, 'readiness exercise' code-named 'Rex 84..' The impression left is that a Christic source exclusively developed this information and quietly handed it over to Sheehan. In fact, the second week of April 1984, the "Rex 84" story was bannered on the front page of the Spotlight and available in coin-boxes all over Capitol Hill. Spotlight had previously reported extensively on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other government initiatives that threatened civil liberties.

Sheehan has told reporters that the "Rex 84" story did not come from Spotlight, but would not respond to questions as to whether or not Source #4 could document where the information came from.

⁵⁷ I had been in the Air Force for 3 years at his time. I never heard of this order from official sources. The only way I have ever heard of this order and the camps was from right wing nut jobs.

This is important because in at least one other instance, previously published research was attributed by Sheehan to Source #4. According to the 1986 Sheehan "Affidavit" revised in 1987:

In early May of 1984, I was supplied by Source #4 with a number of documents describing, in some detail, a project supervised by then Special Assistant California State Attorney General Edwin Meese code-named "Project Cable Splicer" ...part of a larger program, code-named "Project Garden Plot" --which was a nation-wide war games scenario..to establish a nation-wide state of martial law if Richard Nixon's "political enemies" required him to declare a State of National Emergency.

While the descriptions of Cable Splicer and Garden Plot are DODgy the source is deceptively obscured. The original story of Cable Splicer and Garden Plot broke in the alternative press in 1975 in an article by Ron Ridenhour with Arthur Lublow published in Arizona's New Times. Garden Plot was also the cover story for the Winter 1976 issue of counterspy magazine. Dozens of pages of the unedited official documents from Garden Plot and Cable Splicer were reprinted in the magazine. Copies of the official documents were made available to trial teams in several cities litigating against illegal government intelligence abuse.

Several former Christic staffers, who asked to remain nameless, suggest that, at the very least, a critical reevaluation of some allegations made in the Christic case would be beneficial in light of the possibility that material from far-right, conspiracist or anti-Jewish sources was uncritically woven into the original "Secret Team" Christic thesis.

They say that the Christic theories need to be reassessed with the ulterior motives and credibility of those sources in mind. In other words, consider the source and put it in the for-what-it's-worth column. The Christic Institute was supplied with the text of the criticisms raised in this section of the report, as well as an extensive list of written questions. With the exception of the quote regarding the larouchians, they chose not to respond. With the approaching cold front to the East Coast, they will continue to relocate people.

To people who believe in a "new world order" this would be something that would trigger large panic and fear of the government, putting Reagan in a bad light. The camps were to be repurposed from military bases scheduled to be closed and rebuilt into concentration camps. Reagan's involvement is shown, explaining how he was moving power to police forces while removing some of the previous strengths in disaster relief. These readiness tests involved providing martial forces and power to perform mass arrests if need be.

In a way, this is just a President trying to do his job in order to ensure safety to the country, not imposing on their rights in some form of New World Order fear that probably came out of this. Videos and websites have made enduring claims that the United States government has plans to use prison camps to contain American citizens. First it was Reagan, then Bush Sr., then Clinton, then Bush Jr., most recently Obama. I wouldn't be surprised this conspiracy will somehow bleed over into the Trump administration. Rex 84 was linked to the FEMA camp scare, mostly because people thought that the government would be detaining citizens in the FEMA camps. This article about FEMA describes how some power was given to them to then control things like the camps from Reagan's Readiness Exercise.

FEMA - The Secret Government: By Harry V. Martin with research assistance from David Caul © Free America and Harry V. Martin, 1995. Some people have referred to Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North who was supposedly the man who was in charge of writing the readiness exercise document. Government Silently Positions for Martial Law as Financial Collapse Arrives in America. Susanne Posel Occupy Corporatism Aug 1, 2012: The US government has been scheming on how to provide for continuity of government for many years...

A Conspiracists view of what is happening within the government as Reagan was implementing the Readiness Exercises and that this was the governments way of having even more control, possibly even justifying how they could begin martial law and have complete rule over the citizens. Also, it describes what people thought was meant by the Readiness Exercise and how it was a plan to detain many people, including minorities and immigrants.

Toward an American Revolution: Exposing the Constitution.. This article shows many of the things that have stuck with Reagan's name to Conspiracists that believe that Readiness Exercises were a

bad thing. One was the creation of FEMA and how it is a bad group that is made to contain people in the concentration camps and used for martial law and the government control. Ronald Reagan's legacy is FEMA camps and martial law Published: November 12, 2010 FEMA camps, or concentration camps as those in the know. In this book, there are many conspiracies that surround Reagan's in the Rex 84 laws. One of which says that Rex 84 and the camps that include FEMA camps were a way of getting illegal arms. This claim is obviously quite strange considering that it was created in order to imprison dissenters, not hand them small arms and ammunition.

It is possible but seems to be a strange way for the government to go about doing something when they have such large armed forces. The Strategic Defense Initiative, or SDI, was a plan to basically remove the threat of nuclear warfare. In the Initiative, the use of lasers and a force dome that would shoot down missiles that were coming near The United States of America. This defense system, although effective and insanely cool, was clearly not practical in the 1980's, Central to US foreign policy, the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) was launched by Ronald Reagan in 1983. While the Reagan administration failed to deploy the SDI system, it featured prominently in the relationship between the US and the Soviet Union.

The October Surprise conspiracy theory refers to a plot to influence the outcome of the 1980 United States presidential election, contested between incumbent president Jimmy Carter (D-GA) and his opponent, former California governor Ronald Reagan (R-CA). One of the leading national issues during that year was the release of 52 Americans being held hostage in Iran since November 4, 1979. Reagan won the election. On the day of his inauguration, in fact, 20 minutes after he concluded his inaugural address, the Islamic Republic of Iran announced the release of the hostages. The timing gave rise to an allegation that representatives of Reagan's presidential campaign had conspired with Iran to delay the release until after the election to thwart President Carter from pulling off an "October surprise."

According to the allegation, the Reagan Administration rewarded Iran for its participation in the plot by supplying Iran with weapons via Israel and by unblocking Iranian government monetary assets in US banks. After twelve years of mixed media attention, both houses of the US Congress held separate inquiries and concluded that the allegations lacked supporting documentation. In late 1979, a number of U.S. hostages were captured in Iran during the Iranian Revolution.

The Iran hostage crisis continued into 1980, and as the November 1980 presidential election approached, there were concerns in the Republican Party camp that a resolution of the crisis could constitute an "October surprise" which might give incumbent Jimmy Carter enough of an electoral boost to be re-elected. Carter's rescue attempt was first written about in a Jack Anderson article in The Washington Post in the autumn of 1980. After the release of the hostages on 20 January 1981, mere minutes after Republican challenger Ronald Reagan's inauguration, some charged that the Reagan campaign had made a secret deal with the Iranian government whereby the Iranians would hold the hostages until after Reagan was elected and inaugurated.

Iran-Contra Affair: The issue of an "October Surprise" was brought up during an investigation by a House of Representatives Subcommittee into how the 1980 Reagan Campaign obtained debate briefing materials of then-President Carter. During the investigation (a.k.a. Debate-gate), the Subcommittee on Human Resources of the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee obtained access to Reagan Campaign documents and discovered numerous instances of documents and memorandum referencing a monitoring effort for any such October Surprise. The Subcommittee, chaired by former U.S. Rep. Donald Albosta (D-MI) issued a comprehensive report 17 May 1984, describing each type of information that was detected and its possible source. There is a section in the report dedicated to the October Surprise issue.

The allegations that the Reagan team subverted the U.S. government's attempt to resolve the hostage crisis were generally regarded as an unsupported conspiracy theory until the Iran-Contra affair was exposed in 1986, which showed that the U.S. government had made a secret deal with the Iranian government in 1985 to covertly supply Iran with arms, with the funds being used to support the Nicaraguan Contras. Investigations of the Iran-Contra affair, in which the Central Intelligence Agency played a central role, made the 1980 October Surprise allegations, in which Iran and the CIA also figured, seem less implausible, leading to more serious investigation of the claims. The House of Representatives' 1993 report concluded "there is no credible evidence supporting any attempt by the Reagan presidential campaign or

persons associated with the campaign to delay the release of the American hostages in Iran.” The task force Chairman Lee H. Hamilton also added that the vast majority of the sources and material reviewed by the committee were "wholesale fabricators or were impeached by documentary evidence.” The report also expressed the belief that several witnesses had committed perjury during their sworn statements to the committee, among them Richard Brenneke, who claimed to be a CIA agent.

The Village Voice: Retired CIA analyst and counter-intelligence officer Frank Snett of The Village Voice compiled several investigations of Sick's allegations in 1992. Snett alleged that Sick had only interviewed half of the sources used in his book, and supposedly relied on hearsay from unreliable sources for large amounts of critical material. Snett also discovered that in 1989, Sick had sold the rights to his book to Oliver Stone. After going through evidence presented by Richard Brenneke, Snett asserted that Brenneke's credit card receipts showed him to be in Portland, Oregon, during the time he claimed to be in Paris observing the secret meeting.

Newsweek: Newsweek magazine also ran an investigation, and they said that most, if not all, of the charges made were groundless. Specifically, Newsweek found little evidence that the United States had transferred arms to Iran prior to Iran Contra, and was able to account for Bill Casey's whereabouts when he was allegedly at the Madrid meeting, saying that he was at a conference in London. Newsweek also alleged that the story was being heavily pushed within the Larouche Movement.

The New Republic: Steven Emerson and Jesse Furman of The New Republic also looked into the allegations and found "the conspiracy as currently postulated is a total fabrication.” They were unable to verify any of the evidence presented by Sick and supporters, finding them to be inconsistent and contradictory in nature. They also pointed out that nearly every witness of Sick's had either been indicted or was under investigation by the Department of Justice. Like the Newsweek investigation, they had also debunked the claims of Reagan election campaign officials being in Paris during the timeframe that Sick specified, contradicting Sick's sources.

An investigation by Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting found that Emerson's evidence was incorrect, noting "Ironically, in media circles, it is Steve Emerson's dismissal of the October Surprise that turned out to be enduring even though much of his evidence turned out to be wrong." Mark Ames noted that the article "relied on invented evidence later exposed as fake and disowned even by Emerson." The Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) was a proposed missile defense system intended to protect the United States from attack by ballistic strategic nuclear weapons (intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles).

The system, which was to combine ground-based units and orbital deployment platforms, was first publicly announced by President Ronald Reagan on March 23, 1983. The initiative focused on strategic defense rather than the prior strategic offense doctrine of mutual assured destruction (MAD). The Strategic Defense Initiative Organization (SDIO) was set up in 1984 within the United States Department of Defense to oversee the Strategic Defense Initiative. Reagan was a vocal critic of MAD doctrine. SDI was an important part of his defense policy intended to end MAD as a nuclear deterrence strategy, as well as a strategic initiative to neutralize the military component of the Soviet Union's nuclear defenses.

The ambitious initiative was criticized for allegedly threatening to destabilize the MAD-approach and to possibly re-ignite "an offensive arms race.” SDI was nicknamed largely in the mainstream media as "Star Wars," after the popular 1977 film by George Lucas. In 1987, the American Physical Society concluded that a global shield such as "Star Wars" was extremely ambitious and with existing technology not directly feasible for operational status, and that about ten more years of research was needed to learn about such a comprehensive and complex system to set up and make it fully operational.

Under the SDIO's Innovative Sciences and Technology Office, headed by physicist and engineer Dr. James Ionson, the investment was predominantly made in basic research at national laboratories, universities, and in industry; these programs have continued to be key sources of funding for top research scientists in the fields of high-energy physics, supercomputing/computation, advanced materials, and many other critical science and engineering disciplines; funding which indirectly supports other research work by top scientists, and which was most politically viable to fund within the budget environment. Laser research

funded by the SDI office was disclosed at laser conferences that also included panel discussions on the subject with the participation of James Ionson, Edward Teller, and other prominent advocates of SDI.

During the administration of President Bill Clinton in 1993, the SDIO's name was changed to the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO) and its focus shifted from national missile defense to theater missile defense; and its scope from global to more regional coverage. It was never truly developed or deployed, though certain aspects of SDI research and technologies paved the way for some anti-ballistic missile systems of today. BMDO was renamed again to the Missile Defense Agency in 2002. This article covers defense efforts under the SDIO.

Today, the United States holds a significant advantage in the field of comprehensive advanced missile defense systems through years of extensive research and testing. The US and the UK also have both laser weapons and 360-degree laser shields in development, which are expected to be ready for military use as early as 2020. Many of the obtained technological insights were transferred to subsequent programs and would find use in follow-up programs. SDI was criticized for potentially disrupting the strategic doctrine of mutual assured destruction. MAD postulated that intentional nuclear attack was inhibited by the certainty of ensuing mutual destruction. Even if a nuclear first strike destroyed many of the opponent's weapons, sufficient nuclear missiles would survive to render a devastating counter-strike against the attacker.

The criticism was that SDI could have potentially allowed an attacker to survive the lighter counter-strike, thus encouraging a first strike by the side having SDI. Another destabilizing scenario was countries being tempted to strike first before SDI was deployed, thereby avoiding a disadvantaged nuclear posture. Proponents of SDI argued that SDI development might instead cause the side that did not have the resources to develop SDI, rather than launching a suicidal nuclear first strike attack before the SDI system was deployed, instead to come to the bargaining table with the country that did have those resources and, hopefully, agree to a real, sincere disarmament pact that would drastically decrease all forces, both nuclear and conventional. Furthermore, the MAD argument was criticized on the grounds that MAD only covered intentional, full-scale nuclear attacks by a rational, non-suicidal opponent with similar values. It did not take into account limited launches, accidental launches, rogue launches, or launches by non-state entities or covert proxies.

During the Reykjavik talks with Gorbachev in 1986, Ronald Reagan addressed Gorbachev's concerns about imbalance by stating that SDI would be given to the Soviet Union to prevent the imbalance from occurring. Gorbachev answered that he could not take this claim seriously. The Iran–Contra affair, also referred to as Iran–gate, Contra–gate or the Iran–Contra scandal, was a political scandal in the United States that occurred during the second term of the Reagan Administration. Senior administration officials secretly facilitated the sale of arms to Iran, which was the subject of an arms embargo. They hoped, thereby, to fund the Contras in Nicaragua while at the same time negotiating the release of several U.S. hostages. Under the Boland Amendment, further funding of the Contras by the government had been prohibited by Congress.

The scandal began as an operation to free seven American hostages being held in Lebanon by Hezbollah, a paramilitary group with Iranian ties connected to the Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution. It was planned that Israel would ship weapons to Iran, and then the United States would resupply Israel and receive the Israeli payment. The Iranian recipients promised to do everything in their power to achieve the release of the hostages. Large modifications to the plan were devised by Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North of the National Security Council in late 1985, in which a portion of the proceeds from the weapon sales was diverted to fund anti-Sandinista fighters, or Contras, in Nicaragua.

While President Ronald Reagan was a supporter of the Contra cause, the evidence is disputed as to whether he authorized the diversion of the money raised by the Iranian arms sales to the Contras. Handwritten notes taken by Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger on December 7, 1985, indicate that Reagan was aware of potential hostage transfers with Iran, as well as the sale of Hawk and TOW missiles to "moderate elements" within that country. Weinberger wrote that Reagan said "he could answer to charges of illegality but couldn't answer to the charge that 'big strong President Reagan passed up a chance to free the hostages.'" After the weapon sales were revealed in November 1986, Reagan appeared on national television and stated that the weapons transfers had indeed occurred, but that the United States did not trade

arms for hostages. The investigation was impeded when large volumes of documents relating to the scandal were destroyed or withheld from investigators by Reagan administration officials. On March 4, 1987, Reagan returned to the airwaves in a nationally televised address, taking full responsibility, and saying that "what began as a strategic opening to Iran deteriorated, in its implementation, into trading arms for hostages."

Several investigations ensued, including by the U.S. Congress and the three-person, Reagan-appointed Tower Commission. Neither found any evidence that President Reagan himself knew of the extent of the multiple programs. Ultimately the sale of weapons to Iran was not deemed a criminal offense but charges were brought against five individuals for their support of the Contras. Those charges, however, were later dropped because the administration refused to declassify certain documents.

The indicted conspirators faced various lesser charges instead. In the end, fourteen administration officials were indicted, including then-Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger. Eleven convictions resulted, some of which were vacated on appeal. The rest of those indicted or convicted were all pardoned in the final days of the presidency of George H. W. Bush, who had been Vice President at the time of the affair. The Iran-Contra Affair and the ensuing deception to protect senior administration officials including President Reagan has been cast as an example of post-truth politics.

Under the Shah of Iran, the United States was the largest seller of arms to Iran, and the vast majority of the weapons that the Islamic Republic of Iran inherited in January 1979 were American. To maintain this arsenal, Iran required a steady supply of spare parts to replace those broken and worn out. After Iranian students had stormed the American embassy in Tehran in November 1979 and taken 52 Americans hostage, President Jimmy Carter had imposed an arms embargo on Iran. After Iraq invaded Iran in September 1980, Iran had a desperate need for weapons and spare parts to maintain its current weapons. After Ronald Reagan took office as President on 20 January 1981, he vowed to continue Carter's policy of blocking arms sales to Iran under the grounds that Iran was a supporter of terrorism.

A group of senior Reagan administration officials in the Senior Interdepartmental Group conducted a secret study on 21 July 1981, which concluded that the arms embargo was ineffective as Iran could always buy arms and spare parts for its American weapons elsewhere while at the same time, the arms embargo opened the door for Iran to fall into the Soviet sphere of influence as the Kremlin could sell Iran weapons if the United States would not. The conclusion was that the United States should start selling Iran arms as soon as it was politically possible to keep Iran from falling into the Soviet sphere of influence.

At the same time, the openly declared goal of Ayatollah Khomeini to export his Islamic revolution all over the Middle East and overthrow the governments of Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the other Persian Gulf states led to the Americans perceiving Khomeini as a major threat to the United States. In the spring of 1983, the United States launched Operation Staunch, a wide-ranging diplomatic effort to persuade other nations all over the world not to sell arms or spare parts for weapons to Iran. At least part of the reason why the Iran–Contra affair proved so humiliating for the United States when the story first broke in November 1986 that the US was selling arms to Iran was that American diplomats as part of Operation Staunch had, from the spring of 1983 on, been lecturing other nations about how morally wrong it was to sell arms to the Islamic Republic of Iran and applying strong pressure to prevent any arms sales to Iran.

At the same time that the American government was considering their options on selling arms to Iran, Contra militants based in Honduras waged a guerrilla war to topple the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) communist government of Nicaragua. Almost from the time he took office in 1981, a major goal of the Reagan administration was the overthrow of the left-wing Sandinista government in Nicaragua by backing the Contra rebels. The Reagan administration's policy towards Nicaragua produced a major clash between the executive and legislative arms as Congress sought to limit if not curb altogether the ability of the White House to support the Contras.

Direct U.S. funding of the Contras insurgency was made illegal through the Boland Amendment, the name given to three U.S. legislative amendments between 1982 and 1984 aimed at limiting U.S. government assistance to the Contra's militants. Funding ran out for the Contras by July 1984 and in October a total ban was placed in effect. The second Boland amendment in effect from 3 October 1984 to 3 December 1985 stated:

During the fiscal year 1985 no funds available to the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of Defense or any other agency or entity of the United States involved in intelligence activities may be obligated or expended for the purpose of or which may have the effect of supporting directly or indirectly military or paramilitary operations in Nicaragua by any nation, organization, group, movement, or individual.

In violation of the Boland Amendment, senior officials of the Reagan administration continued to secretly arm and train the Contras and provide arms to Iran, an operation they called "the Enterprise." As the Contras were heavily dependent upon U.S. military and financial support, the second Boland amendment threatened to break the Contra movement and led to President Reagan in 1984 to order the National Security Council (NSC) to "keep the Contras together 'body and soul,'" no matter what Congress voted for.

A major legal debate that was at the center of the Iran–Contra affair concerned the question of whether the NSC was one of the "any other agency or entity of the United States involved in intelligence activities" covered by the Boland amendment with the Reagan administration arguing it was not, and many in Congress arguing it was. The majority of constitutional scholars have asserted the NSC did indeed fall within the purview of the second Boland amendment, through the amendment did not mention the NSC by name. More broadly was the constitutional question at stake, namely the power of Congress vs. The power of the presidency.

The Reagan administration argued that because the constitution assigned the right to conduct foreign policy to the executive arm that its efforts to overthrow the government of Nicaragua were a presidential prerogative that Congress had no right to try to halt via the Boland amendments. By contrast congressional leaders argued that the constitution had assigned Congress control of the budget, and Congress had every right to use that power not to fund projects like attempting to overthrow the government of Nicaragua that they disapproved of. As part of the effort to circumvent the Boland amendment, the NSC established "the Enterprise," an arms-smuggling network headed by a retired U.S. Air Force officer turned arms dealer, Richard Secord that supplied arms to the Contras that was ostensibly a private sector operation, but in fact was controlled by the NSC.

To fund "the Enterprise," the Reagan administration was constantly on the look-out for funds that came from outside the U.S. government as not to explicitly violate the letter of the Boland amendment, though the efforts to find alternative funding for the Contras violated the spirit of the Boland amendment. Ironically, military aid to the Contras was reinstated with Congressional consent in October 1986, a month before the scandal broke.

George HW Bush/ George W. Bush: to believe that the U.S. government planned or deliberately allowed the 9/11 attacks, you'd have to posit that President Bush intentionally sacrificed 3,000 Americans. To believe that explosives, not planes, brought down the buildings, you'd have to imagine an operation large enough to plant the devices without anyone getting caught. To insist that the truth remains hidden, you'd have to assume that everyone who has reviewed the attacks and the events leading up to them, the CIA, the Justice Department, the Federal Aviation Administration, the North American Aerospace Defense Command, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, scientific organizations, peer-reviewed journals, news organizations, the airlines, and local law enforcement agencies in three states were either incompetent, deceived, or part of a cover-up. The collapse of the two World Trade Center towers and the nearby WTC7 is a major focus of 9/11 conspiracy theories.

The Bush family conspiracy theory is one used to describe various negative theories alleging conspiracies or misdeeds involving or concerning members of the family of President George W. Bush, including the President's brother, Florida Governor Jeb Bush, their brother Neil Bush, their father and former President George H. W. Bush, grandfather Prescott Bush, and great-grandfather George Herbert Walker.

Some allege criminal conspiracies involve United States multinational corporations and vested interests, US government organizations, and various dictators. While some attach great importance to

suggested links, which connect individuals and companies, others dismiss some or all of the conspiracy theories as fantasy and claim that these connections are normal for business families and do not imply wrongdoing or negative intent.

This conspiracy theory often refers to the alleged secret organization with one of the pejorative terms: Bush League, Bush Buddies, or Texas Taliban. The first is a pun on the baseball term "bush league, minor league amateurs, or an allusion to George W. Bush's experience with the Texas Rangers baseball team. The others are alliterative. A mixture of allegations has been made, trying to link the Bush family and their associates to various forms of intrigue or alleged wrongdoing. Many people, from a wide variety of viewpoints ranging from pro-Bush, anti-Bush or neutral, consider the particular points cited by these conspiracy theorists to be paranoid and not linked to each other in a rational way.

What many people believe or don't believe to be paranoid also depends on which specific conspiracy theory or on what specific allegations one is talking about. It should also be noted that many people are not familiar with some or all of these theories or with some or all of the allegations within them, and that therefore, they do not have an opinion as to whether these theories or allegations are paranoid or not.

Owing to the fact the Bush family has provided the last two Republican presidents, there may be a confusion of family conspiracy with what is actually normal political maneuvering by the Republican party. Additionally, members of the Bush family are politically and economically powerful, so it is natural that they have connections to other major political and business figures, some of whom have inevitably unsavory reputations.

A number of allegations have been made about different members of the Bush family at different times and so it is difficult to discuss these allegations reasonably as a whole. Listed below are assorted allegations and rebuttals, but any serious consideration of these allegations should be made on a strictly individual basis. These allegations range from ones widely regarded as suspicious and unsubstantiated to those which have been the subject of fierce public debate. The following are typical allegations made as part of or in support of the theory. These are not widely accepted or considered proven. The fact that Conspiracists such as Alex Jones and Jesse Ventura should say a lot about the veracity of these conspiracy theories.

- Ayatollah Khomeini dealt with George Bush and his operatives to arrange the Iran-Contra deal and allegedly the October Surprise, on behalf of U.S. Presidential candidate Ronald Reagan.
- George W. Bush is the Antichrist.
- Halliburton gained contracts for the reconstruction of Iraq due at least in part to its connections to Dick Cheney.
- One conspiracy theory is that there was a collusion between Jeb Bush, the U.S. Supreme Court, and Choice Point to rig the 2000 US Presidential election.
- Osama bin Laden, then a minor Mujahedeen leader in Afghanistan, is reputed to have been a CIA agent who made use of CIA resources and US-funds to bolster the morale of radical Islamists after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Further, the Bush family, through its ties to the bin Laden family and other connections, otherwise aided bin Laden's rise.

1. After a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, the 2000 Presidential Election was won by George W. Bush in Florida, whose governor was his brother, Jeb Bush.
2. Answering a repeated reporter question about the anti-Bush gwobush.com, "But how far should these guys go?" Bush replied "There ought to be limits to freedom. We're aware of the site, and this guy is just a garbage man, that's all he is. Of course, I don't appreciate it. And you wouldn't, either." May 21, 1999.
3. Bush planned to have nuclear waste stored at the volcanic Yucca Mountain facility.
4. Bush reportedly made the following statements: "I told all four congressional leaders that there were going to be some times where we don't agree with each other. But that's OK. If this were a dictatorship, it'd be a heck of a lot easier, just so long as I'm the dictator." December 18, 2000.

5. Bush, as governor of Texas, presided over the execution of hundreds of condemned criminals, and joked about some of them prior to and after their executions.
6. Businesses associated with Prescott Bush, such as the Union Banking Corporation, were confiscated just prior to World War II under the Trading with the Enemy Act.
7. Dick Cheney was G.H.W.W. Bush's Defense Secretary, and G.W. Bush's Vice-President. Cheney is the former President and CEO of Halliburton Company which had been given, by George W. Bush, an exclusive and unbidden contract in postwar Iraq. In addition, Halliburton's accounting firm was Arthur Andersen. This latter firm was convicted of obstruction of justice and fraud.
8. George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush were members of the Skull and Bones secret society. Bush's membership in the Skull and Bones society was the subject of several Doonesbury cartoons.
9. George H. W. Bush was head of the Central Intelligence Agency in 1976-77.
10. George W. Bush sealed the presidential records of both himself and his father.
11. George W. Bush twice claimed to have seen the first September Eleventh crash on live television, even though that crash was not in a public broadcast until much later.
12. George W. Bush, during the 2003 State of the Union Address, said that British intelligence had learned Iraq had been attempting to purchase uranium from Africa. That claim was based on information which the CIA said it could not verify, and CIA head George Tenet accepted responsibility for failing to remove the assertion from the speech in the fact-checking stage. An earlier document specifically documenting a hypothetical buy from Niger was known to be a forgery and was not referred to in any Bush speech.
13. John Hinckley Jr, the 'deranged drifter with the hots for Jodie Foster,' also happened to be the son of one of George H. W. Bush's better supporters in his campaign against Ronald Reagan; the Hinckley's' Vanderbilt Energy was threatened with a \$2-million fine the morning of the assassination attempt; the families are sufficiently close that Scott Hinckley and Neil Bush had a dinner appointment for the next day.
14. Prescott Bush supported the Nazis.
15. Saddam Hussein, was provided with weapons and funding during the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s, during the Reagan administration, in which George H. W. Bush was Vice President. In addition, Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense under George W. Bush was the Special Envoy to the Middle East in this period, appointed by President Ronald Reagan and met personally with Saddam Hussein during the Iran-Iraq war.
16. The Bush administration does not accept the International Criminal Court's authority over American citizens, and members of the administration have questioned the usefulness of the United Nations.
17. The Bushes are somehow responsible for Hinckley's assassination attempt against President Reagan, which would have made George H.W. Bush president.
18. The Bushes generally support policies that support the oil industry.
19. The Bushes support the oil industry to enhance their own financial interests in the industry.
20. The Bushes, as part of the Skull and Bones Society, is allegedly associated with crime and Satanism.
21. The Carlyle Group is an investment group which includes both the Bush family and bin Laden family, one of the richest in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, George W. Bush and Salem bin Laden were co-investors/business partners in Arbusto.
22. The following are the parts of known history which have led people to make further unproven claims.
23. The George W. Bush administration pushed for the USA PATRIOT Act and has used the new powers in a variety of cases.
24. The Project for the New American Century, which in 1990s advocated the invasion of Iraq for reasons of geopolitical strategy, included Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, and the "Prince of Darkness," Richard Perle, all of whom subsequently held influential positions in the Bush administration.
25. The September 11, 2001 Terrorist Attack was planned or sanctioned by the Bush administration.

26. The US invasion of Iraq was planned by members of the Bush administration following the goals of Project for a New American Century: the "Mein Kampf" of World War IV (PNAC), with the stated reasons the threat of wmds and terrorism in the wake of the September 11 attacks being political cover.
27. Through legislation and actions which extend executive powers and reduce oversight as justified by the War on Terrorism, the Bush administration was working toward establishing a totalitarian state.
28. While George H.W. Bush was head of the CIA, he may have been involved in the 1976 assassination of Orlando Letelier. Bush remains silent on this and the CIA refuses to release many of the internal documents which could shed some light on it.
29. While Vice President, George H.W. Bush was responsible for Saddam's acquisition of weapons and funding during the Iran-Iraq War.

Critics of the theory allege that its proponents mispresent historical events as part of the theory.

1. That G. H.W. Bush was vice-president during the Reagan Administration does not necessarily link Bush to Saddam's acquisition of weapons and funding during the Iran-Iraq War. Most vice-presidents have little role in the working of an administration and often have little practical influence over policy or decision-making.
2. G. H.W. Bush was head of the CIA from 1976 to 1977. Osama bin Laden's period as an alleged CIA agent occurred a decade later, when Bush was president. Presidents are, because of their workload, not involved in the hiring of CIA agents. Also considering that at any point the CIA has thousands of agents acting worldwide, it seems unlikely that US Presidents are personally associated with all of them. Furthermore, there is no evidence that bin Laden ever was an agent or an associate of or had any relationship at all with the CIA.
3. Many people work in a number of administrations. That Dick Cheney worked in the administrations of G. H.W. and G. W. Bush is neither unusual nor does it demonstrate a conspiracy. He also served in the administrations of Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford.
4. Many people internationally are associated with the Carlyle Group. As it is a large international investment group, it would be surprising if the Bush and bin Laden families were not in it or in some other group together. Former British Prime Minister, John Major, was also associated with it. The bin Laden family in fact have also disowned Osama bin Laden, who is an opponent of organizations such as the Carlyle Group, which he has accused of embodying international economic imperialism.
5. Many presidents have said "The job of the President would be easier, if I were a dictator" or something similar, including Franklin D. Roosevelt, Barack Obama, and John F. Kennedy. In those cases, the comment was made tongue-in-cheek. There is no evidence that Bush intended it in any other way. Similar arguments are applied to the "limits on freedom" statement.
6. Bill Clinton stated "When personal freedom's being abused, you have to move to limit it." and "we can't be so fixated on our desire to preserve the rights of ordinary Americans."
7. While proponents of the conspiracy link Bush family members to a range of groups, from Nazis to Ayatollah Khomeini, Saddam Hussein, to the Carlyle Group and the bin Laden's, supporters of Bush argue that there is no connection between Bush, these people, and each other. They further note that although Bush may have had dealings with the bin Laden's, he didn't have such dealings with Osama bin Laden himself.
8. Many rich people and companies became involved with the Nazis due to pre-existing business relationships with Germany. Becoming disengaged from such relationships cannot happen overnight. Historians agree that Hitler's grasp for power did not rely on foreign trade, and that the Skull and Bones symbol used by the Totenkopf units of the Waffen-SS was designed by Karl Maria Wiligut, an advisor to Heinrich Himmler, a Neo-paganist.
9. Floridian electoral goat roping goes back at least three decades, and involves Democrats like Janet Reno; so, it's hardly a Bush invention. As a result, critics of the Bush family conspiracy theory see it as a string of unconnected claims which have at most, pure circumstantial evidence but which

contains no hard evidence of any long-term conspiracy. A mixture of allegations have been made, trying to link the Bush family and their associates to various forms of intrigue or alleged wrongdoing. Many people, from a wide variety of viewpoints that range from pro-Bush, anti-Bush or neutral, consider the particular points cited by these conspiracy theorists to be paranoid and not linked to each other in a meaningful way. What many people believe or don't believe to be paranoid also depends on which specific conspiracy theory or on what specific allegations one is talking about. It should also be noted that many people are not familiar with some or all of these theories or with some or all of the allegations within them, and that therefore, they do not have an opinion as to whether these theories or allegations are paranoid or not.⁵⁸

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A number of allegations have been made about different members of the Bush family at different times and so it is difficult to discuss these allegations sensibly as a whole. Listed below are assorted allegations and rebuttals, but any serious consideration of these allegations should be made on a strictly individual basis. These allegations range from ones widely regarded as specious and unsubstantiated to those which have been the subject of fierce public debate. As a result, critics of the Bush family conspiracy theory see it as a string of unconnected claims which have at most pure circumstantial evidence but which contains no hard evidence of any long term conspiracy.

Bill Clinton Body Count: The Clinton Body Count, as it is popularly known, is a conspiracy theory that Bill Clinton, while he was president and before, as Arkansas Governor, was quietly assassinating his associates; often anyone who got in the way of his career, such as Vince Foster. It was started as a retaliation to the Bush Body Count; which ostensibly had various members of the Bush family responsible for events like the JFK assassination and the October surprise killing lesser co-conspirators on their way.

The Clinton Body Count is a list of about 50–60 associates of Clinton who have died "under mysterious circumstance." The individuals named originated from a list of 34 suicides, accidental deaths, and unsolved murders, prepared in 1993 by the pro-second amendment group, American Justice Federation,

The chart is a Clinton body count kill list that dates back to the '90s. The documentary *The Clinton Chronicles* brings the conspiracy theory back to Bill Clinton's early days, including his roommate and childhood friends. To those who believe the theories, that Bill and Hillary Clinton might be responsible for more murders than Charles Manson, Ted Bundy, and Jeffrey Dahmer combined.

You might be surprised at how comprehensive the conspiracy theories run. Some have asked on forums that if the Clintons were actually ordering hits on people who were against them, why did Monica Lewinsky live to testify? The answer according to conspiracy theorists might surprise you. The belief is that a hit was ordered on one of Clinton's White House interns, but that the wrong girl was murdered.

Some of the conspiracy theories portray Bill Clinton as a serial sexual predator who became sexually involved with nearly every female intern he met. Sexual scandals and conspiracy theories have surrounded Clinton even before his presidency and there were allegations made by Gennifer Flowers that she had a long-standing sexual relationship with him. Clinton has had numerous sexual accusers over the years, including allegations of rape made by Juanita Broaddrick.

Of the Clinton body count and kill list conspiracy theories that have followed the couple since the '90s, one case has drawn more scrutiny than the others: Vince Foster. Deputy White House Counsel to Bill Clinton, Vince Foster was found dead by suicide on July 20, 1993. Conspiracy theories went wild and there were allegations that Hillary Clinton and Vince Foster were lovers. Author Christopher

⁵⁸ In my opinion, I don't believe anything I hear and only half of what I see. There are more important things to worry about besides presidential conspiracy theories.

Anderson wrote a book entitled ***Bill and Hillary: The Marriage***, that explores the belief they were lovers. Many conspiracy theorists believe that Vince Foster did not commit suicide but was murdered. The Clinton conspiracy list depicting deaths, murders, allegedly staged suicides, and hits ordered by the Clintons is vast. The following are five conspiracy theories about murder, deceit, and greed that have dogged the Clintons for decades.⁵⁹

When it comes to Bill and Hillary Clinton, conspiracy theories abound simply because of the family's ability to endure scandal after scandal. How else could they survive if it weren't for a dollop of deceit, murder, and greed?

News One has gathered five Clinton conspiracies that were unproven and denied, yet live on because of the internet. Many have resurfaced as Hillary Clinton makes her way towards the Democratic presidential nomination. Plenty of fodder here for the likes of Donald Trump, the Republican nominee who likes a good conspiracy theory.

1. According to conspiracy theorists, Mary Mahoney was murdered in 1997 for her inside information on Bill Clinton's sexual scandals. Some theories suggest that Mary was murdered instead of Monica Lewinsky.
2. Bill is not the father of the couple's only daughter, Chelsea: Hillary Clinton Holds New York Primary Night Gathering in Manhattan. Black Bag recently revisited the conspiracy that Bill Clinton is sterile, and Chelsea's real father is Clinton confidant and "federal tax evader Webb Hubbell."

"Hillary's connection to Hubbell goes all the way back to her days at Little Rock's Rose Law Firm in the late '70s. It's probably worth noting that Chelsea Clinton was born in 1980," according to a New Yorker profile of Hillary from 1994. Eventually, Hillary became good friends with two other lawyers at the Rose firm, Vincent Foster and Webster Hubbell. Professionally, the three lawyers were a tightly meshed team. Diane Blair, who has known Hillary since the mid-seventies and is now probably her closest friend, told me, "They were so great together, like basketball players, where they can pass and don't even have to look."

The article does go on to say that the bond "was said to be strongest" between Hillary and the late, Vince Foster. But maybe that's just what Hillary wanted The New Yorker to think. What's more, when Bill Clinton ascended to the presidency in 1993, he appointed Webb to U.S. Associate Attorney General. Hubbell later resigned in 1994 before pleading guilty to federal mail fraud and tax evasion. White House deputy counsel Vince Foster committed suicide in 1993 and there is no evidence that the Clintons had anything to do with his death.

But Trump was criticized for invoking Foster's name in his fight against Hillary Clinton to win the presidency. He told The Washington Post there's something "very fishy" about Foster's death, suspicions that reporter Robert Costa expounded upon, prompting Foster's sister to swat him down.

3. Ron Brown's plane crashed: Ron Brown, former Democratic National Committee chairman and U.S. Commerce Secretary, reportedly died in a plane crash in Croatia, but new evidence reveals he may have been shot in the head, according to Snopes, which cites a lengthy list of deaths associated with Bill Clinton that began circulating on the internet in August 1998.

In 1995, Brown had apparently failed to properly report large payments from a business partner, sparking a federal investigation. At the time of his death, he was being "investigated by a special detective and was about to be indicted with 54 others. He spoke publicly of his willingness to 'make a deal' with the prosecutors to save himself a few days before the fatal trip," the report says. "He was not supposed to be on the flight but was asked to go at the last-minute."

4. James mcdougal dies of a heart attack: James mcdougal and his wife Susan were financial partners with the Clintons in the real estate deal that led to the Whitewater scandal of the 1990s.

⁵⁹ Lynette Holloway

James mcdougal, who was convicted, died of an apparent heart attack while in solitary confinement. He was a key witness in the probe, writes Snopes.

5. Victor Raiser II dies in plane crash: Democratic presidential nominee Bill Clinton, Raiser, the former National Finance Co-Chairman of Clinton for President, and his son, Montgomery, both died in a suspicious private plane crash in Alaska in 1992. No cause for the crash was determined, and Raiser was considered to be a major player on the Clinton team, writes Snopes.

Barack Obama conspiracy theories: A closely related cluster of conspiracy theories is associated with Barack Obama. The essence of all such theories is an allegation that his claim to the Presidency is illegitimate due to the circumstances of his birth. The racially-tinged "birther" theory, which alleged the nation's last black president was not born in the United States and thus ineligible for the office. It is alleged that either his birth certificate was faked or that he holds dual citizenship and thus disqualifies him as President. The conspiracy theories have been tenacious despite the release of Obama's Hawaiian birth certificate by his election campaign and the April 2011 release of a certified copy of Obama's original Certificate of Live Birth (so-called "long form birth certificate"). Related rumors involve questioning the President's Social Security Number, the President's religion, and suggesting that he is or was at one time a Muslim. Fake birth certificates, ghostwriters, teleprompters, a teenage trip to Mars, and more of the most paranoid and bizarre Obama conspiracy theories out there.⁶⁰

Yet, the conspiracy theories are merely a diversion to his scandals; red herrings⁶¹ if you will. Barack Obama's presidency has been an inspiration to many Americans, especially nutjobs. Ever since the last-black-president-to-be appeared on the national political stage, a cottage industry of various conspiracy theorists has churned out bizarre, paranoid, and some racist nonsense, some of which has trickled into the political mainstream. Below, we've charted some of the Obama-baiters best work.⁶²

Obama is a secret Muslim: This one began right after he took the stage at the 2004 Democratic convention, with chain emails alleging his "true" religious affiliation. The rumor soon found its way onto the popular conservative online forum Free Republic, and took on a whole new life in the years to come. On a related theory: Obama secretly speaks Arabic, attended a madrasa as a kid in Indonesia, referred to "my Muslim faith" in an interview, and was sworn in on a Koran.⁶³

Obama is bringing 100 million Muslims to America: Avi Lipkin and his PR outfit Special Guests claimed to have evidence of a scheme to bring roughly 100 million Muslims from the Middle East into the United States, converting the country into an Islamic nation by the end of Obama's second term and making it easier to obliterate Israel.⁶⁴ *Obama once aided the mujahidin:* Harlem pastor and professional race-baiter James David Manning contended that in his younger days, Obama went undercover as a CIA agent to facilitate the transfer of cash and weapons to the Afghan mujahidin in the '80s, thereby aiding what would become the Taliban. *Obama is in the pocket of the Muslim Brotherhood:* Billy Graham's son Franklin wants you to know that Obama is allowing the Muslim Brotherhood to take over the federal government.

Obama redecorated the Oval Office in Middle Eastern style: Driven by his fierce sense of anti-American interior design, Obama got rid of the red, white, and blue decoration scheme in his White House office. However, in all the pictures of the oval office I didn't see anything like Middle East interior design. He was anti-American but even he was careful not to go too far.

Obama married a Pakistani guy: World Net Daily correspondent and conspiracy monger extraordinaire Jerome Corsi posted a video in which he claimed to have "strong" evidence that Obama was

⁶⁰ Asawin Suebsaeng and Dave Gilson

⁶¹ From the practice of drawing a red herring across a trail to confuse hunting dogs: something that distracts attention from the real issue

⁶² When people would accuse me of being racist, I always responded that it wasn't the fact that he was black that bothered me, it was the fact that he was red that I didn't like.

⁶³ Steve Brodner

⁶⁴ Actually, I don't think he was either Muslim or Christian. Although he did favor Muslims in his foreign policy, because he was communist, he was atheist. So, he used religion to advance his Marxist agenda.

once married to his college roommate from Pakistan. The smoking gun: Photos of the chums in which the future president is “sitting about on the Pakistani roommate’s lap.” On a related theory: for years Obama wore a gold ring on his left hand. Was it his gay-wedding ring? Obama’s ring has a Koranic verse on it: The very same ring, which Obama now wears as his (straight) wedding band, is allegedly emblazoned with a key phrase in the Islamic declaration of faith: “There is no god except Allah and Mohammed is his prophet.”⁶⁵

I don’t believe this! Like I said previously, all the conspiracy theories only divert from the real scandals and corruption of his presidency. Obama was funded by a Saudi prince: Another fairy tale courtesy of Corsi: in late-’70s Chicago, Obama secured political and academic funding from a variety of sketchy Arab sponsors, including a Saudi prince. Which may explain why President Obama bowed to the Saudi king when they met in 2009. My personal opinion is Obama bows because he was a village idiot and nothing more.

Obama was born in Kenya: in early 2008, fringe theorists began a push to prove Obama was born on foreign soil and was therefore ineligible to live in the White House. The theory gained national attention thanks to the efforts of perennial GOP candidate Alan Keyes⁶⁶, “birther queen” Orly Taitz, and Corsi. On a related theory: Obama’s birth certificate is a fake, he killed his grandmother in Hawaii because she knew the truth, sealed access to his birth certificate and other damning documents, and did pretty much everything horrible you could possibly do for the sake of a phony birth certificate. Obama lost his US citizenship when he lived in Indonesia.

Once he was voted in office, everything else was moot. From then on people should have focused on his scandals, corruption, and talked about impeachment because of constitutional violations. But it was almost humorous the way everyone focused on the conspiracies and let the weightier matters of the law get ignored.

Michelle’s “whitey” tape: During the 2008 campaign, rumors surfaced that a video of Michelle Obama using the word “whitey” would be released to sink her husband’s campaign. It never materialized. On a related theory: Glenn Beck called Barack Obama a racist. It’s interesting that many minorities truly believe that only whites can be racists. Therefore, they believe that they can refer to other races any way they want and not be accused of racism. I think it is well-known that judging by the things he said and did, Obama was very much a racist. The result was that he divided the nation in a way not seen since the 1968 riots that engulfed the country in flames from sea to shining sea.

Obama was a Black Panther: Well, only if you’re not very good at spotting photoshopped images. Obama is the son of Malcolm X: Because, you know, black people. This charmer popped up on Atlas Shrugged, Pamela Geller’s anti-Muslim website. Geller is also known for obsessing over Shariah turkeys she believes are destroying Thanksgiving. The above conspiracies are so ridiculous that no comment need be made. It was obvious the theorists were scraping the bottom of the barrel.

Obama is the son of Frank Marshall Davis: The conspiracy film, *Dreams from My Real Father*, espouses the theory that Davis, a leftist activist, was not only Obama’s ideological mentor but his biological father. On a related theory: Obama got a nose job to make his nose look less like Davis.’ Obama’s parents were communists: That would be his real father, Barack Obama, Sr. *Obama’s ghostwriter was Bill Ayers:* Conservative commentators claimed they uncovered evidence that ex-Weatherman Bill Ayers was the true author of Obama’s 1995 memoir *Dreams from my Father*. Beyond their shared radicalism, Obama asked Ayers to help because he had writer’s block.

Obama trained to overthrow the government: in 2008, leading Obama conspiracy theorist Andy Martin declared on Fox News’ Hannity’s America that the then-presidential candidate had trained for “a radical overthrow of the government” During his time as a community organizer in Chicago.

Obama wouldn’t say the Pledge of Allegiance: During the ’08 campaign, Obama was rumored to have refused to say the pledge during a town hall meeting. A photo of the incident was taken while the

⁶⁵ Also known as the Shahada. ‘ilāha ‘illā llāh muḥammadun rasūlu āllah (إِلَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ)

⁶⁶ A black Republican, Alan Keyes was the first one Obama tried to destroy by the politics of personal destruction. A tactic he used against Herman Cain and others.

national anthem was being sung. Obama removed the flag from Air Force One: ...and replaced it with his campaign logo.

Obama ordered soldiers to swear allegiance to him: in April 2009, a clearly satirical report made the rounds on the right-wing blogosphere; detailing how secretary of defense Robert Gates was growing “extremely frustrated” with the White House’s plans to scrub the Constitution from the military oath of loyalty.

Obama secretly gave away American islands to Russia: Texas House candidate Wes Riddle endorsed this theory and noted the relinquishment as grounds for impeachment. However, the seven Arctic islands were actually given away in 1991 by President George H.W. Bush.⁶⁷

Obama caused the recession in 1995: According to a recent Daily Caller story, Obama’s efforts to force banks to lend to African Americans in the mid-’90s led to the subprime mortgage crisis that killed the economy in 2008.

Obama’s youth reeducation camps: Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.) Warned that “young people will be put into mandatory service” at politically correct, billion-dollar camps run by the Democrats. Are these the same FEMA camps that Ronald Reagan supposedly set up?

Obama’s coming for your guns: Extreme gun-rights outfits, along with Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), alleged that the Obama administration is supporting the (nonexistent) United Nations Small Arms Treaty, which would lead to nationwide gun confiscation. Unfounded fears of gun confiscation have multiplied since the Newtown massacre.

Obama’s coming for your gold: This theory was floated by Glenn Beck and the gold company he advertised on his show.

Obama is planning FEMA concentration camps: Again, with the camps! This theory got a big boost from Glenn Beck. On a related theory: An executive order entitled, “National Defense Resources Preparedness,” was issued in the middle of March 2012. Conservative commentators saw it as a martial law power-grab that allowed the president to commandeer farmland, steal everyone’s food, and draft any American into slave labor for a war of aggression against Iran. Also, he has a “secret vault” at Interpol’s headquarters for imprisoning Americans.

Obama wants to confiscate your IRA: Townhall.com sent out a message ad claiming that Obama wants to seize your retirement account by force.

Obama caused the BP oil spill: Conspiracy-minded radio nut, Alex Jones promoted the theory that the Deepwater Horizon spill was all part of the administration’s plans of oil nationalization and global government.

Obama was behind the Aurora massacre: in July, Gun Owners of America blasted out a press release claiming that the mass murder at a movie theater in Aurora, Colorado, was suspiciously timed. “Someone in Washington” was probably behind it, paving the way for Obama-led firearm confiscation and “government genocide.”

Obama personally caused Hurricane Sandy: It wasn’t global warming that made Sandy so intense; it was Barack. Alex Jones’ site reported the president engineered the storm using a Pentagon weather modification project. The mayhem caused by the hurricane would afford Obama the opportunity to score points by briskly managing disaster relief a week before the election.

Obama had Andrew Breitbart killed: in March 2012, conservative media producer Andrew Breitbart died of heart failure. Less than a month prior to his death, he had announced that he had uncovered footage of Obama’s formative years as a radical. So obviously, Obama had him offed. The tapes were later revealed to contain things like a young Obama hugging a black college professor. On a related theory: People, like a Rod Blagojevich fundraiser and an Obama impersonator, Christopher Kelly, died of a drug overdose, in 2009. Obama was in office between 2008 and 2012...coincidence? There is a Fox News report on this death, 2009. Rod, former Illinois Governor is serving a 14-year sentence for corruption and abuse of power charges. He is in prison until 2024. Like that’s got anything to do with Kelly.

⁶⁷ That can’t be as bad as Bill Clinton selling Alameda Naval Base to the Chinese.

Obama spiked the jobs report: “Jobs truthers” like former GE CEO Jack Welch and Florida tea party congressman Allen West accused the Obama administration of cooking the unemployment numbers to manufacture a rosier picture of the economy and boost the president’s chances of reelection. The books were obviously cooked. They removed the statistics showing those who had given up on trying to get work. If the real numbers were used the unemployment numbers would have been around 20% for those looking for work.

Obama faked bin Laden’s death: Since no photographs of Osama bin Laden’s corpse were produced, the Al- Qaeda leader must still be out there. (There is a photograph. I’ve seen it.) Fox News’ Steve Doocy and Andrew Napolitano entertained the idea that Operation Neptune Spear was merely a ploy to revive Obama’s sagging approval ratings. On a related theory: Obama was photoshopped into the iconic killing-OBL White House photo.

Obama’s plan to fake an assassination attempt; there was an assassination attempt by a black Democrat. He probably was upset because he didn’t get his Obama phone. A false-flag operation would create urban tumult and give Obama the pretext to declare martial law, thus suspending democracy, postponing the 2012 election, and prolonging his stay in office. The theory was flagged by Tenn. State Rep. Kelly Keisling, among others, after circulating online.

Obama’s planning a third term: The dust from the 2012 election had barely cleared when this one popped up.

These next few theories border on the insane and absurd.

Obama the brainwashing hypnotist: As a master of neurolinguistics programming, Obama convinced Americans to vote for him via subliminal messages. On a related theory: Rush Limbaugh pondered that hypnosis was the reason that so many Jewish voters were in the bag for Obama. In October, Georgia GOP lawmakers held a briefing on the president’s secret mind-control plot.

Obama’s teleprompter: Obama’s eloquence is a myth! The 44th president is incapable of speaking in public without his teleprompter.

Obama had a ghostwriter for everything: Jack Cashill over at WND had a hot scoop on how Obama’s love letters to his college girlfriend were ghostwritten.

Obama’s anti-Semitic poetry: However, according to the American Thinker, Obama’s ghostwriters did not write his youthful poem “Underground,” which compares Jews to fig-eating underwater apes and echoes Koranic verse.

Obama’s exiled lover: Obama was supposedly fooling around with an attractive young staffer from his 2004 Senate campaign. Michelle Obama had the temptress packed off to the Caribbean before the ’08 campaign.

Obama is gay: Which explains why he joined Rev. Jeremiah Wright’s church. (Corsi)

Obama’s crack cocaine/gay sex/murder orgy cover-up: in 2008, a small-time conman named Larry Sinclair and his kilt-wearing lawyer held a press conference to tell the world of the future president’s murderous, drug-and-sodomy-fueled crimes. No one heard this press conference because no one was dumb enough to attend it or believe it.

Obama’s campaigns were funded by drug money: During an October conference, organized to oppose pot legalization, a writer from Lyndon Larouche’s magazine asked about “reports that both Obama’s 2008 and 2012 presidential campaigns were financed in part by laundered drug money⁶⁸.”

Obama is the Antichrist: Obviously.⁶⁹ On a related theory: If you play his 2008 Democratic nomination acceptance speech backwards, you can hear him instruct listeners to do Satan’s bidding.⁷⁰

Obama is a lizard overlord: According to codes hidden in Biblical verses, Obama is a reptilian humanoid. This idea has found its way on to some right-wing radio shows, and two Daily Caller reporters

⁶⁸ So, what? He’s from Chicago, the most corrupt city in the nation next to DC. What did you expect from a communist atheist? A Sunday School teacher?

⁶⁹ I won’t even dignify this one with a comment.

⁷⁰ That one came right out of the 80’s when it was thought that if you played a record backwards you could hear subliminal messages. I’m still surprised that that one is still being thrown around.

recently published a satirical e-book on the topic entitled, *The Lizard King: The Shocking Inside Account of Obama's True Intergalactic Ambitions* by an Anonymous White House Staffer.

Obama's adventures on Mars: As a teen, Obama participated in a CIA initiative to teleport to Mars using a top-secret "jump room." Self-described time travelers, William Stillings and Andrew Basiago claim to have met the future POTUS at American space bases on the Red Planet. In early 2012, a spokesman for the National Security Council actually acknowledged these claims, and issued a fairly convincing denial.

The above conspiracy theories are so absurd that they aren't even worth making an intelligent response. One more time, conspiracy theories are made by nutjobs, paranoid schizophrenics, and those people who need an overwhelming desire to get their 15 seconds of fame.

Yet there were many, many scandals, lies, corruption, and failures in this malignant narcissist's administration, but because of the conspiracy theories no one could separate reality from the fantasy. The Obama administration has been marred by debt, scandals, foreign policy failures, and an overall fragmentation of this country. He has plunged the United States into an abyss of economic debt that will create generations of American servitude paying off his wayward spending endeavors. There is a full list of the administration's most egregious scandals to date. The ones we know about, at least; will read like a litany of fiascos perpetrated on both the American people and the world by this corrupt president:⁷¹ There are over 60 scandals and counting.

As I have researched this president, i've realized three things in common in his staff, his cabinet, his czars, and his political allies.

1. They are all Ivy Leaguers.
2. They are all various types of socialists: progressive, Marxist, national, and democratic socialists.
3. They are all corrupt and the ends justify the means. This means they will do anything to advance their leftist agenda; lie, cheat, steal, kill to cover up their works on the dark side.
4. When I tried to cover the eight years of the Obama administration I discovered that He became the focus of this book. So, I had to move that research to another book all about the village idiot from Kenya. In that book I cover his scandals, lies, corruption, and traitorous behavior. So now that i've briefly addressed conspiracy theories concerning Obama now we can look at theories concerning Trump.

Donald Trump: Conspiracies involving Donald Trump include the Trump campaign having had contact with the Russians such that the Russians helped elect Trump. After CNN reported that some of his top aides were in constant communication with Russian officials during the campaign, Trump tweeted, "This Russian connection non-sense is merely an attempt to cover-up the many mistakes made in Hillary Clinton's losing campaign."

A guide to the conspiracy theories about Donald Trump is more of a window into the souls of the Democrats than Trump's misdeeds. The Democrats are finding that the investigators are putting them between a rock and a hard place. The investigators have filed FOIA requests from the Democrats for everything from the Russian scandal to election frauds and now they have to put up or shut up. They have become very hostile and secretive. They want to destroy president Trump so bad their teeth ache. I learned when I was involved with private security and investigations, when the target becomes hostile to either security or to investigators, that means they are hiding something. For the last 8 years, the Democrats have been able to hide their corruption and deflect the attention on to the Republicans. Now the Republicans are getting their payback and like cockroaches the Democrats are looking for someplace to hide and they are running scared.

Every time the investigators get close to pinning the tail on the jack-asses of the Democratic Party they get nervous and attack Trump, his family and his staff. However. Over the last 70 years the Democrats have attacked Republicans, traditionalists, the religious right, and other conservative groups with impunity.

⁷¹ We'll be cleaning up his messes for generations. At least Carter and Clinton can say they are no longer America's worst presidents.

With Trump, they have met their match. He doesn't take their crap lying down. He fights back and they don't know how to handle it. Add that to the fact they are running for their political lives as they see the socialist empire they have built up for the last 100 years and they are just going berserk with fear.

Unlike the Obama conspiracy theories that digress from the real issues of his administration: lies, corruption, failures, faux pas, and scandals, the conspiracy theories regarding Trump hide the good things he is trying to do. The fact that Trump has accomplished more in his first 100 days in office than Obama did in 8 years. Then tweets on twitter to do an end run around the traditional media and the left is going bonkers. They can't buy him, threaten him, or buy him. All of these theories are being propagated by the shadow government; Obama holdovers and leftists who are actively trying to overthrow the Trump administration. This includes not only democrats, Obama and Clinton, but establishment Republicans who feel threatened when Trump promised the American people that he was going to drain the swamp meaning getting rid of corrupt congressmen and senators and other officials bent on removing Trump from office no matter what it takes.

Like any cultural phenomenon, Donald Trump's campaign for president brings its own folklore. And for Trump, that folklore mainly involves conspiracy theories that explain away all his self-inflicted wounds. Down in the polls,⁷² But it goes beyond that. When candidates make a misstep, they usually try to excuse the incident and move on. The story of the week even as Hillary Clinton came under fire for insisting on Sunday that FBI director James Comey said she had told the complete truth about her emails. He said no such thing. It's all behavior we don't typically expect from someone who is trying to become president of the United States, which brings us to Trump conspiracy theory number one..

1. **He has no intention of becoming president:** It's a theory as old as the campaign itself: Donald Trump has no intention of becoming president, and this has all been a glorified public relations endeavor. "I can't imagine that he wants to be president," MSNBC's Rachel Maddow told Jimmy Fallon last August. "I'm not even convinced he really wants the job," Tucker Carlson wrote in a January piece for Politico. "He's smart enough to know it would be tough for him to govern."

Carlson and Maddow aren't alone in their suspicions. Occidental College professor Peter Drier wrote for the Huffington Post in October that Trump was "scared shitless" that he might win the Republican nomination. "Trump goes to sleep at night both excited about the next day's media attention and worried that he might actually win, but unsure how to get out of the bind he now finds himself in," he wrote.

Perhaps the most famous encapsulation of this theory came from Stephanie Cegielski, a one-time strategist for a pro-Trump super PAC. "He doesn't want the White House," she wrote in an "open letter" to Trump supporters on the website xojane. "He just wants to be able to say that he could have run the White House. He's achieved that already and then some. If there is any question, take it from someone who was recruited to help the candidate succeed, and initially very much wanted him to do so."

2. **Impact of Roger Ailes suit on other sexual harassment cases.** Here's the rub with this theory: Cegielski worked for a PAC that Trump never gave his blessing to, so her insinuations that she was a campaign insider (xojane referred to her as a "top strategist" for the candidate) are likely false. Trump never wanting to be president is a matter of pure speculation, and one that might not make the most sense. This is just a pipe dream of the Democrats. They think if they tell themselves enough time that if Trump didn't want to win that perhaps Hillary would and he would lose. As we can see however, they shouldn't do their own thinking.

The anti-Trump naysayers think that if Trump were trying to improve his standing in the public eye, he's failed, becoming the most unpopular major party nominee in history. It's also hurt his businesses, which have been the target of boycotts and are now forever saddled with their association to a man many see as a racist demagogue; or so they like to think. That brings us to theory number two.

3. **He cut a deal with the Clintons to let Hillary become the candidate then he would drop out.**

⁷² Which is in and of itself a false news report, as he is continuing to rise in the polls.

This theory has the strange benefit of being floated by Jeb Bush, a implant of the GOP's most prominent dynasty and one of Trump's erstwhile primary opponents. The guiding principle of this theory: if you wanted to destroy the Republican Party from the inside, would you do anything differently than what Trump has done? He's divided conservatives. He's alienated large and growing demographic groups and every time Hillary has a bad day, in comes Trump to turn her bad day into a nightmare.

Jeb's tweet prompted a run-down of the theory in The Washington Post last December, while the tweet itself was in response to a characteristically odd boast from Trump that, should he run as an independent, most of his supporters would leave the GOP and follow him. That obviously didn't turn out to be necessary, though the theory still had its compelling points. For starters, Trump used to be a Democrat, and had a personal relationship with the Clintons, who attended his wedding in 2005. Moreover, Trump was a Democrat until 2009, although he spent the George W. Bush years as a Republican. He also repeatedly praised both Clintons over the last decade.

"Hillary Clinton, I think is a terrific woman," he told Greta Van Susteren in 2012. "I am biased because I have known her for years. I live in New York. She lives in New York. I really like her and her husband both a lot. I think she really works hard. And I think, again, she's given an agenda, it is not all of her, but I think she really works hard and I think she does a good job. I like her."

"Four Trump allies and one Clinton associate familiar with the exchange said that Clinton encouraged Trump's efforts to play a larger role in the Republican Party and offered his own views of the political landscape," the Post reported last August. Clinton was also reported to have been "upbeat and encouraging" during the call, in which he "analyzed Trump's prospects and his desire to rouse the GOP base."

That's enough to raise a few eyebrows. The question is, now that Trump has become the most polarizing figure in America, what has he to gain from throwing the fight? What could the Clintons give him after painting him as an unstable racist maniac? Maybe Trump made a deal with a guy with deeper pockets and absolute power, which brings us to theory number three.

4. **Donald Trump is working for Putin's Kremlin.** It's strange, isn't it, that the Republican nominee has such evident affection for Vladimir Putin? In speech after speech, Trump has made it clear that better relations with Moscow would be a central tenet of his foreign policy. And for its part, Russia's propaganda organs have returned the favor.

RT America, the Kremlin-funded English cable news service, has adopted a decidedly pro-Trump party line over the last year. As Politico reported in May, the network portrays him as a "foreign policy savant" who wisely realizes that NATO has outlived its mission and Putin has gotten a bad rap. The journalist Adrian Chen, meanwhile, has reported that much of Russia's "army of well-paid trolls" on the internet became, at some point, Trump backers. All that was before the Democratic National Committee hack, which many believe to be the work of Russia's intelligence agencies. Clinton campaign manager Robby Mook, for one, has said Moscow was behind the embarrassing release of emails via wikileaks that cost a Clinton ally her job running the DNC.

But it doesn't stop there. The last job top Trump aide Paul Manafort held down was a gig advising Viktor Yanukovich, the Putinite president of Ukraine who was toppled by pro-Western demonstrators in 2014 and Trump has had plenty of business dealings with Russian investors, prompting Donald Trump Jr. To tell a real estate conference in 2008 "Russians make up a pretty disproportionate cross-section of a lot of our assets."

Trump has said on Twitter and in his speeches that this is all ridiculous, even as he brags that Putin likes him. The new joke in town is that Russia leaked the disastrous DNC e-mails, which should never have been written...

It's worth noting that the Clintons have had their share of shady deals with Putin-linked figures over the past few years, most notably one involving the Russian takeover of a Canadian uranium company. Still,

it's hard to dismiss the idea that the Kremlin has a vested interest in seeing Trump elected, given his praise for Putin, suspicions about NATO, and apparent business interests in Russia. Then again, Trump is probably not a full-blown Manchurian candidate, or someone who embarked on an enormously expensive presidential campaign just so he could get in better with Putin. Perhaps Trump's behavior has an easier explanation: he's tired of the campaign and looking for an exit. So here we are, with conspiracy theory number four.

Trump might be looking to drop out. "ABC News has learned that senior Republican party officials are so frustrated and confused by Donald Trump's seemingly erratic behavior that they are exploring how to replace him on the ballot if he drops out," ABC's Jon Karl reported on Wednesday.

Stocks are for losers, Donald Trump suggests, and other moneywatch headlines. Here's the thing, though: there's nothing to explore, as the party's Rule No. 9 pretty concretely lays out what happens if there's a vacancy. Basically, RNC members would choose a replacement nominee by voting for a new one on a state-by-state basis. But that only kicks in if Trump dies or Trump drops out. What are the chances he drops out, then? Probably nil, considering the enormous time and effort he's already put into the race, and what we know about him as a person.

He's not the kind of person who can just fold up and leave at this point; doing so would look weak, and Trump's whole worldview is predicated on the need to look strong. Trump's staying put, folks. Then how do we explain what Trump is doing? Chances are it's all quite simple: Trump is an unconventional candidate making unconventional decisions, and he's confident that they'll somehow work because they've worked in the past in his business deals. He knows that to control the game, one has to keep the opposition off guard. Yes, his connections with Russia are peculiar. Yes, his relationship with the Clintons is at the very least complex. But as is the case with most things, the simplest explanation is also the likeliest, and that's the explanation that Trump is just being Trump, for better or worse.

The left is pretending the hate speech and the violence is coming from the right. It's actually coming from the left and we do feel the need to correct the record. The left has been engaging in hate speech against conservatives for so long they have ceased to see what they do as hate speech. The Daily Caller published a report of attacks on conservatives in the last year. It's likely not a comprehensive list since most of these assaults go unreported.

As the Daily Caller mentioned, Huff Po thought this was the right time to call for the execution of Donald Trump and his collaborators. They have since scrubbed the article because even for the left they know they may have gone a little overboard. The author, the irrational Jason Fuller, wrote: "Impeachment and removal from office are only the first steps; for America to be redeemed, Donald Trump must be prosecuted for treason and if convicted in a court of law, executed."⁷³

Here are the listed instances from only the past two months from the Daily Caller:

May 2017: – Republican Rep. Tom Garrett, his family and his dog were targeted by a series of repeated death threats deemed credible by authorities.

-FBI agents arrested a person for threatening to shoot Republican Rep. Martha mcsally over her support for Trump.

-Police in Tennessee charged a woman for allegedly trying to run Republican Rep. David Kustoff off the road.

-Police in North Dakota ejected a man after he became physical with Republican Rep. Kevin Cramer at a town hall.

-A former professor was arrested after police said they identified him on video beating Trump supporters with a U-shaped bike lock, leaving three people with "significant injuries."

June 2017: -James Hodgkinson opened fire on a congressional GOP baseball practice, injuring five, including House Majority Whip Steve Scalise.

⁷³ I don't understand. What did Trump do that was treasonous? Obama, I understand. He should have been brought up on charges of treason, high crimes and misdemeanors. He may still be if he doesn't knock of the shadow government nonsense.

- Shortly after the shooting at the Republican congressional baseball practice, Republican Rep. Claudia Tenney received an email threat that read, "One down, 216 to go." It might be of interest to note that the day of the game, Democrat congressional staff and aids, booed the Republicans as they entered the field.

-A man driving a white Malibu reportedly fired several shots at a man driving a truck displaying a "Make America Great Again" flag in Indiana.

A conservative, who goes by the name of Lorraine, jotted down a list of the noteworthy hate from the left: She said, "This I copied but wanted to share... This is an ugly list. It deserves to be seen following this morning's dedicated shooting of "republicans." All of the people in the list below need to be aware of the possible consequences of their actions. These people in the list reach out to MILLIONS of people and influence them.

- A New York off-broadway play showed the killing of Trump.
- Actress Lea DeLaria Threatened to 'take out' Republicans and Independents with a baseball bat after the Trump win.
- Avengers director Joss Whedon: "I want a RINO to fuck Paul Ryan to death."
- CNN announced who would take over the government if all elected republicans were KILLED during Trump's inauguration.
- Juan Thompson threatened to blow up a Jewish Community Center
- Kathy Griffin decapitated Trump in a photoshoot
- Kathy Griffin promised to beat up Baron Trump...
- Larry Wilmore jokes about suffocating Trump with the 'Pillow they used to kill Scalia.'
- Loretta Lynch wanted bloodshed and violence against republicans.
- Madonna – "I've thought a lot about blowing up the White House."
- Marilyn Manson kills 'Trump' in a music video.
- Obama asked for his supporters to rise up.
- Rapper Everlast warns Trump: "I will punch you in your fucking face."
- Rapper YG threatens Trump with "Fuck Donald Trump" song.
- Robert De Niro: "I'd like to punch him (Trump) in the face."
- Sarah Silverman suggests military could help overthrow Trump.
- Snoop Dog kills Trump in a video.
- Stephen Colbert's Late Show put Stephen Miller's head on a spike.
- The creator of the Wire, David Simon: "Pick up a Goddamn brick" if Trump fires Robert Mueller.
- The Portland killer Jeremy Christian, a Bernie voter, killed two Trump supporters.
- The Wrestler actor, Mickey Rourke Threatened to Beat Trump with Baseball Bat: "He can suck my fucking dick."
- Tim Kaine asked for blood on the streets.

Now I ask you, Bad apples or a rotten tree? I would suggest this is standard operating procedure for the peace and love of the US communist left.

Chapter 4. Wars and False Flag Operations:

Other leading academics disagree and Der Spiegel published a 10-page rebuttal of the four historians' conclusions. "Along with Communist propagandists, serious scholars have been linked on the side of the proponents of the Nazi conspiracy theory." More controversially, former GRU⁷⁴ officer Aleksey Gaskin, former FSB⁷⁵ officer Alexander Litvinenko and other defectors from the Russian government and security services have asserted that the 1999 Russian apartment bombings, which precipitated the Second Chechen War, were false flag operations perpetrated by the FSB, the successor organization to the KGB⁷⁶.

False flag operations are covert operations conducted by governments, corporations, or other organizations, which are designed to appear as if they are being carried out by other entities. Some allegations of false flag operations are verified or at least credible and some are still subjects of historical dispute. The 1933 arson attack of the German parliament building is such an example where in 2001 four German historians argued that the fire had been a Nazi false-flag operation blamed on a communist.

Predictive programming: This theory posits that media outlets produce media; fictional media such as popular films, television shows, novels, etc. That include images of events such as terrorist attacks, epidemics, or other natural or man-made disasters with the intent of programming the general population to accept such events as plausible, so that when the government undertakes such operations in the future, the public will be predisposed to believe the operations are actually terrorist actions and not government actions.

Recently, the mainstream media has engaged in a popular phenomenon known as "False news." They broadcast stories that has the weight of truth because of the former reputation of the media. However, if anyone tries to do any amount of investigation they will discover that there is no truth whatsoever to the false news stories. They merely put a grain of half-truth in the minds of gullible people who will believe anything in order to start a rumor mill with the objective of destroying someone, an organization, or process.

The motivations for nations starting, entering, or ending wars are often brought into question by conspiracy theorists. Munitions suppliers are often blamed for devising, coordinating and precipitating the events that lead nations into war, either in part or in total. According to this view, there is always a party within a nation that benefits from war, on whatever pretext: the suppliers of weapons and other military material. President Dwight Eisenhower referred to this source of potential conflict of interest as the military-industrial complex.

President Abraham Lincoln is known to have made a similar observation near the close of the American Civil War. In 1865, I. Winslow Ayer alludes to the 1864 'Camp Douglas Conspiracy' to break out prisoners, describing it as a conspiracy of Copperheads and of the Sons of Liberty in his historical work, *The Great North-Western Conspiracy in All Its Startling Details*. Ayer alleges that, at an August meeting of the Sons of Liberty, Judge Morris said: "Thousands of our best men were prisoners in Camp Douglas, and if once at liberty would 'send abolitionists to hell in a hand basket.'" This is the oldest recorded use of the phrase according to the Oxford English Dictionary.

A war planned for economic gain can be seen as a conspiracy in the conventional sense of a secret plot, particularly when the public is presented with false pretexts for war. It has also been suggested that war is a perfect way of distracting citizens, as an electoral tactic, from difficulties facing the current

⁷⁴ Main Intelligence Agency (Russian: Глáвное развѣдывательное управлѣние, tr. Glavnoye razvedyvatel'noye upravleniye; In May 1992, the GRU was dissolved and became part of the new Russian Ministry of Defense. In 2006 the GRU moved to a new Headquarters complex at Khoroshevskoye Shosse In 2010 GRU changed its name to Main Directorate of the Russian General Chief of Staff, but the GRU remains commonly used.

⁷⁵ The Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB; Russian: Федеральная служба безопасности Российской Федерации (ФСБ), tr. Federal'naya sluzhba bezopasnosti Rossiyskoy Federatsii;

⁷⁶ The KGB, an initialism for Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti (Russian: Комитѣт госудáрственной безопáсности (КГБ);

government. This premise is the basis of the films *Wag the Dog*, *Canadian Bacon*, and the George Orwell novel *1984*.

Weapons testing is the basis for Peter Vogel's book *The Last Wave from Port Chicago* argues that the Port Chicago disaster was an accidental detonation or intentional test of a nuclear weapon on ships manned by mostly African American U.S. sailors. According to some theories the crashes of Arrow 1285 and TWA800 were caused by a secret electromagnetic directed-energy weapon.

War for Oil: Although there have been numerous reasons, both real and contrived for the invasion of Iraq, none has been more influential than the idea of it being a war for oil. It seems, however, that if it really were the sole reason, the government would have simply gone ahead and cut a deal without all the expensive explosions.

The Secret Team: *The CIA and Its Allies in Control of the United States and the World* is a book written by Air Force Col. L. Fletcher Prouty, published in 1973. From 1955 to 1963 Prouty was the "Focal Point Officer" for contacts between the CIA and the Pentagon on matters relating to military support for "black operations" but he was not assigned to the CIA and was not bound by any oath of secrecy; From the first page of the 1974 Printing. It was one of the first tell-all books about the inner workings of the CIA and was an important influence on the Oliver Stone movie JFK. But the main thrust of the book is how the CIA started as a think tank to analyze intelligence gathered from military sources but has grown to the monster it has become.

The CIA had no authority to run their own agents or to carry out covert operations but they quickly did both and much more. This book tells about things they actually did and a lot about how they operate. In Prouty's own words, from the 1997 edition of *The Secret Team*: This is the fundamental game of the Secret Team. They have power because they control secrecy and secret intelligence, and because they have the ability to take advantage of the most modern communications system in the world, of global transportation systems, of weapons of all kinds, and when needed, the full support of a world-wide U.S. military support base structure.

They can use the finest intelligence system in the world, and most importantly, they have been able to operate under the canopy of an assumed, ever-present enemy called "Communism." It will be interesting to see what "enemy" develops in the years ahead. It appears that "UFO's and Aliens" are being primed to fulfill that role for the future. To top all of this, there is the fact that the CIA, itself, has assumed the right to generate and direct secret operations. "He is not the first to allege that UFOs and Aliens are going to be used as a threat against the world to globalize the planet under One government.

March 1, 2002 report on Secret Government: The Report from Iron Mountain is a book, published in 1967 during the Johnson Administration, by Dial Press, that states that it is the report of a government panel. According to the report, a 15-member panel, called the Special Study Group, was set up in 1963 to examine what problems would occur if the U.S. entered a state of lasting peace. They met at an underground nuclear bunker called Iron Mountain; as well as other, worldwide locations, and worked over the next two years. Iron Mountain is where the government has stored the flight 93 evidence from 9/11. A member of the panel, one "John Doe," a professor at a college in the Midwest, decided to release the report to the public.

The heavily footnoted report concluded that peace was not in the interest of a stable society, that even if lasting peace "could be achieved, it would almost certainly not be in the best interests of society to achieve it." War was a part of the economy. Therefore, it was necessary to conceive a state of war for a stable economy. The government, the group theorized, would not exist without war, and nation states existed in order to wage war. War also served a vital function of diverting collective aggression. They recommended that agencies be created to emulate the economic functions of war. They also recommended "blood games" and that the government create alternative foes that would scare the people with reports of alien life-forms and out of control pollution.

Another proposal was the reinstatement of slavery. U.S. News and World Report claimed in its November 20, 1967 issue to have confirmation of the reality of the report from an unnamed government official, who added that when President Johnson read the report, he "hit the roof" and ordered it to be

suppressed for all time. Additionally, sources were said to have revealed that orders were sent to U.S. embassies, instructing them to emphasize that the book had no relation to U.S. Government policy.

Project Blue Beam is also a common conspiracy theory that alleges that a faked alien landing would be used as a means of scaring the public into whatever global system is suggested. Some researchers suggest the Report from Iron Mountain might be fabricated, others swear it is real.⁷⁷

Bill Moyers, the American journalist and public commentator, served as White House Press Secretary under President Lyndon B. Johnson's Administration from 1965 to 1967. He worked as a news commentator on television for ten years. Moyers has had an extensive involvement with public television, producing documentaries and news journal programs. He has won numerous awards and honorary degrees. He has become well known as a sharp critic of the U.S. media. Since 1990, Moyers has been President of the Schumann Center for Media and Democracy. He is considered by many to be a very credible outlet for the truth. He released a documentary entitled, *The Secret Government*, which exposed the inner workings of a secret government much vaster than most people would ever imagine. Though originally broadcast in 1987, it is even more relevant today. Interviews with respected top military, intelligence, and government insiders reveal both the history and secret objectives of powerful groups in the hidden shadows of our government.

For another powerful, highly revealing documentary on the manipulations of the secret government produced by BBC, in 2007 the intrepid BBC team clearly showed how the War on Terror is largely a fabrication. For those interested in very detailed information on the composition of the shadow or secret government from a less well-known source, by Joe Crubaugh, take a look at the summary available here: *10 False Flags Operations That Shaped Our World*

From Nero to 9/11, via Pearl Harbor and the Gulf of Tonkin incident.. Joe Crubaugh provides an "all-time greatest hits" of false flag operations, whereby one scenario is repeated.. As the world keeps falling for the same lie. Showing that humans do not learn the lessons of history because they continue to repeat the same mistakes from history.

The most commonly known false flag operations consist of a government agency staging a terror attack, whereby an uninvolved entity gets blamed for the carnage. As at least two millennia have proven, false flag operations, with healthy doses of propaganda and ignorance, provided a great recipe for endless war. In "*War is a Racket*," Two-time Medal of Honor Recipient, Major General Smedley Butler wrote:

"I spent 33 years and four months in active military service and during that period I spent most of my time as a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism. I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys in which to collect revenues. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street. I helped purify Nicaragua for the International Banking House of Brown Brothers in 1902-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for the American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras right for the American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went on its way unmolested."

The following are familiar false flag operations throughout history:

1. Nero, Christians, and the Great Fire of Rome: Rome, the night of July 19, 64 AD. The Great Fire burst through the rooftops of shops near the mass entertainment and chariot racing venue called Circus Maximus. The flames, whipped by a strong wind, rapidly engulfed densely populated areas of the city. After burning uncontrolled for five days, four of the 14 Roman districts were burned to the ground, and seven more were severely damaged. It was no secret that Nero wanted to build a series of palaces which he planned to name "Neropolis." But, the planned location was in the city and in order to build Neropolis, a third of Rome would have to be torn down. The Senate rejected the idea. Then, coincidentally, the fire cleared the very real estate Neropolis required.

Despite the obvious benefit, there's still a good probability that Nero did not start the fire. Up to a hundred small fires regularly broke out in Rome each day. On top of that, the fire destroyed Nero's own

⁷⁷ Of course! Some would swear it is real because they have too much time on their hands, an overactive imagination and paranoid psychotic. They think there is a conspiracy around every corner.

palace and it appears that Nero did everything he could to stop the fire. Accounts of the day say that when Nero heard about the fire, he rushed back from Antium to organize a relief effort, using his own money. He opened his palaces to let in the homeless and had food supplies delivered to the survivors.

Nero also devised a new urban development plan that would make Rome less vulnerable to fire. But, although he put in place rules to insure a safer reconstruction, he also gave himself a huge tract of city property with the intention of building his new palace there. People knew of Nero's plans for Neropolis, and all his efforts to help the city could not counteract the rampant rumors that he'd help start the fire.

As his poll numbers dropped, Nero's administration realized the need to employ False Flag Diversion 101: When something, anything bad happens to you, even if it's accidental, point the finger at your enemy. Luckily, there was a new cult of religious believers at hand to act as scape goats. The cult was unpopular because its followers refused to worship the emperor, denounced possessions, held secret meetings and were always talking about the destruction of Rome and the end of the world. Even more luckily for Nero, two of the cult's biggest leaders, Peter and Paul, were currently in town. Nero spread word that the Christians had started the Great Fire. The citizens of Rome bought his lie hook, line and sinker. Peter was crucified and Paul beheaded. Hundreds of others in the young cult were fed to the lions or smeared with tar and set on fire to become human street lamps.

2. Remember the Maine, to Hell with Spain: The Spanish Empire was the first truly global empire, reaching its territorial height in the late 1700s. By 1898, Spain was losing territories regularly. Cuba too was becoming increasingly hard to control and a minor revolution had broken out. This wasn't welcome news to people in the United States who owned Cuban sugar, tobacco and iron industry real estate valued at over \$50 million, which would be \$1.2 billion today).

The main stream media, of the time, then dominated by newspaper magnates Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst, exaggerated and outright fabricated, stories of horrible conditions under Spanish rule. Following the popular newspaper maxim, "If it bleeds, it leads," the newspapers published stories about Spanish death camps, Spanish cannibalism and inhumane torture. The newspapers sent reporters to Cuba. However, when they got there, they found a different story. Artist and correspondent Frederick Remington wrote back to Hearst: "There is no war. Request to be recalled." Hearst's famous reply: "Please remain. You furnish the pictures, I'll furnish the war," and he did. His newspaper, continually screaming how Spanish Cuba was going to hell in a hand basket, convinced big business interests in the US to put pressure on anti-war President William McKinley to protect America's Cuban investments. McKinley, in response, sent the USS Maine battleship to Havana Harbor as a calming show of force.

Three weeks after arriving, on the night of February 15, 1898, the USS Maine exploded, killing 266 men. There are two theories for the explosion: 1. some believe the explosion was caused by an external mine that detonated the ship's ammunition magazines. 2. Others say it was caused by a spontaneous coal bunker fire that reached the ammunition magazines.

Currently, the evidence seems to favor the external mine theory. Without waiting on an investigation, America's mainstream media blamed the tragedy on Spain and beat the drums for war. By April, McKinley yielded to public pressure and signed a congressional resolution declaring war on Spain. To help pay for the Spanish-American War, congress enacted a "temporary" tax of 3 percent on long-distance telephone bills. This was essentially a tax on the rich, as only about 1,300 Americans owned phones in 1898. Although the Spanish-American War ended in 1898, the temporary tax was only abolished in 2005. Over its lifetime, the 107-year-old tax generated almost \$94 billion more than 230 times the cost of the entire Spanish-American War.

The Spanish-American War put a large nail in the coffin of Spain's global empire. And by the end of 1898, the United States, which was founded in opposition to imperialism, found itself in control not only of Cuba, but of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands as well.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Hawaii was not part of the Spanish holding won in the war, but was taken in a land grab from King Kamehameha in

3. *The Manchurian Incident:* The economic slump following 1929's thorough and convincing near-obliteration of Wall Street hit Japan especially hard: exports fell, unemployment rose. Japan, not being rich in natural resources, needed oil and coal to make power to run machines to produce goods to sell to other countries to make money to buy food to have enough energy. Manchuria, a province of China, had its fair share of oil and coal. After Japan decided it needed to invade Manchuria, they needed a pretext to justify the invasion.

They chose to create a false flag attack on a railway close to Liutiao Lake; A big flat area that had no military value to either the Japanese or the Chinese. The main reason the spot was chosen was for its proximity (about 2400 feet distant) to Chinese troops stationed at Beidaying. The Japanese press labelled the no-name site of the blast Liutiaogou, which was Japanese for "Liutiao Bridge." There was no bridge there, but the name helped convince some that the sabotage was a strategic Chinese attack.

Colonel Itagaki Seishiro and Lieutenant Colonel Kanji Ishiwara ordered officers of the Shimamoto Regiment to place a bomb beneath the tracks. The original bomb failed to detonate and a replacement had to be found. Then, at 10.20pm, September 18, 1931, the tracks were blown. Surprisingly, the explosion was minor. Only one side of the rail was damaged, and the damage was so light that a train headed for Shenyang passed by only a few minutes later. But it was a good enough excuse to invade.

The Japanese immediately charged the Chinese soldiers with the destruction, then invaded Manchuria. A puppet government known as Manchukuo was installed. The League of Nations investigated and in a 1932 report denied that the invasion was an act of defense, as Japan had advertised. But rather than vacate Manchuria, Japan decided to vacate the League of Nations, the precursor to the United Nations.

4. *Secrets of the Reichstag Fire:* In 1933, just a week before general elections that might place enough Nazis in office to make Hitler defacto dictator, the Reichstag, which housed the parliament of the German Empire, was set on fire. Adolf Hitler assured everyone that communist terrorists started the fire. Hitler's party member Hermann Göring stated that he had secret evidence that would soon be made public; evidence that proved communists did it. These proclamations came on top of weeks of Nazi-organized street violence designed to whip the public into a pathological fear of communists.

The next day, the Nazis convinced a senile President von Hindenburg to sign the Reichstag Decree. The decree, using defense against terrorism as an excuse, suspended just about every major civil liberty set forth in the Weimar Constitution: habeus corpus, the right to know why you're being put in jail. Gone. Freedom of opinion. Gone. Freedom of the press. No more. Freedom to organize and assemble? Driven underground. The Reichstag decree even allowed the government to spy on its own citizens' personal mail and telephone conversations without a warrant.

All of this most Americans today could hardly begin to fathom. So what about the fire? The only thing historians seem to agree on is that Marinus van der Lubbe, a former Dutch Communist and mentally disturbed arsonist hungry for fame, was found inside the building. Despite the Nazi attempt to blame the fire on a group of communists, the communists were later acquitted by the Nazi government itself. After years of extensive investigation, most historians believe the Hitlerite's themselves set fire to the Reichstag using van der Lubbe as their patsy: they knew a nut was going to try to burn down the building and not only did they let him do it, but they may have befriended him, encouraged him and even helped the blaze spread by scattering gasoline and incendiaries.

Most Germans, feeling safe from terrorism again, didn't mind that their freedom and liberty had been eradicated, or that so much of their life and work had become so strictly controlled. On the contrary, they felt very enthusiastic and patriotic about the new government because they naively believed the new government cared about them. And as long as the average citizen worked hard, kept his mouth shut and let his kids take part in the Hitler Youth organization, he stayed out of the detention camps.

5. *The Fake Invasion at Gleiwitz:* In the late evening of Thursday, August 31, 1939, German covert operatives pretending to be Polish terrorists seized the Gleiwitz radio station in the German/Poland border region of Silesia. The station's music program came to an abrupt halt, followed by frantic German voices announcing that Polish formations were marching toward town. Germany was being invaded by Poland! Then, like a bad imitation of the previous year's infamous War of the Worlds broadcast, the transmission

went dead for a moment of dramatic silence. Soon, the airwaves popped and crackled to life again, and this time Polish voices called for all Poles in the broadcast area to take up arms and attack Germany. In no time, radio stations across greater Europe picked up the story. The BBC broadcast this statement: "There have been reports of an attack on a radio station in Gleiwitz, which is just across the Polish border in Silesia. The German News Agency reported that the attack came at about 8.00pm this evening when the Poles forced their way into the studio and began broadcasting a statement in Polish. Within quarter of an hour, says reports, the Poles were overpowered by German police, who opened fire on them. Several of the Poles were reportedly killed, but the numbers are not yet known." And thus, Hitler invented an excuse to invade Poland, which he did the next day: September 1, 1939. World War II began.

Chain of events, Alfred Helmut Naujocks received the orders from Heinrich Müller, chief of the Gestapo, to put the staged terrorist attack together at the Gleiwitz station. At Naujock's disposal were what the Germans had codenamed "canned goods," which were dissenters and criminals kept alive in detention camps until the Gestapo needed a warm dead body. To add cogency to the Gleiwitz attack, Naujocks brought along one such canned good: Franciszek Honiok. Honiok, a German from the Silesian region, was a known Polish sympathizer.

Before arriving at the station, the Gestapo gave him a lethal injection. Then, they dressed him up like a Polish terrorist and brought him to the front of the radio station. Naujocks later testified that the man was unconscious, but not dead yet, when he was shot full of pistol rounds. When the police and press found Honiok's body, they assumed he'd been one of the fictional Polish terrorists that attacked the station. In all, there were 21 fake terror actions along the border that same night, many of them using "canned goods" from German prisons so there would be plenty of bodies in the morning: evidence of Polish attackers that had been shot in self-defense.

The next day, after a long night filled with fake terror, Hitler gave a speech to the German Army, complete with synthetic anger: "The Polish State has refused the peaceful settlement of relations which I desired, and has appealed to arms. Germans in Poland are persecuted with bloody terror and driven from their houses. A series of violations of the frontier, intolerable to a great Power, prove that Poland is no longer willing to respect the frontier of the Reich. In order to put an end to this lunacy, I have no other choice than to meet force with force from now on. The German Army will fight the battle for the honor and the vital rights of reborn Germany with hard determination. I expect that every soldier, mindful of the great traditions of eternal German soldiery, will ever remain conscious that he is a representative of the National-Socialist Greater Germany. Long live our people and our Reich!"

Had it not been for the Nuremberg trials in 1945, the real story behind the Gleiwitz attack might never have been uncovered. It was there that the operation's leader, Alfred Naujocks, spilled the beans in a written affidavit.

6. *The Myth of Pearl Harbor:* On Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, the Japanese launched a sneak attack at Pearl Harbor that decimated the US Pacific Fleet and forced the United States to enter WWII. That's what most of us were taught as school children. But, except for the date, everything you just read is a myth. In reality, there was no sneak attack. The Pacific Fleet was far from destroyed. And, furthermore, the United States took great pains to bring about the assault. On January 27, 1941, Joseph C. Grew, the U.S. ambassador to Japan, wired Washington that he'd learned of the surprise attack Japan was preparing for Pearl Harbor. On September 24, a dispatch from Japanese naval intelligence to Japan's consul general in Honolulu was deciphered. The transmission was a request for a grid of exact locations of ships in Pearl Harbor.

Surprisingly, Washington chose not to share this information with the officers at Pearl Harbor. Then, on November 26, the main body of the Japanese strike force, consisting of six aircraft carriers, two battleships, three cruisers, nine destroyers, eight tankers, 23 fleet submarines, and five midget submarines, departed Japan for Hawaii. Despite the myth that the strike force maintained strict radio silence, US Naval intelligence intercepted and translated many dispatches. And, there was no shortage of dispatches: Tokyo sent over 1000 transmissions to the attack fleet before it reached Hawaii.

Some of these dispatches, in particular this message from Admiral Yamamoto, left no doubt that Pearl Harbor was the target of a Japanese attack: "The task force, keeping its movement strictly secret and

maintaining close guard against submarines and aircraft, shall advance into Hawaiian waters, and upon the very opening of hostilities shall attack the main force of the United States fleet and deal it a mortal blow. The first air raid is planned for the dawn of x-day. Exact date to be given by later order."

Even on the night before the attack, US intelligence decoded a message pointing to Sunday morning as a deadline for some kind of Japanese action. The message was delivered to the Washington high command more than four hours before the attack on Pearl Harbor. But, as many messages before, it was withheld from the Pearl Harbor commanders.

Although many ships were damaged at Pearl Harbor, they were all old and slow. The main targets of the Japanese attack fleet were the Pacific Fleet's aircraft carriers, but Roosevelt made sure these were safe. In November, at about the same time as the Japanese attack fleet left Japan, Roosevelt sent the Lexington and Enterprise out to sea. Meanwhile, the Saratoga was in San Diego.

So, the real reason why Pearl Harbor happened was that Roosevelt wanted a piece of the war pie. Having failed to bait Hitler by giving \$50.1 billion in war supplies to Britain, the Soviet Union, France and China as part of the Lend Lease program, Roosevelt switched his focus to Japan. Because Japan had signed a mutual defense pact with Germany and Italy, Roosevelt knew war with Japan was a legitimate back door to joining the war in Europe.

On October 7, 1940, one of Roosevelt's military advisors, Lieutenant Commander Arthur McCollum, wrote a memo detailing an 8-step plan that would provoke Japan into attacking the United States. Over the next year, Roosevelt implemented all eight of the recommended actions. In the summer of 1941, the US joined England in an oil embargo against Japan. Japan needed oil for its war with China, and had no remaining option but to invade the East Indies and Southeast Asia to get new resources. And that required getting rid of the US Pacific Fleet first.

Although Roosevelt may have got more than he bargained for, he clearly let the attack on Pearl Harbor happen, and even helped Japan by making sure their attack was a surprise. He did this by withholding information from Pearl Harbor's commanders and even by ensuring the attack force wasn't accidentally discovered by commercial shipping traffic. As Rear Admiral Richmond K. Turner stated in 1941: "We were prepared to divert traffic when we believed war was imminent. We sent the traffic down via the Torres Strait, so that the track of the Japanese task force would be clear of any traffic."

Although for most of us it was a surprise, the conspiracy theorists claim that for a select few ...it wasn't. Particularly for President Roosevelt, who having advocated for war against Germany finally had found his opportunity. Of note, proponents of the conspiracy, often point out that none of the Navy's three Pacific aircraft carriers were in port that day.

7. Israeli Terrorist Cell Uncovered in Egypt: In July, 1954, an Israeli terrorist cell was activated inside Egypt. The ensuing attacks, cleverly designed to look like the work of Arabs, blasted and torched American and British targets. First, the Israeli terrorists firebombed the Alexandria Post Office. Then, they firebombed the US Information Agency libraries: one in Alexandria, and one in Cairo. Then, they firebombed a British-owned Metro-Goldwyn Mayer theatre, a railway terminal, the central post office, and a couple more theatres. To smuggle their bombs inside the buildings, the terrorists used devices shaped like books, hiding them inside book covers. Once inside, bags filled with acid were placed on top of the nitroglycerin bombs. After several hours, the acid ate through the bags and ignited the nitroglycerin, causing explosions and blazing infernos.

In the early 1950s, the United States was making fast friends with Egypt, taking advantage of the new pan-Arab Egyptian government of Gamal Abdel Nasser. The warming relationship between the US and Egypt caused a very insecure Israel to feel threatened. Nasser also had plans to nationalize the Suez Canal, which had been controlled by the British for decades. Egypt had been known to blockade Israeli shipping through the canal and Israel feared Nasser would make a blockade permanent. After US President Eisenhower began encouraging the British to leave the Suez Canal Zone, Israel started looking for a way to make the British stay, and a way to remain best buddies with America. And what better way to treat your best friend than to stab them in the back and tell them one of your other friends did it?

David Ben Gurion, Israel's founding prime minister, thought that Egyptian terrorist attacks against Americans would be a perfect way to cool the growing US/Egypt relationship. Since there were no

Egyptians planning attacks against Americans, Ben Gurion's protégés did the next best thing: they recruited Israeli agents to pretend to be Egyptian terrorists. The top-secret Israeli terrorist cell, Unit 131, had existed since 1948. In 1950, Israel's Directorate of Military Intelligence, Aman was created and Israel sent an undercover agent, Colonel Avraham Dar (alias: John Darling, British citizen of the island of Gibraltar), to recruit more members to Unit 131.

He also trained them in how to build bombs and terrify Americans and British civilians working and living in Egypt. Before the terrorist cell was activated, another Israeli agent named Avraham Seidenberg, was sent to take control from Avraham Dar. Seidenberg first went to Germany to establish an alias: he assumed the identity of Paul Frank, a former SS officer, complete with underground Nazi connections. By 1954, his new identity was in place and he went to Egypt to take command of Unit 131. Everything was going well for the Israeli terrorists it seemed. But, there was one thing the members of Unit 131 didn't know: their terrorist sleeper cell had itself been infiltrated by the Egyptian intelligence service.

The new Unit 131 leader, Seidenberg, had betrayed them to the Egyptians. So, when Unit 131 member, Philip Nathanson made his way to bomb the British-owned Rio theatre in Alexandria, not only was he being followed, the Egyptian intelligence service had a fire engine waiting to put out the flames. As Nathanson stood in the ticket line, his bad luck turned worse when one of the bombs in his pocket ignited and then exploded. Nathanson was burned but not killed.

As nearby pedestrians shouted warnings and wondered if he was a suicide bomber, Egyptian policemen stepped in, calmed the crowd, and identified Nathanson as one of the terrorists who had been blowing up American and British buildings. Nathanson was interrogated by Egypt's military intelligence and confessed the whole plot, which led to more arrests. When the Israeli spies were given a public trial, all the details of their terrorist training in Israel came to light. Former Israeli Prime Minister Ben Gurion and Israel's Aman chief, Binyamin Gibli, tried to frame their own Defense Minister Pinhas Lavon. They even offered forged documents as proof.

The frame-up worked for a while, so much so that the entire incident is still popularly known as the Lavon Affair. Lavon resigned and Ben Gurion came out of political retirement to replace him as Israel's Defense Minister. However, the truth did finally emerge. In 1960, a review of the inquiry discovered the fake documents, as well as perjury by Seidenberg. A committee of seven Cabinet members cleared Lavon. Although Ben Gurion never admitted fault, he did resign his post as Defense Minister.

8. Operation Northwoods: In 1962, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff unanimously proposed state-sponsored acts of terrorism on American soil, against American citizens. The head of every branch of the US armed forces gave written approval to sink US ships, shoot down hijacked American planes, and gun down and bomb civilians on the streets of Washington, D.C., and Miami. The idea was to blame the self-inflicted terrorism on Cuba's leader, Fidel Castro, so the American public would beg and scream for the Marines to storm Havana.

The public learned about Operation Northwoods 35 years later, when the Top-Secret document was declassified by the John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Review Board. Among other things, Operation Northwoods proposed:

- Faking the crash of an American passenger plane. The disaster was to be accomplished by faking a commercial flight from the US to Jamaica, and having the plane boarded at a public airport by CIA agents disguised as college students going on vacation. An empty remote-controlled plane would follow the commercial flight as it left Florida. The commercial flight's pilots would radio for help, mention that they had been attacked by a Cuban fighter, then land in secret at Eglin AFB. The empty remote-controlled plane would then be blown out of the sky and the public would be told all the poor college students aboard were killed.
- Using a possible NASA disaster such as astronaut John Glenn's death as a pretext to launch the war. The plan called for "manufacturing various pieces of evidence which would prove electronic interference on the part of the Cubans" if something went wrong with NASA's third manned space launch.

- Blowing up buildings in Washington and Miami. Cuban agents played by undercover CIA agents, would be arrested, and they would confess to the bombings. In addition, false documents proving Castro's involvement in the attacks would be "found" and given to the press.
- Attacking an American military base in Guantanamo with CIA recruits posing as Cuban mercenaries. This involved blowing up the ammunition depot and would obviously result in material damages and many dead American troops. As a last resort, the plan even mentioned bribing one of Castro's commanders to initiate the Guantanamo attack. That deserves repeating: The Pentagon considered using our tax dollars to bribe another country's military to attack our own troops in order to instigate a full-scale war.

Operation Northwoods was only one of several plans under the umbrella of Operation Mongoose. Shortly after the Joint Chiefs signed and presented the plan in March, 1962, President Kennedy, still smarting from the Bay of Pigs fiasco, declared that he would never authorize a military invasion of Cuba. In September, Kennedy denied the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Lyman Lemnitzer, a second term as the nation's highest ranking military officer. And by the winter of 1963, Kennedy was dead. Killed, apparently, by a Cuban sympathizer in the streets of an American city.

9. Phantom Ships in the Gulf of Tonkin: The Gulf of Tonkin Incident is the name given to two separate incidents involving the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the United States in the international waters in the Gulf of Tonkin 30 miles off the coast of Vietnam. On August 2, 1964 USS Maddox and the USS Turner Joy, two American destroyers engaged three North Vietnamese torpedo boats, resulting in the sinking of one of the boats. On August 4, the US Navy reported another unprovoked attack on the two destroyers. Within hours, President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered a retaliatory strike. This was also the single most important reason for the escalation of the Vietnam War. After Kennedy was assassinated, the Gulf of Tonkin incident gave the country the sweeping support for aggressive military action against the North Vietnamese.

The outcome of the incident was the passage by Congress of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which granted President Lyndon B. Johnson the authority to assist any Southeast Asian country whose government was considered to be jeopardized by "communist aggression." In 2005, an internal National Security Agency historical study was declassified; it concluded that USS Maddox had engaged the North Vietnamese on August 2, but that there may not have been any North Vietnamese vessels present during the engagement of August 4. The report stated "It is not simply that there is a different story as to what happened; it is that no attack happened that night..." in truth, Hanoi's navy was engaged in nothing that night but the salvage of two of the boats damaged on August 2.

As the bases for North Vietnamese torpedo boats were bombed, Johnson went on TV and told America: "Repeated acts of violence against the armed forces of the United States must be met not only with alert defense, but with a positive reply. That reply is being given as I speak tonight." The next day, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara assured Capitol Hill that the Maddox had only been "carrying out a routine mission of the type we carry out all over the world at all times." McNamara said the two boats were in no way involved with recent South Vietnamese boat raids against North Vietnamese targets. At Johnson's request, Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. The resolution pre-approved any military actions Johnson would take. It gave Johnson a free ticket to wage war in Vietnam as large as the President wanted.

In 1965, President Johnson commented privately: "for all I know, our Navy was shooting at whales out there." In 1981, Captain Herrick and journalist Robert Scheer re-examined Herrick's ship's log and determined that the first torpedo report from August 4, which Herrick had maintained had occurred, the "apparent ambush," was in fact unfounded. In 1995, retired Vietnamese Defense Minister Vo Nguyen Giap, meeting with former Secretary of Defense McNamara, categorically denied that Vietnamese gunboats had attacked American destroyers on August 4, while admitting to the attack on August 2.

In the Fall of 1999, retired senior CIA engineering executive S. Eugene Poteat wrote that he was asked in early August 1964 to determine if the radar operator's report showed a real torpedo boat attack or an imagined one. In October, 2005, the New York Times reported that Robert J. Hanyok, a historian for

the U.S. National Security Agency, had concluded that the NSA deliberately distorted the intelligence reports that it had passed on to policy-makers regarding the August 4, 1964 incident. He concluded that the motive was not political but was probably to cover up honest intelligence errors.

And, true to his large Texas roots, Johnson got a big war: by 1969, over half a million US troops were fighting in Indochina. Despite McNamara's testimony to the contrary, the USS Maddox had been providing intelligence support to South Vietnamese boats carrying out raids against North Vietnam. McNamara had also testified that there was "unequivocal proof" of an "unprovoked" second attack against the USS Maddox. In fact, the second attack never occurred at all. At the time of the second incident, the two US destroyers misinterpreted radar and radio signals as attacks by the North Vietnamese navy. It's now known that no North Vietnamese boats were in the area. So, for two hours, the two US destroyers blasted away at nonexistent radar targets and vigorously maneuvered to avoid phantom North Vietnamese ships.

Even though the second "attack" only involved two US ships defending themselves against a nonexistent enemy, the President and Secretary of Defense used it to coerce Congress and the American people to start a war they neither wanted nor needed. After the Vietnam War turned into a quagmire, Congress decided to put limits on the President's authority to unilaterally wage war. Thus, on November 7, 1973, Congress overturned President Nixon's veto and passed the War Powers Resolution. The resolution requires the President to consult with Congress before making any decisions that engage the US military in hostilities. It is still in effect to this day.⁷⁹

10. The September 11, 2001 Attacks: 9/11 Cover-Up: Not since the JFK assassination has there been a national tragedy so heavily imprinted in American minds or that has given rise to quite as many alternative explanations. While videos and photographs of the two planes striking the World Trade Center towers are famous around the world, the sheer profusion of documentary evidence has only provided even more fodder for conspiracy theories.

A May 2006 Zogby poll found that 42% of Americans believed that the government and the 9/11 commission "concealed or refused to investigate critical evidence that contradicts their official explanation of the September 11th attacks." Why had the military failed to intercept the hijacked planes? Had the government issued a "stand down" order, to minimize interference with a secret plan to destroy the buildings and blame it on Islamic terrorists?

In 2005, Popular Mechanics published a massive investigation of similar claims and responses to them. The reporting team found that the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) did not have a history of having fighter jets prepped and ready to intercept aircraft that had gone off route. And while the team found no evidence that the government had planned the attacks, lack of proof has rarely stopped conspiracy theorists before. The theories range all the way from US government officials turning a blind eye to various agencies actually assisting with the attack.

Certain groups like the 9/11 Truth Movement have led to these ideas becoming very popular and they insist that there is no way the towers came down because of jet fuel alone. Like many buildings built in the 1970s, the twin towers were constructed with vast quantities of cancer-causing asbestos. The cost of removing the Twin Tower asbestos would have been a year's worth of revenues at a minimum; possibly as much as the value of the buildings themselves. The cost to disassemble the Twin Towers floor by floor would have run into the double-digit billions. In addition, the Port Authority was prohibited from demolishing the towers because the resulting asbestos dust would cover the entire city, which it did when they collapsed, resulting in many cancers with a confirmed link to the WTC dust.

Despite its questionable status, in January of 2001, Larry Silverstein made a \$3.2 billion bid for the World Trade Center. On July 24, the Port Authority accepted the offer. Silverstein then took out an insurance policy that, understandably, covered terrorist attacks, which happened seven weeks later. To date, Silverstein has been awarded almost \$5 billion from nine different insurance companies. What was an asbestos nightmare turned into a \$1.8 billion profit within seven weeks.

⁷⁹ Also, I need to remind the Conspiracists that Nixon got us out of the Vietnam War. By 1974, the war ended and our troops and POWs came home.

Donald Rumsfeld said about the Pentagon on the morning of September 10, 2001: "According to some estimates we cannot track \$2.3 trillion in transactions." That bombshell was pretty much forgotten by the next morning. So, as a reward for losing \$8,000 for every man, woman, and child in America, taxpayers patriotically forked over another \$370 billion and counting to invade Iraq. True to form, the Pentagon promptly lost \$9 billion of that money, too.

Eight days after the attacks, the 342-page Patriot Act was given to Congress. That same week, letters armed with anthrax from a US military lab entered the mail. Subsequently, while Congressional offices were evacuated, examined, cleaned and nasal cavities swabbed, the Patriot Act remained largely unread. Then, with little debate, the Patriot Act became law, giving the Bush administration unprecedented power to access people's medical records, tax records, information about the books they bought or borrowed and the power to conduct secret residential searches without notifying owners that their homes had been searched.

In early 2001, executives from Shell, BP, and Exxon met with Dick Cheney's Energy Task Force while it was developing its new national energy policy. Later, the companies freely admitted interest in profiting from Iraq's oil fields, even before the US invaded Iraq. Then, a new Iraq hydrocarbon law expected to pass in March 2007 will open the door for international investors, led by BP, Exxon and Shell, to siphon off 75 percent of Iraq oil wealth for the next thirty years.

According to statements by Lt. Col. Anthony Shaffer, a Bronze Star recipient with 22 years of experience in intelligence operations, a classified intelligence program codenamed Able Danger had uncovered two of the three 9/11 terrorist cells a year before the attacks⁸⁰ and had identified four of the hijackers. Shaffer alerted the FBI in September of 2000, but the meetings he tried to set up with bureau officials were repeatedly blocked by military lawyers. Four credible witnesses have come forward to verify Shaffer's claims.

In August 2001, a Pan Am International Flight Academy instructor warned the FBI that a student, Zacarias Moussaoui, might use a commercial plane loaded with fuel as a weapon. The instructor asked "Do you realize that a 747 loaded with fuel can be used as a bomb?" Moussaoui was then arrested on immigration charges, but despite the repeated urging of the school and local agents, FBI headquarters refused a deeper investigation.

The US also received dozens of detailed warnings (names, locations, dates) from the intelligence agencies of Indonesia, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Egypt, Jordan, India, Argentina, Morocco, Russia, Israel, France and even the Taliban. It would seem that the entire world was onto the bungling Saudi hijackers and somewhat perplexed that the US wasn't taking preventative actions. But in each case the US, as if by design, chose not to investigate.

Instead. Condoleezza Rice, on May 16, 2002, stated: "I don't think anybody could have predicted that these people would take an airplane and slam it into the World Trade Center, take another one and slam it into the Pentagon." We also know that on the morning of 9/11, multiple Air Force war games and drills were in progress. The hijackers would have never made it to their targets without these war games: Operation Northern Vigilance ensured that many jet fighters that would have normally been patrolling the east coast were flying over Alaska and northern Canada in a drill that simulated a Russian air attack, complete with false radar blips.

Remarkably, operation Vigilant Guardian simulated hijacked planes in the north-eastern sector, while real hijackers were in the same airspace. This drill had NORAD and the Air Force reacting to false blips on FAA radar screens. Some of these blips corresponded to real military aircraft in the air posing as hijacked aircraft. That's why when NORAD's airborne control officer, Lt. Col. Dawne Deskins, heard Boston claim it had a hijacked airliner, her first words were, "It must be part of the exercise."

If you follow the money, you can see that the people with the most to gain occupied the key military and civilian positions to help 9/11 happen, as well as to cover up the crime. Such is the hallmark of false flag operations throughout history. But the incredible scale of the 9/11 sham, and the sheer number of people who still refuse to see the mountain of truth in front of their eyes. That's what makes the September

⁸⁰ During the Bill Clinton administration.

11, 2001 attacks the greatest false flag operation of all time. Hermann Göring stated: "Naturally the common people don't want war; neither in Russia, nor in England, nor in America, nor in Germany. That is understood. But after all, it is the leaders of the country who determine policy, and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy, or a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship.

Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is to tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in any country." Adolf Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*, a book still forbidden in some countries such as France: "in the size of the lie there is always contained a certain factor of credibility, since the great masses of the people will more easily fall victim to a great lie than to a small one."⁸¹

10. 1990 Testimony of Nayirah: A 15-year-old girl named "Nayirah" testified before the U.S. Congress that she had seen Iraqi soldiers pulling Kuwaiti babies from incubators, causing them to die. The testimony helped gain major public support for the 1991 Gulf War, but despite protests that the dispute of this story was itself a conspiracy theory, it was later discovered that the testimony was false. The public relations firm Hill & Knowlton, which was in the employ of Citizens for a Free Kuwait, had arranged the testimony. It turned out that she had taken acting lessons on request of the CIA and was actually the niece of a major politician in Kuwait. Nayirah was later disclosed to be Nayirah al-Sabah, daughter of Saud bin Nasir Al-Sabah, Kuwaiti ambassador to the USA. The Congressional Human Rights Caucus, of which Congressman Tom Lantos was co-chairman, had been responsible for hosting Nurse Nayirah, and thereby popularizing her allegations. When the girl's account was later challenged by independent human rights monitors, Lantos replied, "The notion that any of the witnesses brought to the caucus through the Kuwaiti Embassy would not be credible did not cross my mind... I have no basis for assuming that her story is not true, but the point goes beyond that. If one hypothesizes that the woman's story is fictitious from A to Z, that in no way diminishes the avalanche of human rights violations." Nevertheless, the senior Republican on the Human Rights Caucus, John Edward Porter, responded to the revelations "by saying that if he had known the girl was the ambassador's daughter, he would not have allowed her to testify."

11. The Falkland's War: Some have claimed that this was the motivation behind the Falklands War. At that time the National Reorganization Process, the right-wing dictatorship that ruled Argentina between 1976 and 1983, was facing increasing discontent among the population over its own Dirty War and this may have contributed to the decision to invade the Falkland Islands.

Related is the allegation that certain wars which are claimed by politicians to be in the national interest, or for humanitarian purposes, are in fact motivated by the conquest and control of natural resources for commercial interest. In the Spanish-American War, the explosion of the USS *Maine* prompted the United States annexation of Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam. Opponents of the war, such as Mark Twain and Andrew Carnegie, claimed that it was being fought for imperialist motives.

⁸¹ I have showed over and over again how the attacks on 9/11 were conducted by Saudi terrorists. I won't waste my time to show it again. Needless to say, I don't believe that our government and major corporations had anything to do with Pearl Harbor or with 9/11. For one thing, our government and corporate bureaucracies are too incompetent to do something like that.

Chapter 5. Assassinations, Bombings, and Other Deaths:

Conspiracy theories abound around the assassination of John F. Kennedy in 1963. Conspiracy theories seem to always emerge following assassinations of prominent people. The best known of these is the assassination of John F. Kennedy (1963), which has caused a number of conspiracy theories to develop. Central to this theory is the claim that the injuries received by Kennedy and Governor John Connally could not have been caused by a lone gunman behind the motorcade. This theory was popularized by the Oliver Stone movie, JFK, which centered on Jim Garrison's conduct of the only criminal prosecution (ultimately an unsuccessful one) related directly to Kennedy's assassination.

Three polls conducted in 2003 suggest that there is widespread disbelief (between 68% and 83% of respondents) among the U.S. public about the original 1964 Warren Commission story of a lone gunman. An ABC News random telephone poll found that just 32% (plus or minus 3%) of Americans believe that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in the assassination of John F. Kennedy, while 68% do not believe Oswald acted alone. The "Discovery Channel" poll reveals that only 21% believe Oswald acted alone, while 79% do not believe Oswald acted alone, details that only 17% of respondents believe that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in the assassination of John F. Kennedy, while 83% do not believe Oswald acted alone.

Since the Warren Commission report, the official U.S. governmental narrative from the 1976-78 House Select Commission on Assassinations is that JFK was murdered by multiple gunmen in a conspiracy. The United States House of Representatives Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) was established in 1976 to investigate the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. The Committee investigated until 1978 and issued its final report, and concluded that Kennedy was very likely assassinated as a result of a conspiracy.

This much we can agree: President John F. Kennedy was assassinated on Nov. 22, 1963, struck by two bullets; one in the head, one in the neck, while riding in an open-topped limo through Dealey Plaza in Dallas. Lee Harvey Oswald was charged with killing him, and a presidential commission headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren found that Oswald acted alone.

There are also theories that some assassination attempts have been carried out by secret conspiracies, in some cases failures but in other cases entirely staged events. The motive for staging an unsuccessful assassination attempt can be to augment the popularity of the person involved; public opinion polls tend to be boosted by unsuccessful attempts on the life of a prominent politician. There have been numerous unsuccessful attempts to assassinate U.S. Presidents. Some of them, such as the attempted assassinations of Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, and George H. W. Bush have aroused suspicion from conspiracy theorists that the events might have been staged. Former Presidents of Taiwan and Ukraine are cited in similar conspiracy theories as well.

The JFK Assassination: Some things in life are certain. Like for example the fact that on November 22, 1963 President John F. Kennedy was shot twice while riding through downtown Dallas in his presidential convoy. Other things can be a bit hazier. While Lee Harvey Oswald was accused of killing him and an official investigation declared him to be the lone assassin, it seems that a majority of people even today (70% in fact) are not buying it. Was there another gunman? Did the CIA want revenge for the Bay of Pigs? Were mobsters upset that his brother was cracking down on organized crime? Perhaps the world will never know.

The 2nd Investigation by Congress, which few people know about, United States House of Representatives Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) was established in 1976 to re-investigate the John F. Kennedy and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Assassinations. The Committee investigated until 1978, and in 1979 issued its final report, concluding that President John F. Kennedy was probably assassinated by a conspiracy involving the mob, and potentially the CIA.

In 1979, a single Report and twelve volumes of appendices on each assassination were published by the Congress. In the JFK case, the HSCA found that there was a "probable conspiracy," though it was unable to determine the nature of that conspiracy or its other participants besides Oswald. This finding was based in part on acoustics evidence from a tape purported to record the shots, but was also based on other

evidence including an investigation of Ruby's mafia connections and potential CIA and FBI connections to Oswald. To this day, many conspiracy deniers are unaware that the Congressional investigation into JFK's assassination concluded beyond any shadow of a doubt that it was a conspiracy.

Aside from reading the report, many witnesses were killed the night before testifying; some of whom were CIA agents and station chiefs in Dallas that morning. For example, George de Mohrenschildt was a petroleum geologist who befriended Lee Harvey Oswald during the months preceding the assassination of President Kennedy. He also worked for the CIA. He also blew his brains out the night before he was to testify to the committee.

The committee also uncovered, among many other things, that Oswald left the Marines at the height of the cold war where he learned how to speak fluent Russian. He was given money by the State Department to travel to Russia where he stopped off in Japan at a top-secret US Military facility. The Warren Commission even mentioned this part. What most people do not know is that he probably was working in the Cold War infiltrating the Russians as either a "dangle,"⁸² "double agent," or "defector" of some kind.

What is interesting is that upon his return he got more money from the State Department to buy a house and work with an ex-FBI Chief and CIA official in training anti-Castro Cubans for an invasion. In Louisiana, where he was working, the CIA was involved in Operation Mongoose, where Oswald worked under CIA Agent David Ferrie, who allegedly killed himself before testifying in a trial on the Assassination as well.

Operation Mongoose worked closely with Southern Mafia figures largely because the casinos in Cuba, which were shut down after Fidel obtained control over the country, were epicenters for control on the island. The CIA even hired the mafia to assassinate Fidel on many occasions, 3 failed attempts are common knowledge. What is funny is that figures who worked very close with Oswald either ended up dead; over 100 of them connected to the assassination, died within a few years of unusual circumstances or ended up in other conspiracies.

For instance, E Howard Hunt, a CIA Agent, on his deathbed, confessed to being involved in the conspiracy to assassinate Kennedy. E Howard Hunt was one of the Watergate Burglars. Barry Seal, as a key player for the CIA and informant for the DEA, worked with Oswald and Ferrie and ended up being one of the largest cocaine smugglers in the United States during Iran Contra. Oswald's tax returns are still classified top secret to this day. One can only conjecture that perhaps he was still getting money from the United States, which placed him on the payroll.

That money trail leads to figures, many of whom were murdered, that would have blown the story wide open. For 14 years, most people didn't know this. The HSCA investigations by congress went against the findings of the Warren Commission and both reports are from the same source, Congressional Committees. So, why do we only teach one report to our children in school?

Some deaths that are officially recorded as having resulted from accidents, suicides, or natural causes are also the subject of some other conspiracy theories. Examples include Patton's car wreck in 1945; the car crash that killed Princess of Wales, Diana, and DODi Fayed in 1997; the death of John F. Kennedy Jr. in a plane crash in 1999; and the death of Senator Paul Wellstone in a plane crash in 2002. Often, unusual circumstances in a suicide or accident are cited as evidence of a conspiracy such as the case of Gary Webb who suffered 2 gunshots to the head. Sometimes, deaths initially considered to be accidents gain such strong conspiracy theories due to new evidence that murder investigations are opened and arrests made, as in the case of journalist, Cats Falck.

July 20, 1944 Conspiracy to Assassinate Hitler: All total there were some 40 some attempts to assassinate Adolf Hitler. On July 20, 1944 occurred one of the largest conspiracies involving hundreds of loyalists in the highest echelons of Hitler's inner circle. Near the end of WWII, things were rapidly going

⁸² Dangle is a term used in intelligence work to refer to an agent or officer of one intelligence agency or group who pretends to be interested in defecting or turning to another intelligence agency or group. The goal of a dangle is to convince the second intelligence agency that they have changed loyalties by offering to act as a double agent. The dangle then feeds information to their original agency and gives disinformation to the second or foreign intelligence agency.

south for Germany and the time seemed ripe for frustrated Nazi officers to assassinate Hitler and overthrow his government. Colonel Henning von Tresckow recruited Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg to join the conspiracy in 1944. The plot to take out Hitler and then all of his loyal officers was called Operation Valkyrie. The plan was to use the Continuity of Government Proceedings during an assassination on Hitler's life to take over full control of the government in Germany.

The assassination would be blamed on the Nazi SS and therefore allow Stauffenberg to take full control of all aspects of the government. It almost worked. In July 1944, Stauffenberg was promoted so that he could then start attending military strategy meetings with Hitler himself. On more than one occasion Stauffenberg planned to kill Hitler at such a meeting with a briefcase bomb, but he always held off because he also wanted to take out Hitler's two right-hand men, Hermann Goering and Heinrich Himmler.

On July 20, he went for it anyway and exploded a bomb inside Hitler's conference room with a remote detonator. Hitler survived only minor injuries, including partial paralysis and tremors in his left arm, ruptured ear drums, and 200 splinters in his legs. As a result of the attempt, Hitler arrested 7,000 people who were suspected to have any involvement with the attempt. Out of the 7,000, he had 4,000 executed.

Other examples of deaths that are not considered to be murders that later receive conspiracy theories include: The assassinations of Robert F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X are also the subject of conspiracy theories. In many cases, it is asserted that a "Manchurian candidate"⁸³ may have been used. The question of "Who benefits?" ("Cui bono"⁸⁴?) is also often asked, with conspiracy theorists asserting that insiders often have far more powerful motives than those to whom the assassination is attributed by mainstream society. The assassinations of historical figures, such as Eric V of Denmark⁸⁵ and Tsarevich Dmitry Ivanovich⁸⁶ of Russia remain subject to conspiracy theories. More recent examples include those of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman,⁸⁷ Carrero Blanco,⁸⁸ Benigno Aquino, Jr.⁸⁹ Olof Palme⁹⁰ and Yitzhak Rabin⁹¹. The suicide of Deputy White House Counsel Vincent Foster; the plane crash that killed United States Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown; the death of Dag Hammarskjöld;⁹² the Mayerling

⁸³ a candidate running for office who publicly supports one group to win election, but uses his executive or legislative powers to assist an opposing group; it should not be confused with a sleeper agent who has been brainwashed into working for a political party.

⁸⁴ Cui bono, literally, "to whose profit?," is a Latin phrase which is still in use as a key forensic question in legal and police investigation: finding out who has a motive for a crime. It is an adage that is used either to suggest a hidden motive or to indicate that the party responsible for something may not be who it appears at first to be.

⁸⁵ Legend has it that several nobles swore an oath that they would murder Eric in revenge for personal slights or policies the king enforced that they did not like. Chief among the conspirators was Marshal Stig Andersen Hvide and Jacob Nielsen, Count of Halland.

⁸⁶ was the first Tsarevich or Tsesarevich - the heir apparent - of the Tsardom of Russia, as the eldest son of Ivan the Terrible, or Ivan IV of Russia and his first Tsaritsa, Anastasia Romanovna. He was the third child and first son of the couple and died in infancy.

⁸⁷ was the founding leader of Bangladesh. Amid rising political agitation, Rahman initiated one party socialist rule in January 1975. Six months later, he and most of his family were assassinated by renegade army officers during a coup. A martial law government was subsequently established.

⁸⁸ was an admiral and leading Spanish politician in the extreme-right wing dictatorship, and long-time confidant of dictator Francisco Franco. He was assassinated by members of the group ETA, setting up the stage for the Spanish transition to democracy.

⁸⁹ was the husband of former Philippine President Corazon Aquino and father of former Philippine President Benigno Aquino III. Aquino, together with Gerry Roxas and Jovito Salonga, formed the leadership of the opposition towards Ferdinand Marcos. He was assassinated at the Manila International Airport in 1983 upon returning from his self-imposed exile.

⁹⁰ Olof Palme, Prime Minister of Sweden, was assassinated on Friday 28 February 1986 in Stockholm, Sweden.

⁹¹ Yitzhak Rabin was an Israeli politician, statesman and general. He was the fifth Prime Minister of Israel, serving two terms in office, 1974–77 and 1992 until his assassination in 1995.

⁹² Dag Hjalmar Agne Carl Hammarskjöld was a Swedish diplomat, economist, and author, who served as the second Secretary-General of the United Nations, from April 1953 until his death in a plane crash in September 1961.

Incident;⁹³ and the deaths of U.S. Presidents Zachary Taylor and Lyndon B. Johnson; Władysław Sikorski;⁹⁴ James Forrestal; British political leader Hugh Gaitskell; Australian prime minister Harold Holt, James P. Brady; New Zealand prime minister Norman Kirk; French prime minister Pierre Bérégovoy; Jimmy Hoffa and British weapons expert David Kelly.

In the case of Salvador Allende, the former President of Chile, conspiracy theories regarding his suicide were so prominent in the public arena official investigations were opened into the matter. There are also theories about untimely deaths of celebrities, the number one example arguably being the death of actress, Marilyn Monroe, but also those of singer, Sam Cooke; boxer, Salvador Sanchez;⁹⁵ Brian Jones;⁹⁶ rappers, Tupac Shakur, and The Notorious B.I.G.; guitarists, Jimi Hendrix, Kurt Cobain;⁹⁷ Jeff Buckley and⁹⁸ Nancy Spungen;⁹⁹ singers Janis Joplin, and Jim Morrison; actors Bruce and his son Brandon Lee, singer and actor, Elvis Presley, singers, Bob Marley, and John Lennon; boxer, Alexis Arguello, singer and actress, Whitney Houston; singer, Michael Jackson, singer, and actor, Paul Walker.

Paul McCartney: to conspiracy-inclined Beatle fans, Paul is not only dead, he has been dead, since 1966, meaning he never had a family, never got in a fight with Yoko Ono, never went vegetarian, and when he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1997, well, that was a stand in. So how could anyone believe that someone who is still very much alive is actually dead? Maybe it's not too far from believing that someone who is actually dead is still alive. The whole rumor began as a rumor that circulated in London that Paul McCartney had been killed in a car crash after a January 1967 traffic accident involving his car. On 17 September 1969, Tim Harper, an editor at the student newspaper of Drake University in Iowa (the Drake Times-Delphic) published an article titled "Is Beatle Paul McCartney Dead?" On 12 October 1969, a caller to Detroit radio station WKNR-FM told disc jockey Russ Gibb about the rumor and its clues. The Michigan Daily published a satirical review of Abbey Road by University of Michigan student, Fred LaBour under the headline "McCartney Dead; New Evidence Brought to Light." Various clues were used to suggest the following story: three years previously (on 9 November 1966), McCartney had an argument during a Beatles' recording session and had angrily driven off in his car. He had crashed it and died as a result. To spare the public from grief, the Beatles replaced him with "William Campbell," the winner of a McCartney look-alike contest. Hundreds of supposed clues to McCartney's death have been reported by fans and followers of the legend. These include messages perceived when listening to a song being played backwards¹⁰⁰ and symbolic interpretations of both lyrics and album cover imagery. LaBour, in 2008, he

⁹³ The Mayerling Incident is the series of events leading to the apparent murder–suicide of Rudolf, Crown Prince of Austria and his lover, Baroness Mary Vetsera in 1889.

⁹⁴ During the Second World War, Sikorski became Prime Minister of the Polish Government in Exile, Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces, and a vigorous advocate of the Polish cause in the diplomatic sphere. He supported the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Poland and the Soviet Union, which had been severed after the Soviet pact with Germany and the 1939 invasion of Poland. However, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin broke off Soviet-Polish diplomatic relations in April 1943 following Sikorski's request that the International Red Cross investigate the Katyń Forest massacre. In July 1943, a plane carrying Sikorski plunged into the sea immediately after takeoff from Gibraltar, killing all on board except the pilot.

⁹⁵ was a Mexican boxer. Sánchez died on August 12, 1982 in a car accident from Querétaro to San Luis Potosí.

⁹⁶ was an English musician, the founder and the original leader of the Rolling Stones. The band asked Jones to leave the Rolling Stones in June 1969. Jones died less than a month later by drowning in the swimming pool at his home.

⁹⁷ Cobain formed the band Nirvana with Krist Novoselic in 1987. On April 8, 1994, Cobain was found dead at his home in Seattle, the victim of what was officially ruled a suicide by a self-inflicted shotgun wound to the head.

⁹⁸ Guitarist, On May 29, 1997, while awaiting the arrival of his band from New York, he drowned during a spontaneous evening swim, fully clothed, in the Mississippi River.

⁹⁹ was the American girlfriend of Sex Pistols bassist Sid Vicious. In October 1978, Spungen was found dead in the bathroom of the couple's room, of a single stab wound to the abdomen.

¹⁰⁰ I remember in the 80's the playing of records backwards was a trend. There were people who took the phenomenon seriously. It just wasn't Paul McCartney other musicians were also targets of conspiracy theorists. Sometimes because there were satanic messages. It was all silly poppycock.

joked that his success as a musician had extended his fifteen minutes of fame for creating the "Paul is Dead" hoax to "seventeen minutes." In 2015, he told The Detroit News that he is still periodically contacted by conspiracy theorists who have attempted to present him with supposed new developments on the McCartney rumors. The best witness that Paul McCartney is still alive come from Pau himself.

"Perhaps the rumor started because I haven't been much in the press lately. I have done enough press for a lifetime, and I don't have anything to say these days. I am happy to be with my family and I will work when I work. I was switched on for ten years and I never switched off. Now I am switching off whenever I can. I would rather be a little less famous these days.

Princess Diana: While most conspiracy theories are supported by rank amateurs in the conspiracy business, the following conspiracy has some serious weight behind it. DODi Al--Fayed, who was in the car with Diane when their drunken chauffer failed to escape pursuing paparazzi, his father claimed that the car accident was actually a set up by British Intelligence acting on behalf of the Royal Family. Although the claims were found to be baseless it was all the fuel the conspiracy flame need to keep its fires burning.¹⁰¹

In other cases, the perpetrators of murders and assassinations are not found and conspiracy theories even become part of official police investigations, as in the case of the Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme or in the case of Diana, Princess of Wales. In cases like this, further public conspiracy theories can exist about why the cases are not closed.

In the case of another prominent Swede, Bernt Carlsson, who died in the Lockerbie bombing, theories exist that the larger crime was committed to hide a more targeted assassination, which therefore has also not been solved. In the case of Aldo Moro, an assassinated Italian Former Prime Minister, a conspiracy to encourage his kidnapers to kill him has been admitted to and is largely accepted as fact, yet theories exist as to the nature of the secrets he was killed to protect. In more extreme cases it has been alleged that some people have been assassinated without acknowledgement of their deaths, assuming that they were replaced by a double or alternatively that their deaths never occurred when it has been proven that they did.

In India, there are several conspiracy theories circulating about the 1945 death of pro-Axis Indian nationalist leader, Subhas Chandra Bose. These allege one of two possibilities: either he did not die in an accident, as officially claimed, but was assassinated; or he did not die at that time, but was still alive and hidden somewhere. The most popular theory concerns Adolf Hitler. Conspiracists contend that he and Eva Braun did not commit suicide but were spirited by loyal Nazi's to an undisclosed to South America. American Nazis in the US and the Neo-Nazis in Europe are the greatest believers in the theory. The Islamo-Fascists, in the Middle East also believe in the theory because it bolsters their claims that did the right thing in killing the Jews. The one thing that the Sunnis and Shi'ites have in common, is that they equally hate the Jews.

Other Conspiracy theories include:

- **2015 Paris Attacks:** One conspiracy theory is that French president François Hollande let the Paris attacks happen so that he would have a reason to close the borders. Another theory is that no one actually died and crisis actors were used. Here are the following six theories: 1. It Was an Inside Job. 2. It Was a False Flag. 3. The CIA & Mossad are Involved.¹⁰² 4. Perpetual War. 5. Yemen. 6. How Did These 'Yemeni Terrorists' Get ID'd? I see a pattern here. No matter what the incident the conspiracies that follow, show the same pattern.
- **Boston Marathon bombing conspiracy theories:** Conspiracy theorists such as talk show host Clyde Lewis have speculated about the Boston bombing. Lewis wrote: "Perhaps in the future we will see

¹⁰¹ One needs to consider the source. Dodi and his father are Arabs. Arabs love a good conspiracy, no matter how outlandish. So, if an Arab proposes a conspiracy, take it with a grain of salt. Especially if the theory augments their victimization by the West and Israel, and their perception that Arabs picked on by the rest of the world.

¹⁰² Of course, the two groups everyone loves to hate: Mossad and the CIA.

that these events are not just random acts of evil, but thoroughly planned by those who need an excuse for full-spectrum control." There are 8 theories for this incident: 1. "Family Guy" predicted the Boston Marathon bombings. 2. Tamerlan Tsarnaev is still alive. 3. The media knew about the Marathon attacks before they took place. 4. The bombings were preceded by the creation of related Facebook pages. 5. The brothers Tsarnaev were CIA double agents gone wrong.¹⁰³ 6. The bombing victims and responders were actors. 7. Bomb squads had prior knowledge of the attacks. And finally, 8. Private security forces or Navy SEALs were behind the attacks.

- **2004 Madrid train bombings conspiracy theories:** The controversy regarding the handling and representation of the Madrid train bombings by the government arose with Spain's two main political parties, Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and Partido Popular (PP), accusing each other of concealing or distorting evidence for electoral reasons.

The bombings occurred three days before general elections, in which incumbent José María Aznar's PP was defeated. Immediately after the bombing, leaders of the PP claimed evidence indicated that the Basque separatist organization ETA was responsible for the bombings. It is suggested that this analysis was favorable to the PP's chances of being re-elected. The PP government involved Spain in the Iraq War, a policy very unpopular with many Spaniards. Therefore, if a link between the bombings and the Iraq War involvement were established, it could have reduced the popularity of the PP.

Nationwide demonstrations and protests followed the attacks. A view amongst several political commentators is that the PP lost the election as a result of the handling and presentation of the terrorist attacks, rather than specifically due to the Madrid train bombings. After 21 months of investigation, judge Juan del Olmo ruled Moroccan national Jamal Zougam guilty of physically carrying out the attack. The September 2007 sentence established no known mastermind nor direct al-Qaeda link.

The conservative PP government was accused of falsely blaming Euskadi Ta Askatasuna for the attacks. The day of the attacks, police officials informed the Government that explosives usually used by ETA were found at the blast sites. This, along with other suspicious circumstances, led the PP to suspect ETA involvement. Although there was no direct or indirect evidence from the investigation of the bombing pointing to ETA involvement, the group had been caught with a large number of explosives some months previously, which looked like preparations for a big strike.

According to a report of the European Strategic Intelligence and Security Center (ESISIC), the same morning of the bombings the Spanish Intelligence Services and Policy had concluded that the author of the massacre was an Islamist terrorist group, but they had been ordered by the government to deny this Islamist attribution and insist that the ETA were the only suspects, although this same source also states that there is no precedent of collaboration of international Islamists with non-Muslims, and there were two non-Muslims and police informers involved in the Madrid attacks.

The government sent messages to all Spanish embassies abroad ordering that they uphold the version that ETA was responsible. Prime Minister José María Aznar even called a number of newspaper editors and publishers personally to ask for their support for this version. The tense political atmosphere in Spain in the period running up to the elections brought the PP to the edge of a political catastrophe.

On one hand, José María Aznar was aggressively opposed to any dialogue with ETA, and based most of his campaign on the threat of terrorism. The September 11 attacks in New York reinforced his view of the war against the terrorists. On the other hand, Aznar's friendship with U.S. president George W. Bush led him to support the 2003 invasion of Iraq against the views of the overwhelming majority of the population resulting in the biggest demonstrations ever seen in Spain since the restoration of democracy in the late 1970s. This left Aznar in a complicated situation: if Basque terrorists were proven to be responsible for the massacre, it would favor the PP's campaign,

¹⁰³ The CIA again. Remember the pattern.

but if an Islamic group appeared to cause the blast, people might blame him for earning himself and Spain Islamic enemies.

The Summary of the Judicial Enquiry concluded that the decision to attack Madrid was taken after, and as a result of, the invasion of Iraq. Nevertheless, The New Yorker claimed the decision was taken before 9/11, according to an Italian police report.¹⁰⁴

In the immediate aftermath of the train bombings it was suspected that the explosive used in the bombs may have been Titadine, as initial suspicions on responsibility for the bombings focused on ETA and this explosive had been used by them on occasions in the past. As evidence emerged from the investigation attention on the explosive used to one switched to a brand of dynamite known as Goma-2 ECO. Analysis of samples from the explosion sites carried out by a member of the bomb disposal squad (TEDAX) following the bombings did not produce a definitive result. The analyst concerned later testified in the trial of those accused of committing the bombings. She stated that the only thing she could identify in these tests were generic components of dynamite.

Later in 2004, in his appearance before the parliamentary commission of investigation, Juan Jesus Sánchez Manzano, the head of the TEDAX, stated that traces of nitroglycerine had been detected in the samples recovered after the bombings. He would later retract this statement before the investigating magistrate in charge of the case and emphasized that he was not an expert in explosives. The statement by Sánchez Manzano led supporters of the idea that ETA was involved in the bombings to question whether the explosive used in the bombs had been Goma-2 ECO. Nitroglycerine is not a component of Goma-2 ECO.

In the run-up to the trial of those accused, the court ordered that fresh tests be carried out on the samples recovered from the trains and on remains of explosive recovered from different sites connected to the bombings. These tests were carried out by specialists appointed from the security services, the defense and other parties to the accusation. The judges ordered that video and audio recordings be made of these tests. The results of these tests were also inconclusive concerning the samples taken from the explosion sites.

Nitroglycerine was detected in one of these samples, and the presence of di-nitro-toluene (DNT) was also detected. This has led to claims that the explosive used could have been Titadine. However, also detected in the same sample was di-butyl-phthalate (DBP), which is a component of Goma-2 ECO but not of Titadine. Several other samples from the explosion sites also revealed the joint presence of DNT and DBP. Tests were carried out on a sample of Titadine. In addition, the presence of nitroglycerine and DNT was also detected in samples of Goma-2 ECO that had been recovered from sites associated with the bombings.

The discovery of these different components led to suggestions that there could have been some accidental contamination of the samples and explosive remains, although a definitive cause of such contamination has never been established. Entire cartridges, or partial remains of cartridges, of Goma-2 ECO were recovered from the apartment in Leganés where 7 suspects of the bombings died following an explosion, the only unexploded bomb, a Renault Kangoo van found near Alcalá de Henares station on the day of the bombings, and the device that was left by the high-speed railway line connecting Madrid and Seville.

The only explosive positively identified in any site connected to the bombings has been Goma-2 ECO and the sentence in the trial concluded that it was likely that the bombs contained this explosive or a mixture of it with its predecessor product Goma-2 EC.

Some of the alleged Islamist perpetrators had reportedly been under surveillance by the Spanish police since January 2003. According to the Spanish newspaper El Mundo, 24 of the 29

¹⁰⁴ When will the US and European governments get it through their thick skull that the Islamic hatred for West and Israel has nothing to do with foreign policy. It has everything to do with scriptures in both the Quran and the Hadith concerning the killing of infidels and People of the Book wherever they may find us.

alleged perpetrators were informers and/or controlled by the Cuerpo Nacional de Policía, Civil Guard and Centro Nacional de Inteligencia ("National Centre for Intelligence") from the time before the attacks. Two alleged perpetrators were Guardia Civil and Spanish police informants. Cell phones used in the bombings were unlocked in a shop owned by a former Spanish policeman who is not one of those accused in connection with the bombings.

Two of those accused of supplying explosives for the bombings have a conviction for a previous 2001 offence of trafficking with Goma-2 ECO, an offence that did not prevent Trashorras, described as "necessarily involved co-operator" from later getting a job in a mine, thus gaining access to explosives and blast equipment.

Thirteen improvised explosive devices were reported to have been used by the Islamic militant group that was responsible for the bombing, all but three of which detonated. This group seems to have had very tenuous connection with al-Qaeda but with the aim of acting on its behalf. Shortly after the bombings, the group was completely dismantled by the Spanish police and the core members died in an apparent suicide explosion when they were surrounded in the nearby town of Leganés.

The Madrid bombings have led to the sharp political and social differences between the parties in Spain being accentuated. This stands in sharp contrast to other large-scale terrorist attacks such as those in New York and London, which galvanized society and political forces towards unity.

Spain's political division is exemplified by the accusation of members of the Partido Popular and several conservative media outlets regarding who was responsible for the bombings and whether the attacks were for political gain. Some of these sources initially supported the hypothesis that ETA was behind the attacks. These groups have focused their investigation on unexplained details and inconsistencies in the Summary Report and have expressed skepticism about the truthfulness and neutrality of the evidence presented.

Since the bombings, the chief opposition party, PP (which lost power in the election in the immediate aftermath of the bombings), together with conservative media in Spain, have overtly argued the possibility that the Socialist party, the police, the Spanish, French, and Moroccan secret services, and, of course, ETA, had a role in organization of the outrage. Not all conservative media outlets were involved in this campaign. There is a distinct difference between those who believe that the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) used it for political gain (as it had access to information, either from France or through links to the Police, used to criticize the government in the aftermath of the bombings), and those who believe a consortium of the ETA, some groups in the State Security Forces (possibly related to the Grupos Antiterroristas de Liberación (GAL)), the Moroccan secret services, and the PSOE may have had a role either in organizing the bombings or blocking official investigation. The first group includes the Newspaper ABC, while the second group includes the Radio Station COPE and newspapers La Razón and El Mundo. This second group claims the official version is more than questionable and that the truth is still unknown. They have coupled such claims with doubts about the legitimacy of the current government, which they oppose ideologically.

An attempt to link ETA to the bombings occurred in May 2006, when El Mundo published on its front page that a business card of the Basque firm Mondragón Cooperative Corporation (MCC) had been found in the van used by the terrorists. This piece of evidence, discovered by the policemen who found the van, was not found in the numerous police reports. El Mundo's rationale was that Mondragón had no connection with ETA but could point to ETA, just as the Qur'anic cassette pointed to Islamic extremists.

The Spanish police later asserted that it was not a business card, but the cover of a music CD of the popular Spanish 1980s rock group Orquesta Mondragón. The CD with its case was found in a pile of various other music CDs. The rear of the cover had apparently been used by the legitimate proprietor to warn people when he parked in the middle of the street, since it had a handwritten message that read "I am coming back immediately." Nevertheless, El Mundo

continued to insist on the existence of an MCC card in the van. The Spanish police also asserted that a card from "Gráficas Bilbaínas" ("Bilbao printing," a print shop located in Madrid) found in the van was the source of the alleged confusion.

The passenger cars damaged by the explosions were supposedly destroyed to hide evidence 4 days after the explosion and the corpses found in the Leganés flat were also supposedly buried without autopsy. Additionally, in December 2004, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero claimed that the PP government erased all of the computer files related to the Madrid bombings, leaving only the documents on paper.

Mobile phones used in the bombings were unlocked in a shop owned by a Spanish policeman (who retired after the attacks) of Syrian descent and former al Fatah militant, Maussili Kalaji. Kalaji was not one of those accused in connection with the bombings, though the police proposed to take him into custody.

Clues from the thirteenth bomb allowed the police to arrest the first alleged perpetrators, three Moroccans (Jamal Zougam, Mohamed Chaoui and Mohamed Bekkaliand) and two Indian citizens, on Saturday, 13 March. The bomb has been called "the bomb that dismantled the PP version of ETA," and was known to Spanish sources as "Mochila de Vallecas," "Backpack from Vallecas," because its discovery was announced in the Vallecas Police Station on the morning of 12 March. The thirteenth bomb's validity as an exhibit is disputed.

On the morning of the bombings, the trains were double-checked by the EOD police to be sure that no unexploded devices were present. The thirteenth bomb was not found at this time. The only EOD policeman who remembered handling a heavy bag (the thirteenth bomb weighed around 24 lbs. that morning in El Pozo station asserted positively that the heavy bag he handled in the train station did not contain the bomb.

A Spanish police report concluded that the bomb could have been manipulated by unidentified persons in Ifema (in Spanish, "pudo ser manipulada por personas no identificadas en el Ifema"), which was the Madrid exhibition center where objects found in the trains were temporarily stored. While DNA from an unidentified male was found on or in the bag, Spanish police asserted that the 'chain of custody' was unbroken and the PP leader, Mariano Rajoy, asserted in March 2006 that he had no doubts about the validity of this police exhibit.

In December 2006, El Mundo claimed that one of the policeman in the Vallecas Police Station during the alleged discovery of the thirteenth bomb was under investigation for his alleged participation in a plot to sell illegal Goma 2-ECO, and in the assassination of a petty thief.

- ***Oklahoma City Bombing Conspiracy Theories:*** A variety of alternative theories have been proposed regarding the Oklahoma City bombing. These theories reject all, or part of, the official government report. Some of these theories focus on the possibility of additional, unindicted, co-conspirators or additional explosives planted inside the Murrah Federal building. Other theories allege that government employees and officials, including US President Bill Clinton, knew of the impending bombing and intentionally failed to act on that knowledge. Government investigations have been opened at various times to look into the theories. At 9:02 a.m. CST April 19, 1995, a Ryder rental truck containing more than 6,200 pounds of ammonium nitrate fertilizer, nitromethane, and diesel fuel mixture was detonated in front of the north side of the nine-story Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. The attack claimed 168 lives and left over 600 people injured. Shortly after the explosion, Oklahoma State Trooper Charlie Hanger stopped 26-year-old Timothy McVeigh for driving without a license plate and arrested him for that offense and for unlawfully carrying a weapon. 1. One theory contends there was a cover-up of the existence of additional explosives planted within the Murrah building. 2. Another theory alleged that President Bill Clinton had either known about the bombing in advance or had approved the bombing. 3. In 2006, US Congressman Dana Rohrabacher, (Republican, California), said that the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the U.S. House Committee on International Relations, which he chaired, would investigate whether the Oklahoma City bombers had assistance from foreign sources.
- ***Pan Am Flight 103:*** on December 21 1988 flight 103 exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland killing everyone on board and 11 residents of the town as well. Although Libya has recently claimed

responsibility for the attack, of all the items on this list flight 103 has probably been responsible for spawning the greatest number of conspiracy theories. Pan Am Flight 103 conspiracy theories all suggest a number of possible explanations for the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 on December 21, 1988. Some of the theories preceded the official investigation by Scottish police and the FBI; others arose from different interpretation of evidence presented at Libyan agent Abdelbaset al-Megrahi's 2000–2001 trial; yet others have been developed independently by individuals and organizations outside the official investigation. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command (PFLP-GC) was the first suspect, in light of a threat it issued against U.S. and Israeli interests before the bombing. The state of Iran was also in the frame very early, with its motive thought to be revenge for the July 1988 shooting down of Iran Air Flight 655 by USS Vincennes. This theory was later reinforced by Abolghasem Mesbahi, former head of Iranian intelligence operations in Europe, who stated after defecting to Germany that Iran had asked Libya and Abu Nidal, a Palestinian guerrilla leader, to carry out the attack on Pan Am 103. In his 1994 film *The Maltese Double Cross*, Allan Francovich suggested that rogue CIA agents were implicated in a plot that involved them turning a blind eye to a drug running operation in return for intelligence. Finally, in December 2013, Patrick Haseldine suggested that the bombing was an assassination by South Africa's apartheid government of United Nations Commissioner for Namibia, Bernt Carlsson.

- ***Russian Apartment Bombings Conspiracy Theories:*** The Russian apartment bombings were a series of explosions that hit apartment blocks in the Russian cities of Buynaksk, Moscow and Volgograd in September 1999, killing nearly 300 people and spreading a wave of fear across the country. The bombings were blamed by the Russian government on rebels from the North Caucasus region and together with the Dagestan War, that took place in August 1999, led to the military invasion of the separatist Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. The militants as well as the secessionist Chechen authorities denied their involvement in the bombing campaign. The war in Chechnya boosted the popularity of Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, who was previously the director of the FSB.

The Moscow City Court concluded in 2004 that the acts of terrorism were organized and financed by leaders of the illegal armed group Caucasus Islamic Institute Ibn al-Khattab and Abu Omar al-Saif. According to political scientist Ariel Cohen, "the terrorist attacks are believed to have been committed by separatists from the North Caucasus as an act of revenge for Moscow's military operations in Chechnya and Dagestan. There are many, however, who challenge the veracity of this version of events."

State Duma deputies Sergei Kovalev, Yuri Shchekochikhin, and Sergei Yushenkov had sought an independent investigation for the causes of the bombings, doubting the original version. Anti-Kremlin oligarch Boris Berezovsky (and his close associates Yury Felshtinsky and Alexander Litvinenko), David Satter, Boris Kagarlitsky, Vladimir Pribylovsky, Anna Politkovskaya, as well as the secessionist Chechen authorities and former Russian politician Alexander Lebed, have claimed that the 1999 bombings were a false flag attack coordinated by the FSB in order to win public support for a new full-scale war in Chechnya. The war boosted Prime Minister and former FSB Director Vladimir Putin's popularity, and brought the pro-war Unity Party to the State Duma within a few months. Theory of warlords' involvement. Theory of Russian government involvement. List of suspects per the conspiracy theory.

According to this conspiracy theory, the following suspects have been involved: Future Russian President Vladimir Putin who was leading the chain of command according to the book by Felshinsky and Pribylovsky. Director of the FSB Nikolai Patrushev FSB General German Ugryumov who supervised the special forces Alpha and Vypel units at this time Maxim Lazovsky, an FSB officer who was also involved in staging of bombings in Moscow in 1994.

Yusuf Krymshamkhalov and Adam Dekkushev, two official convicts who were hired by FSB agents provocateurs and who organized transportation of explosives to Moscow according to both

versions, FSB officers Vladimir Romanovich and Ramazan Dyshenkov who carried out the apartment bombings in Moscow according to this version

Achemez Gochiyayev who rented basements of the bombed buildings under request from Dyshenkov and later reported about other mined buildings to police, according to his tape that Chechen middle men passed to Kovalev Commission

Three FSB agents (two men and a woman) who conducted the "training exercise" in the city of Ryazan. Their identities and fate remains unknown although their photos were advertised on Russian television. A team of twelve GRU operatives who allegedly conducted bombings in the city of Buynaksk under general command of Lieutenant General Kostechko. Theory of CIA involvement. Of course, the CIA had to be involved. It makes me wonder where they found time to pull off all of these operations.

- ***Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting conspiracy theories:*** On December 14, 2012, the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting occurred. The perpetrator, Adam Lanza, fatally shot his mother before murdering 20 students and six staff members at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, and later committed suicide. A number of left-field nut-jobs have promoted conspiracy theories that doubt or dispute what occurred at Sandy Hook. Various conspiracy theorists have claimed, for example, that the massacre was actually orchestrated by the U.S. Government as part of an elaborate plot to promote stricter gun control laws.

Other conspiracy theorists, such as Alex Jones, have denied that the massacre actually occurred, asserting that it was "completely fake" by the United States government involvement to push through new gun control legislation. Press TV, the official state media outlet of Iran, has promoted various anti-Semitic conspiracy theories blaming "Israeli death squads" for the shooting. Ben Swann, a Cincinnati news anchor for Fox affiliate WXIX-TV, has suggested on his personal YouTube channel that Adam Lanza was accompanied by another shooter; he has made similar claims about the Aurora shooting and the Wisconsin Sikh temple shooting from earlier in 2012.

Other conspiracy theories have focused on the claim that Adam Lanza's father was an executive with GE Energy Financial Services. According to these theories, Lanza's father was supposed to testify before the Senate Banking Committee with information about the Libor scandal.¹⁰⁵ However, no such hearings were scheduled. Similar claims had been made about the father of James Holmes, the convicted perpetrator of the 2012 Aurora shooting. Conspiracy theories have claimed that various timestamps for creation dates, who's who records, and Google caches of various memorial websites, fundraising sites, and Facebook were created before or immediately after the date and time of the shooting and are therefore "evidence" of a conspiracy or cover up.

In September 2014, conspiracy theorist Alex Jones, made a new conspiracy claim: that "no one died" at Sandy Hook Elementary School because the Uniform Crime Reports showed no murders in Newtown for 2012, and that the victims were "child actors." James Tracy, a former professor at Florida Atlantic University who taught a course on conspiracy theories, has suggested the shooting either did not actually occur or occurred very differently than reported in mainstream media outlets.

Other conspiracy theorists have tried to connect the shooting to references in popular culture. Suzanne Collins, the author who lived in the Sandy Hook section of Newton, Connecticut wrote *The Hunger Games* and in *The Hunger Games* 22 children are "ritualistically" killed, and 20 children were killed in the shooting, and "Sandy Hook" can be seen on a map in *The Dark Knight Rises*. This is what some conspiracy theorists refer to as predictive programming.

¹⁰⁵ The Libor scandal was a series of fraudulent actions connected to the Libor (London Interbank Offered Rate) and also the resulting investigation and reaction. The Libor is an average interest rate calculated through submissions of interest rates by major banks across the world. The scandal arose when it was discovered that banks were falsely inflating or deflating their rates so as to profit from trades, or to give the impression that they were more creditworthy than they were. Libor underpins approximately \$350 trillion in derivatives. It is currently administered by Intercontinental Exchange, which took over running the Libor in January 2014

Several conspiracy theorists have also claimed a six-year-old victim of the shooting subsequently appeared in a photograph with President Barack Obama. In fact, the child in the photograph is the victim's sister, wearing her deceased sister's dress. Gene Rosen, a Newtown resident who was reported to have sheltered six Sandy Hook students and a bus driver in his home during the shooting, has been subject to harassment online alleging he was complicit in a government coverup, among other things. Some journalists have cited such incidents as part of a "Sandy Hook Truther Movement" analogous to the 9/11 Truth movement. A writer for the Calgary Herald reported that the movement self-identifies as "Operation Terror."

In May 2014, 28-year-old Andrew David Truelove stole a memorial sign from playgrounds dedicated to victims Grace McDonnell and Chase Kowalski. He then went on to call the parents of Grace McDonnell, proclaiming that he stole the sign and that he believed their deaths were a "hoax." He was eventually arrested on May 30, where the signs were found in his home. Truelove was eventually convicted of the theft and sentenced to 12 months in prison.

Robbie Parker, the father of victim Emilie Parker, after doing a CNN interview on the day after the shooting, became the target of conspiracy theorists, who claimed the interview was staged. Parker has been attacked by theorists who believe he is a "crisis actor" and was "getting into character" before going on CNN to grieve over the loss of his child.

In April 2016, Matthew Mills, a 32-year-old man from Brooklyn, accepted a plea agreement with prosecutors on one count of interfering with police; arising from an incident in November 2015, when Mills angrily approached the sister of murdered teacher Victoria Soto, who is regarded as a heroine for her attempt to protect her students from the shooter in the Sandy Hook attack. Mills shoved a photograph in her face, "and began angrily charging that not only did the Sandy Hook tragedy not take place, but that Victoria Soto never existed." Mills entered an Alford plea¹⁰⁶ and was thus found guilty; he was given a suspended sentence of one year in jail and two years' probation.

In December 2016, Lucy Richards, a 57-year-old woman from Tampa, was charged with four counts of transmitting threats in interstate commerce for sending death threats to Lenny Pozner, whose son Noah was the youngest of the 20 children murdered. Pozner has been particularly targeted by Internet trolls and conspiracy theorists because he has vocally fought back against them.

Richards had been expected to plead guilty to one count of transmitting threats, with both the prosecution and defense to recommend a sentence of probation and house arrest. However, in March 2017, Richards, who was free on bond, failed to show up to court for a change-of-plea hearing and sentencing. An arrest warrant was issued, Richards' bond was revoked, and she was soon apprehended. On June 7, 2017, Richards was sentenced to five months' imprisonment. Lenny Pozner, the father of Sandy Hook victim, Noah Pozner, founded an organization called HONR, which takes legal action against harassers of Sandy Hook survivors and families.

It amazes me that even though no evidence supports these conspiracy theories, which make a number of implausible claims, moreover, many Sandy Hook conspiracy theories contradict one another. A number of sources have published articles debunking various claims put forward by conspiracy theorists. As I have researched this incident, the fact that conspiracy theorists harass and attack victims and survivors seems reprehensible to me. It's not enough they had to endure the actual incident but then they have to endure the assorted nut-jobs out there who have way too much time on their hands. Whatever proof they may be shown, they won't accept it because in their own warped minds they have the inside track and so we mustn't confuse them with the facts.

¹⁰⁶ an Alford guilty plea, and the Alford doctrine in United States law is a guilty plea in criminal court, whereby a defendant in a criminal case does not admit to the criminal act and asserts innocence. In entering an Alford plea, the defendant admits that the evidence the prosecution has, would persuade a judge or jury to find the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

- ***The 1943, Philadelphia Experiment:*** a supposed attempt to turn a U.S. Navy warship invisible, which allegedly caused severe harm to on-board crew members. According to Jacques F. Vallée, the experiment was based on the effort to make the USS Eldridge invisible to torpedoes, through degaussing technology¹⁰⁷ and other methods. The Philadelphia Experiment is the conspiracy theory regarding a naval military experiment at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA, sometime around October 28, 1943, in which the U.S. Navy destroyer escort USS Eldridge was to be rendered invisible (cloaked) to human observers for a brief period of time. That is also referred to sometimes as Project Rainbow.

The story is widely regarded as a hoax, while the U.S. Navy maintains that no such experiment occurred, and details of the story contradict well-established facts about the Eldridge. It has nonetheless caused ripples in conspiracy theory circles, and elements of the Philadelphia Experiment are featured in other government conspiracy theories. Several different and sometimes contradictory versions of the alleged experiment have circulated over the years. The following synopsis illustrates key story points common to most accounts.

The experiment was allegedly based on an aspect of the unified field theory, a term coined by Albert Einstein. The Unified Field Theory aims to describe mathematically and physically the interrelated nature of the forces that comprise electromagnetic radiation and gravity, although to date, no single theory has successfully expressed these relationships in viable mathematical or physical terms.

According to the accounts, it was believed that some version of this Unified Field Theory would enable the Navy to use large electrical generators to bend light around an object so that it became essentially invisible. The Navy would have regarded this as being of obvious military value, and according to the accounts, subsequently it sponsored the experiment.

Another version of the story proposes that researchers were preparing magnetic and gravitational measurements of the seafloor to detect anomalies, supposedly based on Einstein's attempts to understand gravity. In this version, there were also related secret experiments in Nazi Germany to find antigravity, allegedly led by SS-Obergruppenführer Hans Kemmler.

In most accounts of the experiment, the destroyer escort USS Eldridge was fitted with the required equipment at the Philadelphia Naval Yard. Testing began in the summer of 1943, and it was supposedly successful to a limited degree. One test, on July 22, 1943, resulted in the Eldridge being rendered almost completely invisible, with some witnesses reporting a "greenish fog" appearing in its place. However, crew members supposedly complained of severe nausea afterwards. Also, it is said that when the ship reappeared, some sailors were embedded in the metal structures of the ship, including one sailor who ended up on a deck level below that where he began, and had his hand embedded in the steel hull of the ship. At that point, it is said that the experiment was altered at the request of the Navy, with the new objective being solely to render the Eldridge invisible to radar. None of these allegations have been independently substantiated to any satisfactory degree.

The conjecture then alleges that the equipment was not properly re-calibrated, but in spite of this, the experiment was repeated on October 28, 1943. This time, the Eldridge not only became invisible, but she physically vanished from the area in a flash of blue light and teleported to Norfolk, Virginia, over 200 miles away. It is claimed that the Eldridge sat for some time in full view of men aboard the ship SS Furuset, whereupon the Eldridge vanished from their sight, and then

¹⁰⁷ Degaussing is the process of decreasing or eliminating a remnant magnetic field. It is named after the gauss, a unit of magnetism, which in turn was named after Carl Friedrich Gauss. Due to magnetic hysteresis, it is generally not possible to reduce a magnetic field completely to zero, so degaussing typically induces a very small "known" field referred to as bias. Degaussing was originally applied to reduce ships' magnetic signatures during World War II. Degaussing is also used to reduce magnetic fields in cathode ray tube monitors and to destroy data held on magnetic storage.

reappeared in Philadelphia at the site it had originally occupied. It was also said that the warship travelled back in time for about 10 seconds.

Many versions of the tale include descriptions of serious side effects for the crew. Some crew members were said to have been physically fused to bulkheads, while others suffered from mental disorders, and still others supposedly simply vanished. It is also claimed that the ship's crew may have been subjected to brainwashing, in order to maintain the secrecy of the experiment.

Many observers argue that it is inappropriate to grant much credence to an unusual story promoted by one individual, in the absence of more conclusive corroborating evidence. An article written by Robert Goerman for *Fate* magazine in 1980, determined that "Carlos Allende" / "Carl Allen" was in fact Carl Meredith Allen of New Kensington, Pennsylvania, who had an established history of psychiatric illness, and who may have fabricated the primary history of the experiment as a result of his mental illness. Some sources indicate that Allen was a known prankster, and that the "Philadelphia Experiment" story may have been an elaborate hoax.

The historian Mike Dash notes that many authors who publicized the "Philadelphia Experiment" story after Jessup seemed to have conducted little or no research of their own: through the late 1970s, for example, Allende / Allen was often described as mysterious and difficult to locate. But after only a few telephone calls, Goerman was able to determine Allende / Allen's true identity. Others speculate that much of the key literature emphasizes dramatic embellishment rather than pertinent research. Though Berlitz and Moore's famous account of the story (*The Philadelphia Experiment: Project Invisibility*) contained much supposedly factual information, such as transcripts of an interview with a scientist involved in the experiment, their work has also been criticised for plagiarising key story elements from the fictitious novel *Thin Air* which was published a year earlier.

No fully developed Unified Field Theory currently exists, although it is still a subject of ongoing research. William Moore's book on the so-called "Philadelphia Experiment" claims that Albert Einstein completed, and subsequently destroyed, a theory before his death. Also, shortly before his death in 1943, Nikola Tesla supposedly claimed to have completed some kind of a "Unified Field Theory." It was never published.

While very limited "invisibility cloaks" have recently been developed using metamaterial, these are unrelated to theories linking electromagnetism with gravity. The USS *Eldridge* was not commissioned until August 27, 1943, and it remained in port in New York City until September 1943. The October experiment allegedly took place while the ship was on its first shakedown cruise in the Bahamas, although proponents of the story claim that the ship's logs might have been falsified, or else still be classified.

The Office of Naval Research (ONR) stated in September 1996 that "ONR has never conducted investigations on radar invisibility, either in 1943 or at any other time." Pointing out that the ONR was not established until 1946, it denounces the accounts of the Philadelphia Experiment as complete "science fiction." A reunion of navy veterans who had served aboard the USS *Eldridge* told a Philadelphia newspaper in April 1999 that their ship had never made port in Philadelphia. Further evidence discounting the Philadelphia Experiment timeline comes from the USS *Eldridge*'s complete World War II action report, including the remarks section of the 1943 deck log, available on microfilm.

Researcher Jacques Vallée describes a procedure on board the USS *Engstrom* (DE-50), which was docked alongside the *Eldridge* in 1943. The operation involved the generation of a powerful electromagnetic field on board the ship in order to degauss it, with the goal of rendering the ship undetectable or "invisible" to magnetically-fused undersea mines and torpedoes. This system was invented by a Canadian, and the Royal Navy and other navies used it widely during the Second World War.

British ships of the era often included such degaussing systems built into the upper decks (the conduits are still visible on the deck of the HMS *Belfast* (C35) in London, for example). Degaussing is still used today. However, it has absolutely no effect on visible light or radar. Vallée

speculates that accounts of the USS Engstrom's degaussing might have been garbled and confabulated in subsequent retellings, and that these accounts may have influenced the story of the so-called "Philadelphia Experiment."

According to Vallée, a Navy veteran who served on board the USS Engstrom noted that the Eldridge might indeed have travelled from Philadelphia to Norfolk and back again in a single day at a time when merchant ships could not: by use of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal and the Chesapeake Bay, which at the time was open only to naval vessels. Use of that channel was kept quiet: German submarines had ravaged shipping along the East Coast during Operation Drumbeat, and thus military ships unable to protect themselves were secretly moved via canals to avoid the threat. It should be noted that this same veteran claims to be the man that Allende witnessed "disappearing" at a bar. He claims that when the fight broke out, friendly barmaids whisked him out the back door of the bar before the police arrived, because he was under age for drinking. They then covered for him by claiming that he had disappeared.

I swear that most of these conspiracy theorists stay up at night thinking of all the what-ifs involved with an incident. They figure that whatever their crazed mind come up with is the answer that gives them the inside track. Because of that they are right and the rest of world is wrong. Most of them are crack-pots and should be treated as such. They give us a good laugh. However, when they get to the point they harass and attack those of us who don't buy their bull, then they should be locked up in an insane asylum where they can theorize to their hearts content.

Chapter 6. CIA, Organized Crime, Science and Technology:

The following conspiracies are ones that were reportedly run by the CIA, the government everyone loves to hate just after the IRS.

Allegations of CIA Drug Trafficking: A number of writers have claimed that the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is or has been involved in drug trafficking. Books on the subject that have received general notice include works by historian Alfred McCoy, English professor and poet Peter Dale Scott, and journalists Gary Webb, Michael C. Ruppert and Alexander Cockburn. These claims have led to investigations by the United States government, including hearings and reports by the United States House of Representatives, Senate, Department of Justice, and the CIA's Office of the Inspector General.

The following are some of the alleged operations in which the CIA has been accused of involvement:

1. For eight years, from 2001 until October 2009, Ahmed Wali Karzai, brother of the then-newly elected President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai, was on the payroll of the CIA, but is also alleged to have been involved in opium trafficking in the Middle East.

2. While the CIA was sponsoring a Secret War in Laos from 1961 to 1975, it was accused of trafficking in opium in an area known as the Golden Triangle.

3. In October 2013, two former federal agents and an ex-CIA contractor told an American television network that CIA operatives were involved in the kidnapping and murder of DEA covert agent Enrique Camarena, because he was a threat to the agency's drug operations in Mexico. According to the three men, the CIA was collaborating with drug traffickers moving cocaine and marijuana to the United States, and using its share of the profits to finance Nicaraguan Contra rebels attempting to overthrow Nicaragua's Sandinista government. A CIA spokesman responded, calling it "ridiculous" to suggest that the Agency had anything to do with the murder of a US federal agent or the escape of his alleged killer.

4. The Honduran drug lord Juan Matta-Ballesteros was the owner of SETCO, an airline which the Nicaraguan Contras used to covertly transport military supplies and personnel in the early 1980s. Writers such as Peter Dale Scott and Jonathan Marshall have suggested that the U.S. government's desire to conceal or protect these clandestine shipments led it to close the DEA office in Honduras when an investigation began into SETCO, allowing Matta-Ballesteros to continue and expand his trafficking. In 1986, the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations began investigating drug trafficking from Central and South America and the Caribbean to the United States.

The investigation was conducted by the Sub-Committee on Terrorism, Narcotics, and International Operations, chaired by Senator John Kerry, so its final 1989 report was known as the Kerry Committee report. The Report concluded that "it is clear that individuals who provided support for the Contras were involved in drug trafficking, the supply network of the Contras was used by drug trafficking organizations, and elements of the Contras themselves knowingly received financial and material assistance from drug traffickers.

5. A failed CIA anti-drug operation in Venezuela resulted in at least a ton of cocaine being smuggled into the United States and sold on the streets. The incident, which was first made public in 1993, was part of a plan to assist an undercover agent to gain the confidence of a Colombian drug cartel. The plan involved the unsupervised shipment of hundreds of pounds of cocaine from Venezuela. The drug in the shipments was provided by the Venezuelan anti-drug unit which was working with the CIA, using cocaine seized in Venezuela. The shipments took place despite the objections of the U.S. DEA.

When the failed plan came to light, the CIA officer in charge of the operation resigned, and his supervisor was transferred. In November 1996, shortly after then-CIA Director John Deutch went to Los Angeles to refute allegations raised by the Gary Webb investigative report on cocaine trafficking and the CIA, a Miami jury indicted Venezuelan CIA asset, General Ramon Guillen Davila, who "led a CIA counter-narcotics program that put a ton of cocaine on U.S. streets in 1990." The New York Times reported:

The CIA, over the objections of the Drug Enforcement Administration, a branch of the Justice Department, approved the shipment of at least one ton of nearly pure cocaine to Miami International Airport as a way of gathering information

about the Colombian drug cartels. But the cocaine ended up on the street because of "poor judgment and management on the part of several CIA officers," the intelligence agency said. During the long years of the cold war the CIA mounted major covert guerilla operations along the Soviet-Chinese border. The CIA recruited as allies, people we now call drug lords for their operation against communist China in northeastern Burma in 1950, then from 1965 to 1975 during the Vietnam war their operation in northern Laos and throughout the decade of the 1980s, the Afghan operation against Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

Powerful, upland political figures control the societies and economies in these regions and part of that panoply of power is the opium trade. The CIA extended the mantle of their alliance to these drug lords and in every case the drug lords used it to expand a small local trade in opium into a major source of supply for the world markets and the United States.

While they were allied with the United States these drug lords were absolutely immune to any kind of investigation. If you're involved in any kind of illicit commodity trade, organized crime activity like drug trafficking, there is only one requisite for success, immunity, and the CIA gave them that. As long as they were allied with the CIA, the local police and then the DEA stayed away from the drug lords.

In addition, the former Venezuelan anti-narcotics chief General Ramon Guillen Davila and his chief civilian aide were both indicted in connection with the shipments. Because Venezuela does not extradite its citizens, Guillen was not tried in the U.S., but his civilian aide was arrested while in the United States and sentenced to 20 years.

Drug cultivation thrives on economic and political instability, corruption and totalitarianism. The world's biggest drug producing centers are in regions beyond the control of the central government, like South Afghanistan, South-West Colombia and East Myanmar. Until government control, democracy and the rule of law are restored, these regions will remain nests of insurgency and drug production and represent the biggest challenge to containment. Especially in developing countries in conflict, there have been allegations that the CIA assisted the illicit drug activities of local leaders who saw that as a payment for their assistance.

CIA Drug Smuggling in Arkansas: August 23, 1987, in a rural community just south of Little Rock, police officers murdered two teenage boys because they witnessed a police-protected drug drop. The drop was part of a drug smuggling operation based at a small airport in Mena, Arkansas. The Mena operation was set up in the early 1980's by the notorious drug smuggler, Barry Seal. Facing prison after a drug conviction in Florida, Seal flew to Washington, D.C., where he put together a deal that allowed him to avoid prison by becoming an informant for the government.

As a government informant against drug smugglers, Seal testified he worked for the CIA and the DEA. A number of allegations have been written about and several local, state, and federal investigations have taken place related to the alleged use of the Mena Intermountain Municipal Airport as a CIA drop point in large scale cocaine trafficking beginning in the early 1980s. Some conspiracy theories regarding the airport extend to alleging the involvement of figures such as Oliver North and former presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton.

An investigation by the CIA's inspector general concluded that the CIA had no involvement in or knowledge of any illegal activities that may have occurred in Mena. The report said that the agency had conducted a training exercise at the airport in partnership with another Federal agency and that companies located at the airport had performed "routine aviation-related services on equipment owned by the CIA"

In one federal court case, he testified that his income from March 1984 to August 1985, was between \$700,000 and \$800,000. This period was after making his deal with the government. Seal testified that nearly \$600,000 of this came from smuggling drugs while working for and with the permission of the DEA. In addition to his duties as an informant, Seal was used by CIA operatives to help finance the Nicaraguan Contras.

The CIA connection to the Mena operation was undeniable when a cargo plane given to Seal by the CIA was shot down over Nicaragua with a load of weapons. In spite of the evidence, every investigator who has tried to expose the crimes of Mena has been professionally destroyed, and those involved in drug smuggling operations have received continued protection from state and federal authorities.

CIA Drug Running in LA: Pulitzer Prize Award winning journalist Gary Webb exposed this alongside LAPD Narcotics Officer turned whistleblower and author Michael Ruppert, CIA Contract Pilot Terry Reed, and many others. In August 1996, the San Jose Mercury News published Webb's "Dark Alliance," a 20,000 word, three-part investigative series which alleged that Nicaraguan drug traffickers had sold and distributed crack cocaine in Los Angeles during the 1980s, and that drug profits were used to fund the CIA-supported Nicaraguan Contras.

Webb never asserted that the CIA directly aided drug dealers to raise money for the Contras, but he did document that the CIA was aware of the cocaine transactions and the large shipments of cocaine into the U.S. by the Contra personnel. "Dark Alliance" received national attention. At the height of the interest, the web version of it on San Jose Mercury News website received 1.3 million hits a day. According to the Columbia Journalism Review, the series became "the most talked-about piece of journalism in 1996 and arguably the most famous—some would say infamous—set of articles of the decade."

The CIA Assassinates a Lot of People (Church Committee): The Church Committee is the common term referring to the United States Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, a U.S. Senate committee chaired by Senator Frank Church in 1975. A precursor to the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, the committee investigated intelligence gathering for illegality by the CIA and FBI after certain activities had been revealed by the Watergate affair. The Committee uncovered, among many other things, that the CIA had violated its charter to perform only gathering of intelligence. For example, the assassinations of Allende in Chile and Mossadegh in Iran, Assassinations against Central and South American leaders and revolutionaries, as well as Africa, Middle East and East Asia. The list was tremendous.

They even declassified a "Heart Attack Gun" the Agency had made for the use of killing someone without it being detected. Cancer, car accidents, skiing accidents, suicide, boating accidents, heart attacks, and just plain being shot were common assassination methods. The hearings, although recorded in full in congressional record, the mainstream media and official policies, is still largely not taught in American schools on recent history. The American public still has no idea this was ever actually confirmed or even took place. It is common for people to still refer to any of these assassinations as a joke or made up conspiracy.

Operation Gladio: Gladio is a code name denoting the clandestine NATO "stay-behind" operation in Italy after World War II, intended to continue anti-communist resistance in the event of a Warsaw Pact invasion of Western Europe. Although Gladio specifically refers to the Italian branch of the NATO stay-behind organizations, "Operation Gladio" is used as an informal name for all stay-behind organizations, sometimes called "Super NATO."

The role of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in sponsoring Gladio and the extent of its activities during the Cold War era, and its relationship to right-wing terrorist attacks perpetrated in Italy during the Years of Lead and other similar clandestine operations is the subject of ongoing debate and investigation. Italy, Switzerland and Belgium have had parliamentary inquiries into the matter.

Thousands of documents, depositions and testimony as well as recorded conversations and admission by the highest levels of government in Italy. That's about as credible as it gets, regardless of the CIA's adamant denial it ever happened. The shooting of innocent civilians, terrorism and assassinations all blamed on leftist communists were actually a part of well-coordinated, "black operations." Black operations typically involve activities that are highly clandestine and, often, outside of standard military protocol.

"The right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing." Black ops missions often fit into the plausible deniability category, a situation in which there is no claim of responsibility for the action, and a false flag operation is used to give the appearance that another actor was responsible, or most often, black operations involvement so as to be able to hide the fact that the black operation ever occurred. Black military operations, or paramilitary operations, can be used by various secret services to achieve or attempt to achieve an unusually sensitive goal. The methods used in black operations are also used in unconventional warfare. Depending on the precise situation in a given case, and the level of authoritarianism of the national

government or other responsible party, some tasks will be conducted as black operations, while there are usually other activities that can be admitted openly.

Black operations may include such things as assassination, sabotage, extortion, spying on allied countries or one's own citizens, kidnapping, supporting resistance movements, torture, use of fraud to obtain funds, use of child soldiers, human experimentation, trafficking in contraband items, terrorism, guerilla and other operations involving unconventional warfare. Since 9/11, many black operations and longtime unethical standings have been approved for legality in the war on terror.

In other words, since September 11th, 2001, it is no longer conspiracy for any of this to occur, a simple decision by a top-level military or CIA official is enough, without oversight or even one thread of admission by the Government or Private accomplices. Much of the Black operations today are performed by private contract companies like Blackwater (now Xe).

The Mafia as Sensational Conspiracy Theory: This secret crime society was virtually unknown until the 1960s, when member Joe Valachi first revealed the society's secrets to law enforcement officials. What was known was that organized crime existed, but not that the extent of their control included working with the CIA, politicians and the biggest businesses in the world.

The involvement of real Italian American criminals in organized crime is often overshadowed by their fictional counterparts. It is rarely clear where facts give way to conspiracy theory. It is clear, however, that popular culture plays an important role in the development, elaboration, and reinforcement of the Mafia conspiracy theory. Al Capone, the bootlegger, quickly gives way to "Al Capone," the character in *The Untouchables*, or "Tony" Montana in *Scarface* (1983)

Many of these theories have their origins in the tabloid news or Hollywood cinema, but then quickly migrate into popular lore and public policy. During the 1950s, New York Mirror reporters Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer wrote a popular series of entertaining "true crime" books that both gained high sales and inspired the Kefauver investigation. Gossip columnist Walter Winchell wrote sensational "Mobfia" stories and did voiceovers for TV's *The Untouchables*, but he also provided information to J. Edgar Hoover. The theories would then migrate back into popular culture in films like 1951's ***The Enforcer***, based on Kefauver's investigation.

Many politicians and public figures draw on the notoriety of organized crime conspiracies in building their careers. After Prohibition, Eliot Ness became Cleveland's safety director but lost his bid to be the city's mayor. Thomas Dewey began his rise to the New York governorship by prosecuting gangster Charles "Lucky" Luciano in 1936. More recently, Rudolph Giuliani went from a gang busting U.S. attorney for the southern district of New York to mayor of New York City.

The Godfather series of films would perhaps have the greatest impact on popularizing the Mafia conspiracy in late-twentieth-century America. When the first film was released in 1972, few Mafia movies had been made since their heyday in the 1920s. The first two films in the series captured Academy Awards in several categories, including Best Picture. The first film marked a major transformation in the image of the Mafia in that its focus on the Corleone family took on the idea of a "crime family."

The film's Italian American themes catered to the 1970s search for ethnic roots, while its traditional nuclear families provided a nostalgic look back during a time of rising divorce rates. Despite these fictitious films, the series seemed real: it exhibited the gruesome reality of violence, an eye for period detail, and a joy with Italian American food and dialogue that made it difficult for many viewers to distinguish this fictional crime family from the practice of actual organized crime.

Many individuals and organizations have worked hard to discredit the theory of the Mafia. Most notably, J. Edgar Hoover, the director of the FBI, denied the existence of the Mafia until the Valachi revelations of 1963. Beginning in the 1950s, the Order of the Sons of Italy in America (OSIA), an Italian American civic organization, began a campaign to eliminate the Mafia from U.S. culture. They believed it to be a defamatory stereotype with no basis in reality. In addition to protesting portrayals in the mass media, they lobbied politicians and government organizations from the FBI to the United States Postal Service, which pulled the plug on a planned Godfather commemorative stamp due to Sons of Italy pressure in 1998. Their efforts to get *The Sopranos* taken off cable television however, proved unsuccessful.

MK-ULTRA: From the 1950s to the 1970s, the CIA ran a mind-control project aimed at finding a “truth serum” to use on communist spies. Test subjects were given LSD and other drugs, often without consent, and some were tortured. At least one man, civilian biochemist Frank Olson, who was working for the government, died as a result of the experiments. The project was finally exposed after investigations by the Rockefeller Commission.

Operation Mockingbird: Also in the 1950s to '70s, the CIA paid a number of well-known domestic and foreign journalists, from big-name media outlets like Time, The Washington Post, The New York Times, CBS and others, to publish CIA propaganda. The CIA also reportedly funded at least one movie, the animated “Animal Farm,” by George Orwell. The Church Committee finally exposed the activities in 1975.

Counter Intelligence Programs Against Activists in the 60s: COINTELPRO (an acronym for Counter Intelligence Program) was a series of covert, and often illegal, projects conducted by the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) aimed at investigating and disrupting dissident political organizations within the United States. The FBI used covert operations from its inception, however formal COINTELPRO operations took place between 1956 and 1971. The FBI’s stated motivation at the time was “protecting national security, preventing violence, and maintaining the existing social and political order.”

According to FBI records, 85% of COINTELPRO resources were expended on infiltrating, disrupting, marginalizing, and subverting groups suspected of being subversive, such as communist and socialist organizations; the women’s rights movement; militant black nationalist groups, and the non-violent civil rights movement, including individuals such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and others associated with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Congress of Racial Equality, the American Indian Movement, and other civil rights activist groups; a broad range of organizations labeled “New Left,” including Students for a Democratic Society, the National Lawyers Guild, the Weathermen, almost all groups protesting the Vietnam War, and even individual student demonstrators with no group affiliation; and nationalist groups such as those “seeking independence for Puerto Rico.”

The other 15% of COINTELPRO resources were expended to marginalize and subvert “white hate groups,” including the Ku Klux Klan and National States’ Rights Party. The directives governing COINTELPRO were issued by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, who ordered FBI agents to “expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize” the activities of these movements and their leaders. In many cases, critics have accused the U.S. government of engaging in realpolitik in the cynical sense of political action without regard for principles or morals. In recent times, wars in the Middle East such as the Gulf War and the invasion of Iraq have been described as wars for oil, as well as power, wealth and land.¹⁰⁸

1919 World Series Conspiracy: The 1919 World Series, often referred to as the Black Sox Scandal, resulted in the most famous scandal in baseball history. Eight players from the Chicago White Sox, nicknamed the Black Sox, were accused of throwing the series against the Cincinnati Reds. Details of the scandal remain controversial, and the extent to which each player was involved varied. It was, however, front-page news across the country when the story was uncovered late in the 1920 season, and despite being acquitted of criminal charges, throwing baseball games was technically not a crime, at that time; the eight players were banned from organized baseball for life. The leagues were subject to the National Agreement. There are hundreds of other conspiracies involving throwing games, sporting matches and large-scale entertainment events. It is common knowledge for many, this list would have to go into the thousands if we included all of them.

Similar to the "Frozen Envelope Theory" is the football "Hot Balls Theory" which suggests that certain balls used in draws for FIFA competitions have been raised in temperature in order to achieve a

¹⁰⁸ Wars since time began, have been fought for power, wealth, and land. Some say wars have been fought over religion and politics. However, once one studies the war, it still boils down to wealth, power, and land. Even the wars of the 20th, and 21st centuries fascism, communism, and Islamo-jihadism. They say it was about religion or ideology. But once one studies the history it has always been about lebensraum, building walls, and new caliphates. No matter what they rationalize, it’s still about wealth, power, and real estate.

certain specific outcome for the draw. To draw rivals together in order to generate more interest and revenue, or to give a certain team an "easier" draw

The NFL game of football deflate-gate, The NFL acknowledged for the first time today that the New England Patriots used under-inflated balls in the first half of Sunday's game against the Indianapolis Colts and that it is continuing to look the matter ahead of next week's Super Bowl. That brought out critics and conspiracy theorists out of the woodwork getting their fifteen minutes of fame on national news offering their own misguided opinions on the scandal.

"While the evidence thus far supports the conclusion that footballs that were under-inflated were used by the Patriots in the first half, the footballs were properly inflated for the second half and confirmed at the conclusion of the game to have remained properly inflated," the league said in a statement.

"The goals of the investigation will be to determine the explanation for why footballs used in the game were not in compliance with the playing rules and specifically whether any noncompliance was the result of deliberate action. We have not made any judgments on these points and will not do so until we have concluded our investigation and considered all of the relevant evidence," the league said, adding that it has conducted nearly 40 interviews, including "Patriots personnel, game officials, and third parties with relevant information and expertise."

Boxing is a sport that has been particularly linked with conspiracy theories, such as the theory that the second Ali-Liston fight was fixed, and that the first Bradley-Pacquiao encounter was fixed by promoter Bob Arum.

Karen Silkwood: Karen was an American labor union activist and chemical technician at the Kerr-McGee plant near Crescent, Oklahoma. Silkwood's job was making plutonium pellets for nuclear reactor fuel rods. After being hired at Kerr-McGee, Silkwood joined the Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers Union local and took part in a strike at the plant. After the strike ended, she was elected to the union's bargaining committee and assigned to investigate health and safety issues. She discovered what she believed to be numerous violations of health regulations, including exposure of workers to contamination, faulty respiratory equipment and improper storage of samples.

She also believed the lack of sufficient shower facilities could increase the risk of employee contamination. In the summer of 1974, Silkwood testified to the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) about these issues, alleging that safety standards had slipped because of a production speedup which resulted in employees being given tasks for which they were poorly trained. She also alleged that Kerr-McGee employees handled the fuel rods improperly and that the company falsified inspection records.

On November 5, 1974, Silkwood performed a routine self-check and found almost 400 times the legal limit for plutonium contamination. She was decontaminated at the plant and sent home with a testing kit to collect urine and feces for further analysis. Oddly, though there was plutonium on the exterior surfaces of the gloves she had been using, the gloves did not have any holes.

This suggests the contamination did not come from inside the glove box, but from some other source, in other words, someone was trying to poison her. The next morning, as she headed to a union negotiation meeting, she again tested positive for plutonium. This was surprising because she had only performed paperwork duties that morning. She was given a more intense decontamination.

The following day, November 7, 1974, as she entered the plant, she was found to be dangerously contaminated, even expelling contaminated air from her lungs. A health physics team accompanied her back to her home and found plutonium traces on several surfaces especially in the bathroom and the refrigerator. The house was later stripped and decontaminated.

Silkwood, her partner and housemate were sent to Los Alamos National Laboratory for in-depth testing to determine the extent of the contamination in their bodies. Later that evening, Silkwood's body was found in her car, which had run off the road and struck a culvert. The car contained no documents. She was pronounced dead at the scene from a "classic, one-car sleeping-driver accident."

Genetically modified crops: The GMO conspiracy theory asserts that the global community of agricultural and biological scientists has conspired to fabricate evidence supporting the safety and benefit of genetically modified food crops, while also suppressing evidence suggesting the dangers of these crops. Supporters of this conspiracy theory typically argue for organic superiority and against the use of

genetically modified food crops. Supporters of this conspiracy theory often associate the private company Monsanto with this conspiracy theory.

GMO conspiracy theories are conspiracy theories related to the production and sale of genetically modified crops and genetically modified foods (also referred to as genetically modified organisms or "GMOs"). These conspiracy theories include claims that agribusinesses, especially the food company Monsanto, have suppressed data showing that GMOs cause harm, deliberately cause food shortages to promote the use of GM food, or have co-opted government agencies such as the United States Food and Drug Administration or scientific societies such as the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Critics charge that GMO conspiracy theories are largely promulgated by those opposing the production and sale of GMOs, and instances of unsubstantiated conspiracy theories have lately occurred in the context of public health issues that are mostly unrelated to GMOs, including the current Zika virus outbreak and concerns over food safety at Chipotle Mexican Grill. The existence of conspiracy theories relating to the fear over GMOs has been attested to by scientists, journalists, and skeptics who oppose much anti-GMO activism.

Such commentators include Michael Shermer (writer of a monthly Skeptic column series for Scientific American), Mark Lynas (an environmental activist and writer who opposed GMOs for years and recently switched positions), and Jon Entine (the founder and head of an advocacy organization dedicated to advancing the case in favor of genetic engineering in agriculture and biotechnology). Academics writing about bioethics and science communication have also taken note. A 2013 paper published in the journal ***PLOS ONE*** found statistical evidence that linked conspiracy theorist ideation as being a significant factor in the rejection of scientific propositions about genetically engineered food.

One GMO conspiracy theory was identified by biochemist Paul Christou and horticulturalist Harry Klee as a claim that development and promotion of GMOs was done by pesticide companies to cause crops to become more vulnerable to pests and therefore require more pesticides, while philosopher Juha Räikkä identified a conspiracy theory that claims the lack of any reliable scientific evidence that show harmful effects of GMOs is due not to a lack of evidence but rather to a conspiracy to hide that evidence.[6]

Conspiracy theories involving GMOs and their promoters have been invoked in a variety of contexts. For example, in commenting on the Séralini affair, an incident that involved the retraction of a much-criticized paper which claimed harmful effects of GMOs in lab rats, American biologist PZ Myers said that anti-GMO activists were claiming the retraction was a part of "a conspiracy to Hide the Truth™." [7] A work seeking to explore risk perception over GMOs in Turkey identified a belief among the conservative political and religious figures who were opposed to GMOs that GMOs were "a conspiracy by Jewish Multinational Companies and Israel for world domination." [8] Additionally, a Latvian study showed that a segment of the population believed that GMOs were part of a greater conspiracy theory to poison the population of the country. Social critic Margit Stange contextualized certain arguments adopted by GMO conspiracy theorists as being part of the larger controversy surrounding the subject:

The corporate push for genetically modified food arouses great suspicion. Critics charge that GM food ("Frankenfood") is profitable to industry not only because it can be patented but because crop uniformity will eventually drive up pesticide demand. The charge that big food interests take advantage of poverty to open new markets for GM food is restated by conspiracy theorists, who describe a deliberate macroeconomic creation of food shortages in impoverished nations in order to open the door to GM food. The food industry's opposition to GM food labeling and precautionary measures fuels such suspicions.

This view was echoed by bioethicist Michael Reiss and moral philosopher Roger Straughan who explain in their book *Improving Nature?: The Science and Ethics of Genetic Engineering* that fears about the consolidation of power by a few agrochemical companies over farmers is a main argument against new genetic engineering technology in agriculture: "At its extreme, this fear belongs to the conspiracy-theory genre and, to caricature somewhat, envisages powerless farmers forced to pay ever increasing amounts to anonymous international companies who profit from the cost of the crop seed and from the cost of the herbicides used to spray them."

Political science professors Joseph E. Uscinski and Joseph M. Parent in their book *American Conspiracy Theories* summarized the people that have adopted GMO conspiracy theories thusly: Another prototypical conspiratorial movement involves those opposed to genetically modified organisms (GMO), in essence a protest against the genetic engineering of food. Not everyone who opposes GMOs is a conspiracy theorist: reasonable people can disagree about research and fail to see small groups of people covertly working against the common good. But most visible and vocal members of this movement, however, are conspiracy theorists. They believe that genetically modified foods are a corporate plot to destroy America, led by the giant multinational Monsanto corporation to profit off unhealthy food.

Global Warming: Although it is undeniable that the average temperature of the climate system has increased in recent years, the reason for the increase is a bit more controversial. Is it cyclical, manmade, or are the thermometers broken? It seems as though there is no consensus and everyone is pointing the conspiracy finger at everyone else. Global warming conspiracy theorists typically allege that, through worldwide acts of professional and criminal misconduct, the science behind global warming has been invented or distorted for ideological and financial reasons.

There are 72 scientists who have conducted studies on Climate Science that contradict the “mainstream” consensus of those who accept the theory of climate change and global warming, hook, line and sinker (as of 2007 there are only 364 climate scientists). Even if there was only one scientist who disagreed that would still mean that there is not a 100% consensus on the scientific theory of global warming and climate change.

The only thing the majority gives us is harassment toward the minority. We have seen time after time throughout history where one lone scientist proved a theory or hypothesized a new way of looking at scientific questions and the majority ridiculed and in some cases censured the lone scientist only to show years down the road the lone scientist to be correct.

The majority wants everyone to believe that the ice floes are melting, the climate is changing, the temperatures are rising, use of computer models forecast climate change, use of climate records forecast temperatures, the cause of which involves aerosols, CO² emissions, greenhouse gasses, and of course humans; all of which is supported by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, environmental activists and liberal politicians.

The majority uses celebrities such as Michael Moore, and politicians, like Al Gore to throw out propaganda in the way of films no one cares about and intimidate anyone who they call a denier. They make statements that scientists who deny global warming are not true scientists. Has anyone looked at Moore’s or Gore’s credentials? One is a celebrity who makes stupid movies and the other is a politician who makes stupid movies.

Politicians like Obama makes statements like there is no more debate. The consensus is in. Global Warming and Climate Change is something we all need to be worried about. Those who don’t know how to think or reason for themselves and let the majority crowd tell them to jump off the bridge, hold hands, and singing Kumbaya, they jump.

Much has been made of where the skeptics get their funding, from energy corporations and conservative think tanks and others. However, my question is where do the environmentalists receive their funding? Dues from members represent an average of 50 % of the income of most groups; most of the rest of the income comes from foundation grants, corporate contributions, and U.S. government funds. The data available from public sources show that the total revenues of the environmentalist movement are more than \$8.5 billion per year. If the revenues of law firms involved in environmental litigation and of university environmental programs were added into the mix, this figure would easily double to more than \$16 billion a year.

Another huge source of contributions to the environmental movement is private corporations. Unlike tax-exempt foundations, however, corporations are not required by law to report what they do with their money, so it is difficult for an independent researcher to estimate the level of funding for the environmentalist movement from business and industry. There are watchdog groups, however, that have investigated these money flows and come up with startlingly large figures.

For example, the April 1991 newsletter of the Capital Research Center in Washington, D.C., which monitors trends in corporate giving, scathingly denounces those corporations it has discovered financing the environmentalists. The newsletter states that oil companies "are heavy financial supporters of the very advocacy groups which oppose activities essential to their ability to meet consumer needs."

Further, it reports, "The Nature Conservancy's 1990 report reflects contributions of over \$1,000,000 from Amoco, over \$135,000 from Arco, over 4,100,000 from BP Exploration and BP Oil, more than \$3,200,000 (in real estate) from Chevron, over \$10,000 from Conoco and Phillips Petroleum and over \$260,000 from Exxon." From the scant information, publicly available (largely annual reports from the major environmental groups), one can conservatively estimate that corporations contribute more than \$200 million a year to the environmentalist movement.

There is a third area of funding for the environmental movement: the U.S. government itself. As reported in detail by Peter Metzger, former science editor of the Rocky Mountain News, there are now thousands of professional environmentalists entrenched in the U.S. government. These environmentalists channel hundreds of millions of dollars in grants and favors to left-wing environmentalists and environmental groups under all kinds of guises. In a 1991 newspaper series, columnist Warren Brookes exposed how the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) used the Nature Conservancy as a land broker, giving the antigrowth organization handsome profits.

The EPA doles out huge amounts of money to environmental groups to conduct "studies" of the impact of global warming and ozone depletion. President George W. Bush made the Global Climate Change program a priority, so while the Space Station, vaccinations for children, and other crucial projects have been virtually eliminated from the budget, \$1.3 billion is available for studies of how man is fouling the Earth. Similarly, scientists who challenge global warming and ozone depletion as hoaxes do not receive a penny in funding, while those who scream doomsday warnings receive tens of millions in research grants from the "climate change" program.

How much funding do the environmentalists receive from the federal government? Officially, the U.S. government gives away more than \$3 billion a year in grants to support environmental groups and projects. The actual total, however, is impossible to estimate. A top-ranking official of the Department of Energy, Margaret Chu, who spent two years attempting to cut off tens of millions of dollars in "pork barrel" grants going to environmentalist groups, discovered that for each grant she was eliminating, environmentalist moles in the department added several new ones. The official resigned in disgust.

The environmentalist capture of Washington, which was consolidated during the Carter administration, produced radical changes in the Washington, D.C. establishment. This process of subversion was described by Peter Metzger in a speech given in 1980, titled "Government-funded Activism: Hiding Behind the Public Interest."

"For the first time in history, a presidential administration is funding a political movement dedicated to destroying many of the institutions and principles of American society. Activist organizations, created, trained, and funded at taxpayers' expense, and claiming to represent the public interest, are attacking our economic system and advocating its replacement by a new form of government. Not only is this being done by means already adjudicated as being unconstitutional, but it is being done without the consent of Congress, the knowledge of the public, or the attention of the press."

"It all began when President Carter hired individuals prominently identified with the protest or adversary culture, the appointment by the Carter administration of several hundred leading activists to key regulatory and policy-making positions in Washington resulted in their use of the federal regulatory bureaucracy in order to achieve their personal and ideological goals."

"Already accomplished is the virtual paralysis of new federal coal leasing, conventional electric generating plant licensing in many areas, federal minerals land leasing and water development, industrial exporting without complex environmental hearings, and the halting of new nuclear power plant construction. The consequences of those sub-cabinet appointees having then made their own appointments, and those having then made theirs, so that now, there are thousands of environmentalist representatives in government..." According to Metzger, this new class, "enshrined in the universities, the news media, and especially the federal bureaucracy, has become one of the most powerful of the special interests."

The next problem I have with activists who like to whine about how glaciers are melting in the polar regions. My problems with this is why do they only notice the melting glaciers in the summer when the temperature is between 60°F and -28°F in the arctic and -42°F and -97°F in the Antarctic? Why don't they go there in the winter when the temperatures are between -42°F and -58°F in the Arctic, and between -103°F to -113°F in Antarctica when the glaciers are frozen?

Now what about the computer models? I don't suppose anyone remembers the acronym GIGO (Garbage in/Garbage Out) The climate scientists input formulas to forecast climate and temperature changes. The formulas are almost guaranteed to predict the future the way the scientists want. Instead of looking out the window and seeing the climate and the seasons the way they are. They want to predict the future in a way and manner that will influence policymakers and the public at large in a way of thinking that will validate their junk science.

Finally, the environmental movement wants us to believe that the cause of all this climate change and global warming are humans and our use of carbon fuels, carbon foot print, and production of greenhouse gasses. Well, in 2015, George Soros, the billionaire who once said coal was lethal to the earth, his financial management company, the Soros Fund Management (SFM) bought 1 million shares in the Peabody Energy Corporation, and another \$588,000 for 500,000 shares in Advanced Renewable Energy Company LLC (ARC Energy). The firm, which Soros chairs, bought the large stakes for bargain prices. Peabody and Arch are giants of the US coal sector but have suffered massive declines in recent years, losing more than 98% of their value. SFM made a similar move in 2014 by investing \$234.4 million in publicly owned coal and gas company, CONSOL Energy. Those shares were sold off after a few months as gas prices continued to fall.

The Hungarian trading titan is the 29th richest person on earth; according to Forbes he is worth \$24.2 billion. In 2009, after being convinced by Al Gore of the urgency of the climate challenge, he pledged to spend \$1 billion of his own money on renewable energy and funded the Climate Policy Initiative (CPI) thinktank.

At the time, Soros said: "There is no magic bullet for climate change, but there is a lethal bullet: coal." A report produced by CPI in June 2014 concluded that transitioning away from coal represented a cost-effective way to reduce emissions. CPI declined to comment on their benefactor's apparent inconsistency.

Soros has also been a significant donor to both Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama's election campaigns, donating at least \$1 million to each through the Priorities USA Action Super Pac.¹⁰⁹ Both have positioned themselves as supporters of strong climate policy. The coal industry has admitted that Obama's clean power plan, which Clinton has vowed to support, threatens the future of coal in the US.

So, as they say, follow the money and one must ask the question, who are the environmentalists really protecting? My guess is they are protecting the power and wealth of those in powerful positions in a socialist government. I believe in climate change; we get it four times a year. It's called winter, spring, summer and fall. I also believe the temperatures run in cycles. This would be something people on the Left Coast wouldn't understand because the climates there never change.

Fluoridation: Fluoridation is part of a Communist, Fascist or New World Order or Illuminati plot to pacify people so that they more easily trust authority and central banker persistent propaganda. This notion is mentioned in Stanley Kubrick's Dr. Strangelove. According to the conspiracies, Fluoridation was designed by the military industrial complex to protect the U.S. atomic weapons program from litigation.

Fluoridation was pioneered by a German chemical company to make people submissive to those in power. Fluoridation was used in Russian prison camps and produces schizophrenia. Fluoridation is backed

¹⁰⁹ Priorities USA Action is the largest Democratic Party super PAC. Founded in 2011, it supported Barack Obama's 2012 re-election campaign. It was the primary super PAC supporting Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign. It focused mainly on high-dollar donors. As of September 2016, it had amassed \$132 million in support of Clinton. The top six donors to the super PAC have given \$43.5 million, which is a third of the money collected by Priorities USA Action in the 2016 election cycle. The super PAC raised \$21.7 million in August 2016, marking its largest monthly fundraising haul

by the aluminum or phosphate industries as a means of disposing of some of their industrial waste. Fluoridation is a smokescreen to cover society's failure to provide dental care to the poor. Fluoridation researchers are accused to be in the pay of corporate or political interests as part of the plot. Specific anti-fluoridation arguments change to match the spirit of the time; as do most theories. For example, before it was global warming it was global cooling.

There are only a few countries that fluoridate their water supplies, the United States, the UK, Canada, and Australia. Although it is done for health reasons and to prevent tooth decay in the population numerous conspiracy theorists have generated resistance by claiming that the water fluoridation is all part of a shady mind-control scheme put on either by communists or some other insidious elite.

History Conspiracy Theories: Some New Chronology theories, such as the phantom time hypothesis of Heribert Illig and the Fomenko-Nosovsky chronology, claim that the conventional dating of historical events is incorrect. The historical timeline has been purposely distorted by powerful shady interests. The phantom time hypothesis is a historical conspiracy theory asserted by Heribert Illig. First published in 1991, the hypothesis proposes a conspiracy by the Holy Roman Emperor Otto III, Pope Sylvester II, and possibly the Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII, to fabricate the Anno Domini dating system retrospectively, so that it placed them at the special year of AD 100. The purpose was to rewrite history to legitimize Otto's claim to the Holy Roman Empire.

Illig believed that this was achieved through the alteration, misrepresentation, and forgery of documentary and physical evidence. According to this scenario, the entire Carolingian period, including the figure of Charlemagne, would be a fabrication, with a "phantom time" of 297 years (AD 614–911) added to the Early Middle Ages. The proposal has found no favor among mainstream medievalists. The bases of Illig's hypothesis include:

- The scarcity of archaeological evidence that can be reliably dated to the period AD 614–911, the perceived inadequacies of radiometric and dendrochronological methods of dating this period, and the over-reliance of medieval historians on written sources.
- The presence of Romanesque architecture in tenth-century Western Europe, suggesting the Roman era was not as long ago as conventionally thought.

The relation between the Julian calendar, Gregorian calendar and the underlying astronomical solar or tropical year. The Julian calendar, introduced by Julius Caesar, was long known to introduce a discrepancy from the tropical year of around one day for each century that the calendar was in use. By the time the Gregorian calendar was introduced in AD 1582, Illig alleges that the old Julian calendar should have produced a discrepancy of thirteen days between it and the real (or tropical) calendar. Instead, the astronomers and mathematicians working for Pope Gregory XIII had found that the civil calendar needed to be adjusted by only ten days. (The Julian calendar day Thursday, 4 October 1582 was followed by the first day of the Gregorian calendar, Friday, 15 October 1582). From this, Illig concludes that the AD era had counted roughly three centuries which never existed.

The most difficult challenge to the theory is through observations in ancient astronomy, especially those of solar eclipses cited by European sources prior to 600 AD, when phantom time would have distorted the chronology. Besides several others that are perhaps too vague to disprove the phantom time hypothesis, two in particular are dated with enough precision to disprove the hypothesis with a high degree of certainty. One is reported by Pliny the Elder in 59 AD and one by Photius in 418 AD. Both of these dates and times have confirmed eclipses. In addition, observations during the Tang Dynasty in China, and Halley's Comet, for example, are consistent with current astronomy with no "phantom time" added. Archaeological remains and dating methods such as dendrochronology refute, rather than support, "phantom time."

The Gregorian reform was never purported to bring the calendar in line with the Julian calendar as it had existed at the time of its institution in 45 BC, but as it had existed in AD 325, the time of the Council of Nicaea, which had established a method for determining the date of Easter Sunday by fixing the Vernal Equinox on March 21 in the Julian calendar. By 1582, the astronomical equinox was occurring on March 10 in the Julian calendar, but Easter was still being calculated from a nominal equinox on March 21. In 45 BC, the astronomical vernal equinox took place around March 23. Illig's "three missing centuries" thus

correspond to the 369 years between the institution of the Julian calendar in 45 BC, and the fixing of the Easter Date at the Council of Nicaea in AD 325.

If Charlemagne and the Carolingian dynasty were fabricated, there would have to be a corresponding fabrication of the history of the rest of Europe, including Anglo-Saxon England, the Papacy, and the Byzantine Empire. The "phantom time" period also encompasses the life of Muhammad and the Islamic expansion into the areas of the former Roman Empire, including the conquest of Visigoth Iberia.

This history too would have to be forged or drastically misdated. It would also have to be reconciled with the history of the Tang Dynasty of China and its contact with Islam, such as at the Battle of Talas. The New Chronology is a pseudohistorical theory which argues that the conventional chronology of Middle Eastern and European history is fundamentally flawed, and that events attributed to the civilizations of the Roman Empire, Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt actually occurred during the Middle Ages, more than a thousand years later.

The central concepts of the New Chronology are derived from the ideas of Russian scholar Nikolai Morozov (1854–1946), although work by French scholar Jean Hardouin (1646–1729) can be viewed as an earlier predecessor. However, the New Chronology is most commonly associated with Russian mathematician Anatoly Fomenko although published works on the subject are actually a collaboration between Fomenko and several other mathematicians. The concept is most fully explained in ***History: Fiction or Science?*** originally published in Russian.

The New Chronology also contains a reconstruction, an alternative chronology, radically shorter than the standard historical timeline, because all ancient history is "folded" onto the Middle Ages. According to Fomenko's claims, the written history of humankind goes only as far back as AD 800, there is almost no information about events between AD 800–1000, and most known historical events took place in AD 1000–1500.

The New Chronology is rejected by mainstream historians and is inconsistent with absolute and relative dating techniques used in the wider scholarly community. The majority of scientific commentators consider The New Chronology to be pseudoscientific or as many refer to it, as junk science.

The BP Oil Spill Conspiracy: I had thought I had heard it all. There are some conspiracies out there with some evidence to back them up. There are others that cause me to lose faith in humanity when I was sure I had no more faith to be lost. From JFK, to 9/11, if you don't live under a rock, you're probably familiar with more than a few. When I first heard of the BP Oil Spill Conspiracy, my eyes rolled into the back of my head as hard as when I heard of the Reptilian Conspiracy. What could anyone possibly have to gain by causing an oil spill? Unfortunately, the more I did research, the more I came to find that this wasn't a Conspiracy Theory, but more like Conspiracy Fact.

Follow the money: their stocks. Just weeks before the spill, anyone with a legitimate investment in the company; for example, CEO Tony Chapman, Goldman Sachs, and Obama's Vanguard, conveniently sold off a good portion of their stocks. Making them some of the very few who didn't end up broke for investing with BP. If that's not enough to raise your eyebrows, I have the red flag of all red flags. Halliburton. It's that same energy company that used to be run by Dick Cheney, and somehow manages to put its name in to more sketchy scenarios than a meth addicted crack whore. Halliburton was in charge of reinforcing the oil well with cement when the rig blew, and they knew it was faulty weeks before the disaster, but that's not the only job they were invested in. Halliburton also purchased the Boots and Coots cleaning company, one of the largest in the world, the same company that was hired to clean up the spill, just 11 DAYS before the oil spill. With Boots and Coots contracted to BP, Halliburton started making money right away. In fact, the company's profits increased 83% in just 3 months following the Gulf Oil Crisis.

What a perfect example of Crisis Capitalism. We create the problem, so we can sell you the solution. Screw the people that live there, the wildlife, the historic value to our nation. It's all about the rich getting richer. If that doesn't piss you off enough, let's look at how they are cleaning up the spill. "Editor's note: If you want to read about BP, Whale Blow-up, Fill the Whale and operation Frogman, see this. They were using a dispersant called Corexit dropped into the water from airplanes. Not only is this system highly ineffective, but it is also highly toxic. The dispersant simply breaks down the oil, and it sinks to the ocean

floor, where it continues to wash up daily with the tide, making the cleaning process potentially never ending. Never mind the damage to be caused by whatever washes out to sea. But I guess BP and Halliburton feel that if you can't see it, it's not there.

The toxicity of Corexit is far more disturbing than its inefficiency. After weeks of public outcry, the EPA finally did, what it always had the power to do; put the people's interest ahead of the corporation. It released an ingredients list detailing several toxic chemicals, some of which can be tied to illness of clean-up workers in the Exxon Valdez in 1989. It is also well documented that the EPA told BP to stop using Corexit and find a less toxic alternative.

What did BP have to say to that? In a matter of polite words...Fuck Off. Remind me why our governments projected spending for 2013 is 6.6 Trillion Dollars? That's almost 12 million dollars a minute. I could write BP a nicely worded letter asking them to please oh please stop poisoning us. It's the government's job to put the boot of America right up their asses. Not these silly little lawsuits that seem like a lot of money to us, but to the eyes of a billion-dollar corporation, it's really just small change. If you haven't had enough conflict of interest, BP is also connected to Corexit, which is why they refused to stop using it. The executive director for Nalco, the company that makes Corexit, was an 11-year board member for BP. Does anyone have shame anymore? Everyone connected to the oil rig had something to gain from this disaster.

These people, politicians and corporate CEOs have caused untold damage to an entire region, all for a profit. They should be in jail and the whole incident was covered up. But it seems in America we treat criminals differently. If you wear a three-piece suit and have enough money in the bank, you can get away with just about anything. If the rest of us committed the same crime, we all be doing life in prison.

Coca-Cola Conspiracy: A number of people believe that Coca-Cola intentionally developed Santa Claus's traditional red suit to match the color closely associated with Coca-Cola's product.

A theory claims that The Coca-Cola Company intentionally changed to an inferior formula with New Coke with the intent of driving up demand for their classic product, later reintroducing it for their financial gain. Alternatively, people believe the switch was made to allow Coca-Cola to reintroduce "classic" Coke with a new formulation using less expensive corn syrup. Donald Keough, president of Coca-Cola, replied to this charge: "The truth is, we're not that dumb, and we're not that smart."

The New Coke campaign of the early 80's was considered one of the biggest marketing failures ever. Well, it's not. It is in fact one of the most brilliant and immoral marketing strategies in history. This is all true, just look on any can of Coke. In the 1980's when Bill Cosby declared that Coke would change its formula, it was a huge scam to save Coke money. You see, the Coca-Cola corporation never dreamed that people would like New Coke. What they wanted was to release a substitute Coke product with a noticeably different taste. They would keep this on the market until all of the old Coke was sold and people couldn't get it anymore.

Eventually, Coke co. claimed that people missed old Coke and demanded its return. As a consequence, Coke vowed to rerelease the original Coke as Coke Classic. They never did. What they did do was bring back the original recipe, but with corn syrup instead of sugar. Everyone would have noticed if they had just made the switch directly. Coke would have been forced to return to the original, more expensive, product. But since Classic Coke tasted passably similar to old Coke, people just assumed it was the same, since no one had had any in so long.

So now one can only get original Coke in the US on Passover; look for Kosher for Passover Coke from about mid-March, it will either say Kosher for Passover (KP), or just look for Hebrew letters **קֹשֶׁר** . Since corn is not kosher for Passover, they release the true original formula with sugar. In Europe, Coke is still made with real sugar

The Coca-Cola symbol is perhaps the most well-known of Capitalism, along with Starbucks and McDonalds. Coca-Cola, or Coke, is manufactured by the Coca-Cola Company in Atlanta, Georgia. It was originally created as a medicine and evolved to become the world's most popular carbonated soft drink. The two main ingredients are kola nuts and coca leaves. The exact recipe remains a trade secret. The Coca-Cola Company sells the concentrate to bottlers in the U.S.A., who then add water and sweeteners before selling it to retailers. In 2014 Coke was sold in over two hundred countries worldwide.

When I was serving in the Middle East, Pepsi products were forbidden in some countries because Pepsi was supposedly owned by Jews, whereas Coke was owned by non-Jews. Needless to say, Pepsi was difficult to come by. Although we were able to get Mt. Dew without any problems.

In 2015 Coke started backing a non-profit organization called the Global Energy Balance Network. This organization promotes the idea that Americans focus too much on what they eat and drink and should be paying more attention to exercise. This can be stated for exactly what it is. Coca-Cola was trying to deflect attention away from the role their product obviously plays in obesity and its related diseases. The scientists associated with the organization stated that Coca-Cola had no say in the message given out to the public and had been transparent in their funding right from the start.

This was later found to be false. The group's website also omitted mention of Coke's backing until Dr. Yoni Freedhoff, an obesity expert at the University of Ottawa, wrote to the organization to inquire about its funding. Dr. Blair said this was an oversight that had been quickly corrected. "As soon as we discovered that we didn't have not only Coca-Cola but other funding sources on the website, we put it on there... Does that make us totally corrupt in everything we do?"

The conspiracy here is just a Corporation funding an organization where their interests happen to align, as Coke is coming under increasing pressure as the public become more aware of the dangers of sugary foods and High Fructose Corn Syrup ("HFCS") in particular. In the last twenty years, the consumption of sugary drinks by American citizens has gone down by twenty-five percent. The influence that major food corporations have on apparently neutral health organizations is well documented, with strange funding arrangements and even reports of dietitians being bribed in order to present unhealthy snacks in a healthy way. Coca-Cola are now going even further, recruiting top scientists to promote their product for them

The most probable theory about Coke is one involving the now infamous High Fructose Corn Syrup. Holistic experts and the organic health movement, in general, are strongly opposed to HFCS, prevalent in practically all processed foods. The majority of corn now manufactured in the U.S is genetically modified, and this is what is credited with the enormous surplus of corn. As the theory goes, the introduction of HFCS into the food supply was a great way for the corn farmers to make money and is a cheaper alternative for the producers, as well as giving the appearance of being more healthy than conventional sugar.

Some claim that "New Coke" was an excellent marketing ploy introduced solely for the purpose of adding an extra ingredient to the recipe: High Fructose Corn Syrup. In the 80s Coke brought out a new flavor of Coke, called "New Coke." The idea was that Coca-Cola knew that no one would ever like the taste of New Coke. When the old supply of Coke ran out, people started demanding the release of old Coke, known as "Coke Classic." And they brought it back.

While this theory may or may not be true, it is true that HFCS was not an ingredient before the marketing of New Coke and was added as an ingredient when they went back to Coke Classic. It is still possible to get Coke original with sugar instead of HFCS. Corn is not kosher on Passover and the true formula is released for this date, the original formula. In Europe sugar is still used and HFCS is not an ingredient. And HFCS was and still is cheaper than cane sugar.

However, the reality of claims that the entire marketing campaign was released to introduce HFCS without anyone knowing is much more mundane, and the opposite of what is claimed above. The Coca-Cola Manufacturing Company needed to address the fact that independent tests consistently showed that people preferred the taste of Pepsi, their main rivals, against Coke. In response to this, they formulated New Coke, and independent tests showed that it was significantly preferred to Coca-Cola Classic and Pepsi.

This was what was really behind the "ploy," as before the introduction of New Coke tests showed that American citizens actually preferred Pepsi against Coke Classic. However, in a bizarre twist, the public wanted Coke Classic back, because of the automatic tendency that old is always better than new, and Coke Classic formed an integral part of American identity. It was not to stand. The President of Coca-Cola Donald Keough publicly stated that:

“The simple fact is that all the time and money and skill poured into consumer research on the new Coca-Cola could not measure or reveal the deep and abiding emotional attachment to original Coca-Cola felt by so many people . . . “

Interestingly, New Coke, now known as Coke II, has now faded away, highlighting the effect advertising and cultural conditioning have on all aspects of the psyche, the power of mental associations clearly triumphing over actual taste. Usually, with these claims, it is best to simply take the middle path between two extremes. As Keough later stated: “Some critics will say Coca-Cola made a marketing mistake. Some cynics will say that we planned the whole thing. The truth is we are not that dumb, and we are not that smart.”

The primary ingredients of Coke are primarily water, a wee bit of flavoring, caffeine, salt and sugar. A rather simple theory is that caffeine is a stimulant as well as a diuretic which makes you urinate. The 55 mg of sodium per can makes the consumer thirsty. The sugar is used to hide the taste of the salt. The consumer then wants to keep drinking the product due to dehydration. This could be regarded simply as good business, the company not engaging in anything illegal. People are aware of the dangers of Coke at this late stage, and drinking two gallons of coke a day and blaming the Corporation is simply irresponsible.

There are many theories surrounding Coca-Cola and Cocaine. Some allege that the New Coke marketing campaign was introduced in order to get the last vestiges of Cocaine from the product before the Drug Enforcement Administration cracked down on the Company. Time Magazine did run an article on this idea and it was endorsed by historian Bartow Elmore. It was done at a time when the Reagan administration was running a war on drugs. All credible evidence indicates that the last derivatives of the Coca product was removed from the formula in the twenties.

It is true that the original product, Pemberton’s French Wine Coca, contained coca-ethylene, a mixture of cocaine and alcohol. It was not until 1929 that the formula was perfected, and before this time active compounds could be found in the soda. Cocaine was taken out of the formula due to racially promoted fears which may or may not have a basis in fact. The New York Times reported that: “Anyone with a nickel, black or white, could now drink the cocaine-infused beverage. Middle-class whites worried that soft drinks were contributing to what they saw as exploding cocaine use among African-Americans. Southern newspapers reported that “negro cocaine fiends” were raping white women, the police powerless to stop them.”

While Coke became cocaine free in 1929, it still contains the coca leaf extract. And this is where the heart of the Cocaine conspiracy theory lies. Allegedly Coca-Cola acts as a front for legitimately importing Cocaine into the United States. Apparently, over \$21 billion of Cocaine is imported for processing by the Jersey-based Stephan Corporation, with an arrangement with the DEA who are given a cut of the profits. The merchandise is said to be hauled away to Mallinckrodt, Missouri for processing. While popular on the web this theory is merely speculation.

In 2001 a lawsuit was filed against Coca-Cola and two of their bottling companies. The case was brought jointly by The United Steelworkers Union and the International Labor Rights Fund. Eight members of the United Steelworkers Union were assassinated by “death squads” in the plants in Colombia. Coca-Cola said they had no ties to the bottling plants and that they committed no violation of human rights. Coca-Cola were found to have a 28% ownership in the direct owner of the two plants, FEMSA.¹¹⁰

The killings were not disputed and did severe damage to the image of Coca-Cola. It cannot be disputed that the massacres of union workers in Columbia happen regularly, and it is the most dangerous place to organize in the world. Infowars, killercoke.org and the Stop Killer Coke campaign did a good job at highlighting how dangerous it is to organize a union in Colombia and how terrible it was for the families of the union victims, including orphaned children and estranged spouses. Horrific as it is, however, there is no definitive link between Coke and the murders. It seems inherently risky for Coca-Cola to purchase the

¹¹⁰ Fomento Económico Mexicano, S.A.B. de C.V., doing business as FEMSA, is a Mexican multinational beverage and retail company headquartered in Monterrey, Mexico. It operates the largest independent Coca-Cola bottling group in the world and the largest convenience store chain in Mexico. It is also the second largest shareholder of Heineken International.

services of the paramilitary in Colombia to go around mass murdering union workers. The question in the court case was whether or not Coca-Cola was responsible for the actions of the bottling plants, and a US federal court found that it was not.

However, the campaign against Coke is not to be taken lightly and has gained considerable traction. Being a symbol of Capitalism may have once been good for generating revenue. Now Coke is targeted as a punching bag for anyone to vent their capitalist anger upon, a symbol of all that is wrong with the world and everything that is wrong with American health. Colombia Vice President Juan Carlos Galvis has stated that: "If we lose this fight against Coke, first we will lose our union, next we will lose our jobs, and then we will all lose our lives!"

A similar court case ensued in 2010 after trade unions and their families were harassed, raped and murdered in Guatemala in connection with Coca-Cola bottling plants. In Turkey in 2005 over one hundred Coca-Cola workers who unionized had their contracts terminated. While protesting, Turkish riot police attacked the protesters who had assembled peacefully. In Mexico, Coca-Cola has been shown to have short changed the Mexican government, fire employees who refuse to carry out illegal activities and cheat Mexican workers out of their money.

On top of this, they allegedly negotiated 27 water concessions from the Mexican government, eight of which are for the right to dump toxic waste into the waters, and 19 for the extraction of water from aquifers and rivers, some of which belong to indigenous peoples. In India, suicide rates among farmers are on the rise due to the Coca-Cola related destruction of their livelihoods. The maneuvers that Coca-Cola uses too much underground water which results in a dry surface where crops cannot grow. In El Salvador and China, Coca-Cola is linked to slave labor and child labor.

Multiple reporters have claimed that in China, in particular, workers toil in awful conditions for slave wages. While individually these claims may falter, the sheer level of international consistency to the reports of Human Rights abuse at the hands of Coca-Cola bottling plants needs to be investigated. While it is not conclusive that Coca-Cola organizes actual attacks on union workers, it would surely be more appropriate for courts to rule that Coca-Cola is responsible for the actions of its bottling plants. This would ensure that the killings stop whether it is directly responsible or not.

The link between Coca-Cola and Scientific organizations is ominous. The public relies on health advice from independent groups in order to gain information about what to consume, and this could be the start of a dangerous trend. If the public cannot get decent health advice due to Corporate manipulation, then society is in a precarious position.

Coca-Cola is a dangerous organization. Aside from the usual claims involving Illuminati symbolism and Cocaine in the beverage, there is plenty of real world actual evidence to encourage caution with the company. Studies have shown links between the consumption of HFCS and the emergence of diabetes and fatty liver disease. It is addictive and not good for the body. The sheer number of claims against Coke by different organizations in different countries, as well as investigative reporters is cause for concern. While there is no conclusive link or findings, to say that Coke may have committed any criminal activity is naive in the extreme given the sheer amount of controversy generated.

It seems that those who engage in conspiracy theories involving Coca-Cola need to get a life. They have way too much time on their hands and need to spend their time on real issues instead of speculation involving corporations such as Coke, Pepsi, Fast foods, big box stores, banks, energy companies, and other capitalist corporations who provide goods and services to American citizens. Most of these protesters are leftists who are anti-capitalists who would like nothing better to destroy the free market system in the US.

Digital TV Transition Conspiracy Theories: Some theorists claim that forced transition to digital television broadcasting is a practical realization of the "Big Brother" concept. They claim that miniature cameras and microphones are built into set-top boxes and newer TV sets to spy on people. Another claim describes the use of mind control technology that would be hidden in the digital signal and used to subvert the mind and feelings of the people and for Subliminal Advertising.

As many know, the long-awaited and once-delayed transition from analog to digital television broadcasting finally took place. Those who had the outdated rabbit ears antennas had to either buy a converter box or invest in cable or satellite TV services.

In the US, the DTV transition was mostly about freeing bandwidth that was sold at auction to communications interests, so the TV stations could transmit High Definition and remain competitive to cable stations and the cinema. Canada, to protect the US spectrum that was sold, and to free their own bandwidth, would have to transition also.

Cable is a closed system, so broadcast and wireless interests have no bearing on their digital transition, which is only to free bandwidth from analog channels, so more digital and HD channels could be provided, or faster internet and phone service.

The Government cannot, at your receiver, control what you watch. If they wanted that control, they would only have to commandeer TV stations and broadcast what they want viewers to see. All the government does, at most, is minimally regulate content, and force some broadcasters to carry some programming. DTV receivers do have Emergency Alert System (EAS) capabilities but those are local however. Spying, either with cameras in the boxes, or what you watch on TV, are just urban myth.

The program has been criticized from various quarters, which was a contributing factor behind the transition being pushed back from earlier in 1998. Sometimes though, commentary on the DTV transition went beyond mere criticism and veered into the realm of those who think that the moon landing was faked, that 2pac is still alive, and that the second gunman on the grassy knoll was taking orders from Castro. That's right, conspiracy theorists!

Those endless public service announcements reminding us all of the previous February switchover date had become so popular with TV viewers that the government and broadcasters decided to turn the estimated 6.5 million homes left in the U.S. that still weren't ready for the switch to ultimately roll over and go along with the Obama Administration's push to delay the digital TV transition from Feb. 17 to June 17, 2009.

Apparently, the administration and some consumer advocacy groups were determined to make sure that every single home in the U.S. that has a television set would be ready for the future. This would be about a total universe of an estimated 110 million homes, according to the Consumer Electronics Association. Granted, surveys from Nielsen showed that many of those homes lacking converter boxes, or the coupons to buy them, were populated by low-income residents and senior citizens, and Obama believed that everyone deserved every chance to get hooked up; the same as he believed that everyone deserved an Obama phone. But US\$1 billion of broadcaster and government money had already been spent on the awareness campaign that has brought viewers those public service announcements (PSAs). Families and friends of those lagging in the transition effort should have been given the chance to help out, in addition to church groups and private aid agencies.

But others among you can debate that particular approach to this problem. For this unrepentant geek, my annoyance is based on having to wait another four months to see if yet another promise of digital technology will be fulfilled, or scuttled, by those who bring it to us.

If we remember the excitement over HD radio, in 2002, the technology that was going to spice up our morning commute by bringing us crystal-clear audio and multicasting technology in our cars. Then the hand of government reached out and touched a company called "Ibiquity;" the FCC made it the only approved technology for in-band digital signals on existing AM and FM radio.

Provided we had the right kind of radio, our cars would be able to receive several versions of the same radio station signal; 102.1a, 102.1b, etc. One version would be the main signal, the one we've listened to for so many years. Another version would be all traffic reports, another would be all news, yet another would be commercial-free music. There would be more information crossing the digital readout on our car radios; which song, which artist, what year it came out, the latest headlines, stock quotes, sports scores. An application called "iTunes tagging" would allow instant purchases of that catchy tune you keep hearing.

Yet here we are, entering the fifteenth year of the HD rollout, and that buzz still has some static in the signal. The latest estimates as reported by Reed Business Information from Consumer Electronics Show had 600,000 HD radios in U.S. cars and homes. That was nearly double from the end of 2007, but lousy economics in the radio industry and a lack of consumer awareness are combining to keep the technology from hitting the kind of acceptance levels that were initially advertised. Out of 13,500 total AM and FM

radio stations nationally, just over 1,800 were broadcasting a digital signal, and about 900 were multicasting more than one channel.

In the 2005, Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas that trumpeted the coming showdown between free HD radio and subscription-based satellite radio; That pretty much dealt a deathblow to HD radio, considering what happened with the government-approved merger of Sirius/XM in 2014. Now almost every new car has an introductory subscription to satellite radio which they renew once the free subscription runs out because satellite radio is so much better and clearer than either HD or analog. Sirius/XM has finally decided which channels to keep and which to throw away post-merger and is offering up new tier-based subscription plans that give subscribers more. Meanwhile, Internet radio applications are now available for certain smartphones, including Apple's iPhone.

There was more specificity about the promise of digital and satellite radio than has been promoted by broadcasters and the government with its digital TV rollout. Like HD radio, digital TV would allow for multicasting, as is already seen in some markets. The PBS station in Seattle, offers a perfect example of how multicasting can serve the community; one digital channel is for the Spanish-language V-me Network, another channel broadcasts cooking and travel shows.

Digital technology also offers the chance for viewers to talk back, vote and shop via their TV sets. Potential applications for social networks, e-commerce and advertising revenue abound. But interactivity and multicasting are strangely absent from the first round of PSAs that are now clogging up broadcast channels. The benefits talked about in these spots focus mostly on enhanced picture and audio; the senior citizens targeted commercials for medicines, wheelchairs, flashlights and on and on have taken over the broadcast television market.

They always let us know that these commercials are always real people and not actors. Of course, real people must read the script just like actors do. For example, medicines; "If you have moderate to severe (fill in the blank disease) like I do, talk to your doctor about (fill in the blank medicine.) Another one I hate is the one with all the acronyms; I have (fill in the blank disease) one of the many pieces in my life. So I take (fill in the blank medicine). ... If you have the symptoms of (fill in the blank disease) talk to your doctor about (fill in the blank medicine). All I can say is thank goodness for DVR.

Subliminal Advertising Conspiracy Theories: Subliminal advertising is the act of sneaking images or messages into product advertisements. The purpose is to affect the behavior of consumers (ex. makes consumers want to buy the product being advertised) without the consumers even noticing the message or image. If you take a look at what are considered to be subliminal ad examples, you will notice that many of them are linked to sex and power. Advertisers do this to help products sell better.

People still question whether or not advertisers sneak subliminal messages into their advertisements on purpose. For the many people who do believe that advertisers do this, some think that the hidden messages work on consumers. These people may go by the fact that more recent experiments have shown that subliminal messaging can affect people's behavior in small ways. Others believe that subliminal advertising does not work on consumers. These people do not think that the messages are advanced enough change the behavior of consumers.

There are examples of subliminal advertising from mundane to the weird. I don't believe that it does exist. I've listened to the phonograph records played backwards, seen the commercials they played in drive-in theaters. I personally have seen many, many advertisements and have never seen one that made me go out and buy a product. In fact, at one time I flirted with teaching English at one point in my life. I always tried to do a unit on the language of advertisement, argument, and propaganda. I always got in trouble with administrators because they felt my time should be spent on building reading and writing skills. Anyway, I felt my students should be aware of the strategies to get people to believe advertisements, arguments, and propaganda. I don't know how many of my students understood or even accepted my lessons but I tried.

As we know it, the first use of subliminal messages in ads was back in 1957. This was when the words, "Eat Popcorn" and "Drink Coca Cola," were inserted into a theatre film by market researcher, James Vicary. The purpose was to increase popcorn and Coca Cola sales without the audience members noticing the words pop up on the screen. Vicary lied about the results, saying that there was an 18.1% increase in Coke sales and a 57.8% increase in popcorn sales. Now no one really goes to theaters or even drive-ins, nor

do they play records anymore. Liberal people believe the liberal media and conservative people only believe conservative media, and no one knows how to present an argument any more. Even on the talk show circuit and news programs people just yell at each other and try to overpower each other with ad hominins.

Alternating Current Power Conspiracy: the voltage and current can be manipulated to be 'wattless' in other words, recording no consumption. While early utility supply meters may have been fooled by phase-changing devices, this ruse was discovered and remedied in the mid-20th century. The devices still appear from time to time, but suppliers or users may risk prosecution by regulation agencies. Nicola Tesla was a Serbian inventor, engineer and physicist. It is arguable that there are more conspiracy theories linked to Nicola Tesla than anyone else in history. The claims have grown with time and most are exaggerated.

Tesla is best known for his invention of Alternating Current ("AC"). He worked with Thomas Edison in 1884 before striking out on his own. It is becoming generally accepted that Edison was financially tight with business associates and that he kept renegeing on agreements with Tesla. This forced Tesla to partner with two other businessmen and formed Tesla Electric Light & Manufacturing. Over 300 patents were attributed to Tesla in his lifetime in over 25 countries. Many of his patents were for futuristic and far-reaching concepts. Of course, the conspiracy theorists maintain that more efficient versions of renewable energy technologies such as solar cells and biofuels; and energy-consuming technologies such as electric vehicles are being suppressed by the auto makers, and the energy companies.

Some free energy devices imply it is possible to harness perpetual motion which conflicts with the universally accepted physical laws of conservation of energy which allow energy to change form, but not to be either created or destroyed.

Others claim to access novel or occulted power sources such as the actual source hypothesis by Nikola Tesla based on naturally occurring potential differences caused by photon interaction with Earth's atmosphere at different altitudes. His Arnccliffe Tower demonstrated that a structure of sufficient dimensions, or alternatively a machine to electrically vibrate the Earth enough to harness useful power would be extraordinarily uneconomic. Photons are however a genuine power source and are exploited by photovoltaics. Similarly, cold fusion while not fundamentally proven impossible, is not accepted as established or even regarded as potentially viable by the scientific community at large. The scientific community usually regards all claims of and research into free energy technology as pseudo-scientific.

He was also hired by George Westinghouse for a short time in a consultancy capacity. His AC current fought against Thomas Edison's Direct Current (DC) in what became known as the "War of Currents." There were many legal battles involving patents over technology, and many large Corporations took an interest. Tesla was a futurist and his fans today proclaim that his work was instrumental to all modern technology. He was the first to propose wireless communication, x-rays and radio remote control.

Tesla would live most of his life in New York Hotels and used the money he earned from his patents to finance his own projects. Tesla did not have time to act on his many ideas. Some of his research did not fit into the early 20th century, so he contented himself with publishing his ideas without a patent, including solar panels, a rocket engine design, an ultra-high vacuum and directed beams. Other ideas were simply written down with no intent to patent or publish. Some of his wilder theories were said to touch upon time travel, invisibility, antigravity and free energy. Tesla was just a man ahead of his times.

B. A. Behrend, distinguished author and engineer, made the following statement about Tesla: "Were we to seize and to eliminate the results of Mr. Tesla's work, the wheels of industry would cease to turn, our electric cars and trains would stop, our towns would be dark, our mills would be dead and idle."

Free Energy was at the heart of Tesla conspiracies and features on most of the more far-flung conspiracy theories. As the theory goes, "The Powers That Be" are opposed to free energy at all costs. Free energy would result in the empowerment of the individual. Because everything is related to energy, if energy were free, there would be no more electric or oil bills. Devices would be manufactured which completed much manual labor. And this free energy could be applied to diseases of the mind and body.

Thus, everyone would be richer, not tied down to corporate jobs and debt, and as such would engage in positive processes which would be relaxing, empowering and rejuvenating. Thus "The Powers That Be" are alleged to have systematically suppressed all devices which purport to not only suggest free energy but

those which improve on the efficiency of existing models, such as the mileage in car engines. Tesla is said to have discovered free energy, but his works were suppressed during his lifetime and stolen after his death.

The free energy conspiracy is linked to the Wardencllyffe Tower AKA Tesla Tower. This tower was initially built by Tesla to compete with Marconi's radio based telegraph system, to transmit messages across the Atlantic to England. It is contended by theorists that the backers of the Tesla Tower project, withdrew funding as this tower would have been able to produce limitless and free power worldwide. Tesla had planned to initially transmit power as well as communications. Tesla was warned that no more than \$150,000 would be used to fund the project by J.P. Morgan, the individual, not the bank.

In the meantime, Marconi had already succeeded in transmitting a letter across the Atlantic. Tesla then proceeded to explain to J.P Morgan that he needed more funding for a different aim than that initially given to J.P. Morgan; he now wanted additional funding to investigate if he could send power in addition to communication. Morgan had already told Tesla he did not want to spend more than \$150,000 and Tesla did not reveal to him initially that he was also intending to investigate whether power could be transmitted.

This theory is often summarized that Morgan did not want citizens receiving free electricity, radio and television and sold the Tesla Tower for scrap when he heard Tesla's ultimate objectives. This is not the case and a gross and inaccurate oversimplification. It is also contended that the belief that transmission of power = free energy is blown completely out of context and is simply not the way the facility was designed. Much of Tesla's life was about providing free energy to the masses via wireless waves with no wires or ground infrastructure.

The patents that Tesla had for free energy are also said by scientists to be completely overblown and taken out of context by free energy conspiracy theorists. Tesla's patent for radiant energy is said to be no more than a patent on electromagnetic energy. Essentially his devices would provide no more free energy device than a solar panel, which converts one form of energy to another. Theorists content that Tesla had plans to tap energy from another dimension or from the "ether" which was of a limitless supply.

However, on the investigation into Tesla's devices and patents, they are energy conversion devices from already known energy supplies. Of course, his theories may have laid the foundations to what we already have including x-rays, wireless communications and alternating currents, which are marvelous inventions and are quite efficient. However, they do not constitute "free" energy, which means that one unit of energy input would result in two or more units of energy output. Many scientists contend that Tesla's works are brilliant enough as they are and there is no need to insert any conspiracy to make them seem more interesting.

One conspiracy theory contends that Nikola Tesla was actually assassinated by Hitler's personal bodyguard and assassin, Otto Skorzeny. This theory stems from Eric Bermen, who alleges that he met the bodyguard by chance who has since been given a new identity. Bermen got the confession from Skorzeny along with a shoe-box of photographic evidence. Tesla was allegedly suffocated on Jan 6th, 1943 by Skorzeny and fellow Nazi Reinhard Gehlen, when Tesla was 86. After the murder, they stole the contents of Tesla's safe, which they gave to Hitler. All these innovations would have been returned to the U.S after the war which they won.

On an unrelated side note, Skorzeny also said that Hitler did not commit suicide, that he helped Hitler escape via plane to Austria and the dental records prove that the double thought to be Hitler was not him, but this information was kept hidden by the Americans.

One online theory by Commander X goes as far as to suggest that Tesla conducted numerous time traveling experiments. Using a combination of high voltage electricity and magnetic fields Tesla is said to have been able to traverse the space-time continuum. He is said to have been able to have seen the past, present and future all at the same time but was simultaneously rendered paralyzed in this state. The New York Herald 1895: "I am afraid," said Tesla, "that you won't find me a pleasant companion tonight. The fact is I was almost killed today. The spark jumped three feet through the air and struck me here on the right shoulder. If my assistant had not turned off the current instantly it might have been the end of me."

Tesla is linked to the Philadelphia experiment, where it is alleged that the US destroyer Eldridge turned invisible in a shipyard in Philadelphia before reappearing. This was a project conducted by the military on the technology given to them by Tesla. The experiment is said to have resulted in many cases

of mental illnesses regarding sailors onboard the vessel. Highly charged, rotating magnetic fields invented by Tesla are said to be the basis for invisibility and this is the technology said to be relied upon by the military in the Philadelphia Experiment.

The work of Nicola Tesla is also reportedly used extensively by the military, including particle beam and radio frequency weaponry. In Tunguska, Siberia in 1908 one of the biggest cosmic impacts to ever take place, occurred. It took decades for the Mysterious Tunguska Explosion to become common knowledge outside of Siberia. The communist Russian government was a largely secretive place at the time. On top of this, the climate in the region was very harsh and it was 20 years before an expedition to the area was mounted by Western scientists. When the team arrived at the epicenter of the blast, they found trees had been stripped of all branches, a feat which requires fast moving shock waves.

The region is extremely remote and sparsely populated. Over 722 sq. miles of forest were devastated, all of which was scorched for decades to come. The blast is estimated at 40 Megatons and the mass of the crashed object was estimated to be at 100,000 tons. What the object was made up of was not clear. Reports from Tatar tribesmen at the time were said to have described a bright, flaming object hurtling towards the ground, with a huge plume of dust and smoke on impact and a deafening noise. Thunderclaps were reported to have been heard up to 500 miles away. A black rain of debris showered the area after the blast and is said to have caused all sorts of climate change all over the planet.

Visibility was decreased worldwide and brilliant sunsets were reported in the aftermath of the impact. This is the only time in earth's recorded history that a large meteorite collided with the earth's surface. It should be noted that the size of this meteorite is estimated to have only been 197 feet in diameter. A huge global effect for such a small rock. Should this impact have occurred a few hours later, it could have hit central Europe, resulting in the deaths of tens of thousands of people, or more if it hit a well-populated city.

Of course, the conspiracy theorists link the explosion to Nikola Tesla. Tesla allegedly was working on a wireless torpedo, a remote-controlled boat he offered to the U.S Navy. The exact specifics behind this theory are unknown, but the two most common variants are that Tesla was testing out his death ray or some type of machine or that his experiments actually attracted a meteorite itself. The timeline of 1908 does not lend weight to the theory. The Tesla Tower was only used until 1907 and most of its operational capacities were disabled in 1903 when Westinghouse company removed most of the equipment. It seems to be a very far flung theory built on an already far-flung theory with no evidence, testimonies, logic or reason involved.¹¹¹ Nikola Tesla did make reference to such devices; however, the idea that they are linked to the devastating explosion in 1908 is ridiculous.

Tesla did work on particle accelerators which aimed to send a concentrated beam of energy in a vertical line without diffusion. It is not known whether or not he was actually successful in building the device, but there is no evidence that he did. Many others claimed to have invented it in the 20's and 30's, such as Guglielmo Marconi and Edwin R. Scott. Tesla claimed until his death that he had successfully invented the death ray which he called tele-force. "this invention of mine does not contemplate the use of any so-called 'death rays.'

Rays are not applicable because they cannot be produced in requisite quantities and diminish rapidly in intensity with distance. All the energy of New York City which was approximately two million horsepower at the time, transformed into rays and projected twenty miles, could not kill a human being, because, according to a well-known law of physics, it would disperse to such an extent as to be ineffectual. My apparatus projects particles which may be relatively large or of microscopic dimensions, enabling us to convey to a small area at a great distance trillions of times more energy than is possible with rays of any kind. Many thousands of horsepower can thus be transmitted by a stream thinner than a hair, so that nothing can resist," He also stated it could: "destroy anything approaching within 200 miles ... and will provide a wall of power in order to make any country, large or small, impregnable against armies, airplanes, and other means for attack." His intention to create a death ray go against the grain in terms of his popular perception as the father of the 21st century. He was trying to make weapons of mass destruction.

¹¹¹ Like most conspiracy theories by people with too much time on their hands

While Tesla is commended by many as the father of physics and the inventor of the 21st century technology, there is a considerable amount of scorn and perhaps even envy of the inventor. It is held that he was a show-off; with wild dreams which never came to fruition, and was well known for his showmanship. He claimed to have had a dynamic theory of gravity which he never published. He criticized Einstein's theory of relativity; however, he never provided any alternate theory.

He tried to establish a free energy device for the masses via electromagnetic induction, but this never came to pass. And some also hold that he tried to sell a device to the military that would end all wars, though this is most probably a conspiracy theory in itself. And it is hard to imagine that the military would simply have any time for such a device when it pretty much sums up what the military is all about. He is criticized as being an eccentric individual with a possible case of Asperger's Syndrome as well as Obsessive Compulsion Disorder. However, these criticisms fail in comparison to what he did do such as provide the world with Alternating Current which runs on to this day, not to mention wireless communications which are also used to this day, including Bluetooth and mobile hotspots. Many of his theories are still in use to the present day.

Most of the theories surrounding Tesla have little standing. Free energy does not hold up, nor does the belief that Morgan refused to continue financing the project due to free energy. There is no evidence that he was killed by Hitler's bodyguard, Otto Skorzeny, other than his testimony. And the claims with regard to the Tunguska Explosion are simply beyond ridiculous; that Tesla was responsible for an asteroid hitting the earth. Claims relating to a disappearing naval destroyer and time travel are likewise ridiculous. And it is possible, yet highly unlikely, that he finished his death ray and sold it to the military. There are actually more Tesla conspiracies than the ones covered here, and they get more and more complex as time goes on.

Tesla's contribution to the world cannot be underestimated. The world runs on the ideas of Nikola Tesla. However, the Tesla haters may have some merit to their arguments. Some of Nikola Tesla's views are chilling. He was an atheist and believed men were no more than machines, governed by external stimuli. He believed in eugenics; Much like Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. Undesirable traits are to be bred out of the human being with social and chemical engineering. Marriage should be made more difficult. No one who is not a desirable parent should not be allowed to produce a child. As brilliant as he was, it is perhaps best that he stuck to the engineering of the mechanical and not the social. To inventing and not to politics. He was proud of his death ray, which would destroy anything approaching within 200 miles. However, to qualify this statement; This would be a defensive device placed around a city as a defense mechanism. Tesla's view was that this was the only way to stop warfare among the human race.

What Tesla and other naïve people don't seem to understand as long as we have Hitler's, Mussolini's, Tojo's, Lenin's, Stalin's, Pol Pots, Saddam Husseins, Assads, Kim Jong Uns, Al-Baghdadi's and other madmen in the world, we will always have war, and the death and destruction that come with it.

"If no country can be attacked successfully, there can be no purpose in war. My discovery ends the menace of airplanes or submarines, but it insures the supremacy of the battleship, because battleships may be provided with some of the required equipment. There might still be war at sea, but no warship could successfully attack the shore line, as the coast equipment will be superior to the armament of any battleship." Such thinking is hopeful... naïve, but hopeful.

RFID chips: Privacy concerns have surfaced regarding the use of RFID chips, which many states require to be implanted into pets as a means of tracking, will ultimately be used to track, spy on, or otherwise harass ordinary citizens; these devices' small size enable them to be discreetly installed into a variety of items someone may carry on their person. My cats each have one implanted just under their skin. They aren't much use as if someone finds a stray, they have to go to the animal shelter or a veterinarian to read the chip in order to get the pet to its rightful owner. So, I don't really know who they could be used with people.

2005 Hurricane Katrina Conspiracy: Several theories are advanced regarding the cause and aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. New Orleans's levees failed because Katrina was just too big; The Army Corps of Engineers tried to spin the story in the aftermath of the storm. The levees were built in 1965, with 1965 technology. So, by the time Hurricane Katrina hit, the levees were 40 years old. But key levees,

including the 17th Street and London Avenue canals in the heart of the city, failed with water well below levels they were designed to withstand.

As the Army Corps of Engineers, eventually conceded, they were breached because of flawed engineering and collapsed because they were junk. Sheet piling, metal planks driven into the ground to reinforce levees and flood walls, didn't run deep enough. Corps geologists botched tests that should have determined soil stability below the levees. The Corps and local levee boards that maintained flood barriers misappropriated funding, and suddenly Katrina became the nation's first \$200 billion disaster.

As criticism of President George W. Bush and his FEMA chief, Michael "Heckuva Job" Brown, spread, the White House began trying to shift blame to local authorities, chiefly Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Blanco (D). The rap was that she had taken too long to declare a state of emergency and then failed to make clear her state's needs.

In fact, Blanco had declared a state of emergency on Friday, Aug. 26, one day before Mississippi's Republican Gov. Haley Barbour and indeed the White House itself. The following Monday, as Katrina made landfall, she was pleading by phone with the vacationing Bush: "Mr. President, we need your help, we need everything you've got." The storm hit on August 28, 2005.

Tens of thousands of New Orleanais were trapped in the Superdome and the city's Convention Center. The Louisiana National Guard had asked FEMA for 700 buses; days later, the agency sent 100, and nearly a week had passed before the last flood survivors were herded aboard. Another line of attack, playing on the stereotype of the shiftless South, was to imply that the citizenry had been too indolent to get out of harm's way.

"The failure to evacuate was the tipping point for all the other things that either went wrong or were exacerbated," Brown told Congress a month after Katrina. In fact, the exodus of an estimated 1.3 million people from southeast Louisiana, roughly 400,000 from New Orleans, was not only one of the largest in U.S. history, but the monumental traffic flow was notably well-lubricated in contrast to previous evacuations.

The film coverage coming out of New Orleans tells a different story. The mayor of New Orleans thought there was no urgency to evacuate. It wasn't until reality hit him in the face that he asked the state of Louisiana. That put the governor under the gun. After the storm hit, it took time for FEMA and other relief agencies to step in and help. One doesn't just call the president on the day the storm hits town and expect the Feds to jump to rescue the south coast.

The traffic that choked the freeways, the people who refused to leave... "I've stayed for every hurricane in the last 30 years, I intend to stay for this one." The reason there were so many people in the street was because they were people who would rather riot and loot than get the heck out of Dodge. When the high water hit many of the stragglers who were in town went to the Superdome for cover. While they were in the Superdome, they trashed the place above and beyond the storm damage.

It took several days and weeks to get everything marshaled and in place. I don't what the governor and mayor thought the government was going to do, but to expect relief to show up at a hour's notice was very naïve. It might be interesting to note the mayor was also democrat. It had been known right after the inauguration of President Bush that the Democrats were to do everything they could do to ensure he was destroyed as president. So, blaming President Bush for the failings of the mayor and the governor was rather pathetic. But that is what Democrats do. They never do anything wrong. They just blame everyone else.

The storm gutted the heart and soul of New Orleans, turning it into a majority-white city: Katrina didn't turn New Orleans white. According to the 2010 census, the city's black majority eroded from 67 % before Katrina to about 60 % afterward, in part because of a significant influx of Hispanics (5%). The post-storm city became a war zone. The Army National Guard was tasked to patrol the streets under martial law.

Unemployment was at 4.7 % in June 2008, as the city rebuilt, it continued rise until it became 8.1 % in 2009. Also 41 % of children under 18 years of age in Orleans Parish live in poverty, more than double the national rate. That is in spite of the fact than many Orleanais were sent to other states where they might have a better chance to get on their feet. However, many of these people refused to return to New Orleans as they were beginning to find success in their new homes.

Racial paranoia and conspiracy theories persist, however, including the conviction that the city's elite blew up the levees to protect rich neighborhoods at the expense of poorer ones, or to drive low-income African Americans out of town. This falsehood, cued by faulty memories of a deliberate levee breach in 1927, gained currency after the storm. Louis Farrakhan claimed that Mayor Ray Nagin (D) told him that the levees had been blown up, a view Nagin felt obliged to disown under questioning on Capitol Hill. Also, Spike Lee, who would later direct a documentary about Katrina, espoused similar ideas. "I don't find it too far-fetched," he said in 2005, "that they try to displace all the black people out of New Orleans."

The story does not stand up to even casual review. Spike Lee along with Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton, and Calypso Louis Farrakhan, are poverty pimps. They have done nothing to help the plight of black people in America. All they do is complain and blame white people for the black man's poverty.

The democrat leadership in Louisiana failed to prepare for the hurricane. There was no conspiracy to kill blacks in New Orleans. It was political incompetence of democrat leadership. The levees failed so extensively during Katrina that it would have taken scores of dynamite charges detonated simultaneously over many miles of levees to decimate flood defenses as thoroughly as they did.

It wasn't racism that caused the National Guard to shoot people in the streets. They were enforcing martial law and a curfew. The people they shot were looters and rioters. Note also that some of the worst-flooded areas, the Lakeview neighborhood among them, were rich areas and predominately white. Also, the other states like Mississippi, Alabama and Texas were able to clean-up and rebuild in a fraction of the time that Louisiana and New Orleans did.

It has been reported that New Orleans's levees are fixed and could withstand another Katrina. After Katrina, Washington committed \$14.5 billion to flood-protection improvements that are supposed to survive a 100-year storm a term that refers to storms that have a 1 percent chance of striking in any given year. But here's the problem: By the Army Corps of Engineers' own accounting, Katrina was not a 100-year storm but an even stronger 400-year storm. And it only sideswiped New Orleans. In other words, the Big Easy still lacks a flood defense remotely strong enough to withstand a direct hit by the really big storms that the gulf can whip up; Katrina-size or even larger.

New Orleansians learned their lesson and are more likely to evacuate sooner. Even as storm tracks show hurricanes on target to plow right up the Mississippi, along the Gulf Coast, most New Orleansians stay put and many bars stayed open. All across the city, neighbors pulled grills out onto the sidewalk and observed another New Orleans tradition: hurricane barbecues. After all, anything in the freezer was likely to go bad as soon as the electricity failed. When Hurricane Isaac hit the Mayor and the Governor worked together in such a way that only 16 people died and the destruction, corruption, and other problems that plagued Katrina were averted.

In 2012, almost seven years to the day after Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, Hurricane Isaac made landfall in southeast Louisiana. For those who were around for the Katrina catastrophe, there was reason to wonder if seven years of healing was going to be undone in an afternoon. That healing was impressive: Tourism and business start-ups were on the rise, the school system had been overhauled, and though the murder rate remained appallingly high, public corruption among politicians and police was under siege. But some things remain the same, among them persistent falsehoods about what happened seven years before. Governor Bobbie Jindal and New Orleans mayor Mitch Landrieu were able to save southeastern Louisiana from the same fiasco that hit during Katrina.

Shakespeare Conspiracy: for years' people have suggested the true identity of the world's greatest author wasn't really Shakespeare of Stratford. Because there isn't a whole lot of biographical information concerning his life which is what led some conspiracy theorists to believe the works were actually written by William Stanley or Francis Bacon. Did you know that there are many scholars who believe that there's a conspiracy surrounding the plays and sonnets of Shakespeare, and that Shakespeare didn't actually write the works attributed to him?

The Shakespeare authorship question is the argument that someone other than William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon wrote the works attributed to him. Anti-Stratfordians, a collective term for adherents of the various alternative-authorship theories, believe that Shakespeare of Stratford was a front to shield the identity of the real author or authors, who for some reason did not want or could not accept

public credit. Although the idea has attracted much public interest, all but a few Shakespeare scholars and literary historians consider it a fringe belief and, for the most part, acknowledge it only to rebut or disparage the claims.

Shakespeare's authorship was first questioned in the middle of the 19th century, when adulation of Shakespeare as the greatest writer of all time had become widespread. Shakespeare's biography, particularly his humble origins and obscure life, seemed incompatible with his poetic eminence and his reputation for genius, arousing suspicion that Shakespeare might not have written the works attributed to him. The controversy has since spawned a vast body of literature, and more than 80 authorship candidates have been proposed, the most popular being Sir Francis Bacon; Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford; Christopher Marlowe; and William Stanley, 6th Earl of Derby.

Supporters of alternative candidates argue that theirs is the more plausible author, and that William Shakespeare lacked the education, aristocratic sensibility, or familiarity with the royal court that they say is apparent in the works. Those Shakespeare scholars who have responded to such claims hold that biographical interpretations of literature are unreliable in attributing authorship, and that the convergence of documentary evidence used to support Shakespeare's authorship: title pages, testimony by other contemporary poets and historians, and official records, is the same used for all other authorial attributions of his era.

No such direct evidence exists for any other candidate, and Shakespeare's authorship was not questioned during his lifetime or for centuries after his death. This Shakespeare conspiracy theory began almost two centuries ago and was recently inflamed by the production of *Anon*, which portrays Shakespeare as a semi-literate, scarcely talented minor actor paid by the genius de Vere, Earl of Oxford, to pass the plays off as his own, as it would have been impossible for a member of the aristocracy to be a playwright in Elizabethan and Jacobean England.

The argument that drives the Conspiracists' position is that the plays contain too much knowledge of foreign and distant places and too much familiarity with court life and the affairs of court to have been written by someone so low down in the social order: the author writes with ease and familiarity about such aristocratic sports as hunting, falconry, tennis and bowling. Other arguments are that the plays have too wide a range of style to have been written by someone without the advanced education that most of the other contenders had, and that Stratford was too parochial and backward a place to have produced one of the greatest literary geniuses of all time.

Indeed, the argument maintains that the other members of the Shakespeare family, including William's parents, wife and daughters, were illiterate and it's impossible that someone with such a facility for language could have grown up and lived a family life in those circumstances. When the advocates of Shakespeare as the author of the plays point out that Shakespeare had a good education in the classics, the Latin language, rhetoric and mathematics at the local grammar school their adversaries say that there is no evidence of his attendance there.

They insist on his having been illiterate. They use the fact that there is no evidence of his handwriting, no letters or documents written by him. There are only six authenticated signatures, which Conspiracists refer to as an illiterate scrawl. They assert that there is no documentary evidence that Shakespeare was a dramatic writer. They maintain that the evidence supports the view of him as a businessman and property owner but nowhere as a writer. His will says nothing about his poems and plays and is phrased in flat, mundane language.

The question of who the author might have been is quite simple: almost all prominent Elizabethans have been mentioned and there are arguments made for their being the author by one Conspiracist or another. Whoever is promoted by one of them is always provided with a reason why he couldn't put himself forward as the author.

The Stratfordists fight back with their own arguments in favor of Shakespeare's authorship. Their case is more than a series of arguments. It's a huge body of evidence. It's pretty overwhelming

so I will summarize it very briefly. It's significant that nearly all Shakespeare scholars and academics believe that the author referred to as 'Shakespeare' was the same William Shakespeare who was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564 and who died there in 1616.

Elizabethan London had scores of playwrights and most of them came from humble backgrounds, sometimes even more humble, than Shakespeare like his friend, Ben Jonson, the son of a bricklayer. No one suggests that someone else wrote Ben Jonson's plays, and neither Ben Jonson nor any other of Shakespeare's contemporaries suggested that their colleague, William Shakespeare, whom they knew well, did not write the plays performed in his name. Moreover, not only did Shakespeare's name appear on the title pages of poems and plays but he was referred to at least twenty-three times in different documents.

Also, there is substantial documentary evidence attesting to the author having been the same Shakespeare whose home was in Stratford. For example, in 1598 Frances Meares named Shakespeare as a playwright and poet in his *Palladis Tamia*, referring to him as one of the authors by whom the 'English tongue is mightily enriched,' and he names twelve plays written by Shakespeare, including one, *Love's Labor's Won*, that has been lost.

A powerful argument in favor of Shakespeare being the author of his plays is that there are records from his lifetime of books of his plays being printed, his authorship being attested to by the official stationers. There are at least three such references, referring to the printing of *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Henry IV Part 2* and *King Lear*, and also to their performances at the Globe.

Mainstream Shakespeare scholars maintain that the convergence of documentary evidence for Shakespeare's authorship: title pages, testimony by other contemporary poets and historians and official records is the same as that for any other author of the time. No such supporting evidence exists for any other candidate, and Shakespeare's authorship was not questioned during his lifetime or for centuries after his death.

Surely there can be no stronger proof of Shakespeare's role of playwright than records of the acknowledgement of that by his friends and colleagues. Score of actors and writers referred to him, identifying him as a writer. After his death, there were several eulogies that spoke of his work by poets like Hugh Holland, Leonard Digges, and most convincing, Shakespeare's friend and workmate, Ben Jonson: *To the Memory of My Beloved the Author, Mr. William Shakespeare and What He Hath Left Us*, published in the First Folio in 1623.

These conspiracy theorists are nothing more than stuck-up elitists. These people haven't changed since Shakespeare's time. Anyone who isn't an Ivy Leaguer, wealthy, politically connected can't possibly have written anything as grand wonderful as *Romeo and Juliet* or any of Shakespeare's plays and poetry. When I first tried to get my work published, I found an agent and he ripped my stuff apart. Most of his criticism had to do with the fact I had gone to a state university instead of Harvard. When I was in graduate school, I took a linguistics class. I had to write a paper on the Proto-Hamito-Semitic Language. I worked on that paper. I worked right to the deadline. I thought I had done a very good job. However, the professor gave me a D on the paper because I had used references to linguists from the Universities of Berlin, Prague, Warsaw, Cambridge, and Oxford. I hadn't used any sources from the Ivy League.

What I wanted to know then and still have never found the answer, is who died and made these elites the be all and end all of academics? We see the same thing in politics. You are good enough to hold office anywhere unless you have Harvard, Yale, Columbia et al on your resume. The last three administrations were all Ivy Leaguers. Two democrats and one republican. Even though the republican was an Ivy leaguer, he was still rejected by not only democrats but by his own party because he came from Texas.

So, we had a governor who was corrupt and some say he did whatever it took to get what he wanted and then cover it up. His administration was known as the Arkansas mafia. Then we had the Texan who didn't let his enemies get him down. The last black president, Obama, 63 scandals and counting. He brought us to the brink of communism and will go down in history as the most corrupt president in American History.

Chemtrail Theory: Cloud-like trails behind aircraft, having the general appearance of contrails, but alleged by conspiracy theorists to be chemical spraying. Boeing Honeywell Uninterruptible Autopilot is a theory that most commercial airliners have been "secretly" fitted with technology that enables agencies such as the CIA to remotely take control of the aircraft, without any input from the flight crew. This theory

is used as explanation in relation to incidents of hijacking such as the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center, or unexplained aircraft disappearances such as Malaysia Airlines MH370.

When the exhaust from a plane's engine hits the cold air, and begins to condense it leaves a vapor trail also known as a contrail. Some people, however, exercising their paranoia are convinced that the government is spraying chemical agents at its citizens from 30,000 feet hence the name, chemtrail. Rumors persist that the 1952 Lynmouth Flood in Devon, England was caused by British government scientists and the British military experimenting with artificial rainmaking or cloud seeding as part of research program known as Project Cumulus.

The resulting floods caused the deaths of 35 people and extensive damage to buildings and the natural landscape. Declassified official documents uncovered by the BBC appeared to lend some credence to the theory and the incident was the subject of a BBC documentary. The chemtrail conspiracy theory is the claim that long-lasting trails, so-called "chemtrails," are left in the sky by high-flying aircraft and that they consist of chemical or biological agents deliberately sprayed for unknown purposes undisclosed to the general public. Believers in the theory argue that normal contrails dissipate relatively quickly and that contrails that do not dissipate must contain additional substances.

These arguments have been dismissed by the scientific community: such trails are normal water-based contrails (condensation trails) that are routinely left by high-flying aircraft under certain atmospheric conditions. Although proponents have attempted to prove that the claimed chemical spraying does take place, their analyses have been flawed or based on misconceptions. The proponents are probably those students who slept in science class. Because of the persistence of the conspiracy theory and questions about government involvement, scientists and government agencies around the world have repeatedly explained that supposed chemtrails are in fact normal contrails.

The term chemtrail is a portmanteau of the words chemical and trail, as contrail is of condensation and trail. Believers in the conspiracy theory speculate that the purpose of the claimed chemical release may be solar radiation management, psychological manipulation, human population control, weather modification, or biological or chemical warfare and that the trails are causing respiratory illnesses and other health problems.

Chemtrail conspiracy theories began to circulate after the United States Air Force (USAF) published a 1996 report about weather modification. Following the report, in the late 1990s the USAF was accused of "spraying the U.S. population with mysterious substances" from aircraft "generating unusual contrail patterns." The theories were posted on Internet forums posted by people like Richard Finke and William Thomas; they were also discussed by late-night radio host Art Bell, starting in 1999. As the chemtrail conspiracy theory spread, federal officials were flooded with angry calls and letters. Suckers who believe everything they hear and see. Then make fools of themselves by writing letters to the editor, calling their congressmen, and late-night talk show hosts.

A multi-agency response attempting to dispel the rumors was published in 2000 by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Many chemtrail believers interpreted agency fact sheets as further evidence of the existence of a government cover-up. The EPA refreshed its posting in 2015.

In the early 2000s the USAF released an undated fact sheet that stated the conspiracy theories were a hoax fueled in part by citations to a 1996 strategy paper drafted within their Air University entitled Weather as a Force Multiplier: Owning the Weather in 2025. The paper was presented in response to a military directive to outline a future strategic weather modification system for the purpose of maintaining the United States' military dominance to the year 2025, and identified as "fictional representations of future situations and scenarios."

The USAF further clarified in 2005 that the paper "does not reflect current military policy, practice, or capability," and that it is "not conducting any weather modification experiments or programs and has no plans to do so in the future." Additionally, the USAF states that the "Chemtrail" hoax has been investigated and refuted by many established and accredited universities, scientific organizations, and major media publications."

The conspiracy theories are seldom covered by the mainstream media, and when they are, they are usually cast as an example of anti-government paranoia. For example, in 2013 when it was made public that the CIA, NASA, and NOAA intended to provide funds to the National Academy of Sciences to conduct research into methods to counter act global warming with geoengineering, an article in the International Business Times anticipated that "the idea of any government agency looking at ways to control, or manipulate, the weather will be met with scrutiny and fears of a malign conspiracies." and mentioned chemtrail conspiracy theories as an example.

This is just one more example of people who won't be persuaded by facts. Their collective minds are made up so don't confuse them with the facts. They are the ones who wear the tin foil hats and sleep under their tables so the government mind control agents can't find them.

"Computer Vs. Human" Chess Game: There is a theory that the "Computer vs. Human" chess game between Russian grandmaster Garry Kasparov and IBM's Deep Blue computer had involved cheating by IBM, to ensure they would achieve a victory that would be widely publicized. This theory is argued by the documentary *Game Over: Kasparov and the Machine*. 1996

Kasparov played a six-game match against IBM's Deep Blue in 1996. Kasparov lost the first game (Deep Blue – Kasparov, 1996, Game 1), the first time a reigning world champion lost to a computer using regular time controls. However, Kasparov regrouped to win three and draw two of the remaining five games of the match, for a convincing 4–2 match victory.

In May 1997, an updated version of Deep Blue defeated Kasparov 3½–2½ in a highly publicized six-game match. Kasparov won the first, lost the second, and drew the next three. The match was even after five games but Kasparov was crushed in Game 6. This was the first time a computer had ever defeated a world champion in match play. A documentary film was made about this famous match-up entitled *Game Over: Kasparov and the Machine*. In that film Kasparov casually says, "I have to tell you that, you know, game two was not just a single loss of a game. It was a loss of the match, because I couldn't recover."

It should be noted however, that in game 6, Kasparov blundered very early into the game. Kasparov cites tiredness and unhappiness with the IBM team's conduct at the time as the main reason. Kasparov claimed that several factors weighed against him in this match. In particular, he was denied access to Deep Blue's recent games, in contrast to the computer's team that could study hundreds of Kasparov's.

After the loss Kasparov said that he sometimes saw deep intelligence and creativity in the machine's moves, suggesting that during the second game, human chess players, in contravention of the rules, intervened. IBM denied that it cheated, saying the only human intervention occurred between games. The rules provided for the developers to modify the program between games, an opportunity they said they used to shore up weaknesses in the computer's play revealed during the course of the match. Kasparov requested printouts of the machine's log files but IBM refused, although the company later published the logs on the Internet. Kasparov demanded a rematch, but IBM refused and dismantled Deep Blue. Kasparov maintains that he was told the match was to be a scientific project but that it soon became apparent that IBM wanted to beat him and nothing more.

Vril Society Conspiracy: which suggests that a secret form of energy, called "Vril," is used and controlled by a secret subterranean society of matriarchal socialist utopian superior beings. A typical suppressed invention story is that of the incredibly efficient automobile carburetor, whose inventor was supposedly killed or hounded into obscurity by petroleum companies desirous to protect their business from an engine that would make their product obsolete. The documentary *Who Killed the Electric Car?* Alleged that electric car technology has been largely suppressed by big oil and gas firms.

The Phoebus cartel set up in 1924 has been accused of preventing technological advances that would have produced longer-lasting light bulbs. The document *Light Bulb Conspiracy* claimed that the Phoebus cartel deliberately limited the expected lifetime of a light bulb to 1000 hours. However, 1000 hours was a reasonable optimum life expectancy for most bulbs. A longer lifetime can be obtained only at the expense of efficiency: more electricity is wasted as heat and less light is obtained. The Vril Society was a secret society of pro-Nazi channelers and psychics who founded their organization based on an English novel called "*The Coming Race*."

In 1871, English politician and novelist Edward Bulwer-Lytton had written the book, "*The Coming Race*," that described a subterranean world inhabited by beings who call themselves "Vril-ya." They had formerly been surface dwellers until a global catastrophe forced them to take up refuge deep in the Earth. The survival of their society was facilitated by their application of an energy force, they referred to as "Vril."

It was supposed by some that Lytton 's book was not altogether a work of fiction. Some claimed that Lytton was privy to secrets of the lost Lemurian and Atlantean worlds. His work presented the idea of a subterranean matriarchal, socialist utopia ruled by superior beings who had mastered this mysterious energy called the Vril Force. The book describes this race of men as psychically far in advance than our own. Thus, a secret society was formed, known as The Vril Society who actually supported the Nazi movement. "This secret society was founded, literally, on Bulwer Lytton's novel *The Coming Race* (1871)."

German oriental scholars and occultists regarded such ancient myths with complete seriousness and during the lull between the First and Second World War, diligent efforts were put forth by both the 'Thule' and the 'Vril' secret societies to transform these myths into a viable technological reality for Nazi Germany. The Nazis would do anything to validate their bogus racial purity theories.

Ideologically, mastery of an occult force such as 'Vril' would not only assure German technical dominance, it would ultimately liberate Germany from any crippling co-dependence upon the international petroleum cartels dominated by Germany's conquerors; the United States and Britain.

During WWII, the Vril Society channeled advanced beings for any knowledge of the "Vril power" described in Lytton's, "*The Coming Race*." The intent was to gain a technological edge in the Nazi movement. Interestingly, that "edge" was funneled to the United States through Operation Paperclip. All of the German rocket technology and developments were absorbed into the US aerodynamics, and the future NASA and space program.

Currency: The substitution of precious metal-based coin currency by paper currency. This process began in the Renaissance, with the beginning of the use of tickets which allowed for people to have a tangible good (such as silver or gold pieces) by paper; a more virtual, but comfortable, medium which the state was committed to provide the equivalent amount of precious metal if such was required.

The Conspiracy theorists tell us that the government wanted to devalue the US dollar. Therefore, they took gold and silver currency out of circulation and replaced it by paper certificates. In recent times companies that sell gold and silver coins make an issue that the paper money is worthless and that is necessary to buy their product in order to have something tangible to purchase goods and services. What they don't understand that in case of an emergency most people won't have gold and silver coinage. Most people will engage in the bartering system the same as they did in the Great Depression.

The Technology Suppression Claims: The scientific community has controlled and suppressed research into alternative avenues of energy generation via the institutions of peer review and academic pressure. Devices exist which are capable of extracting significant and usable power from preexisting unconventional energy reservoirs, such as the quantum vacuum zero-point energy, for little or no cost, but are being suppressed. I've heard similar stories over the years. Cars, energy sources, engines; all sorts of devices that were supposed to save energy, free us from the evil carbon fuels, and cut energy costs. It seems that time after time the big automobile and oil companies trick the inventors and buy up the supposed inventions to keep them off the market. One would think that after a hundred years someone would get smart and not fall for the trick of the big corporations.

Electronic Identity Card: The worldwide implementation of an electronic identity card. This is a good one. I started to hear this one in the 80s. The essence is this. The evil government will make everyone get an electronic card with all of our personal information embedded on it. We'll also get tattooed with a "Mark of the Beast" from the Book of Revelations in the New Testament. This occultist ID number will be 666. They will also get an injection of some type of electronic chip that will track everywhere we go. I put in the same category as CIA mind control devices. This is a crazed nightmare of fundamentalist Bible thumpers. To me are no different than the ones who spread theories about Muslims, Catholics, Jews, and Illuminatis.

The Great Worldwide Blackout: A tremendous disaster will take place when, after a great electrical blackout on a planetary scale, the data of all electronic accounts erase simultaneously. After this event, chaos and poverty will immediately ensue throughout the planet; and civilization will revert to its primitive forms of slavery to survive. This is the last aim of the "secret organization" which has spent centuries guiding this process.

The worldwide blackout will be preceded by partial blackouts that would only be tests and "signals" such as the Emergency Broadcast System (EBS). The government will communicate different phases of the process are being fulfilled to lead up to the final black-out. An example of these partial blackouts would be those that have been produced almost simultaneously in different parts around the world; and, at the beginning of the 21st century, shortly after the September 11, 2001, attacks: the blackouts in the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. This theory is used as the central plot of the 2013 TV series ***Revolution***.

The problem I see in this theory is that most of the world is in the Third World. That means that their economies are such that most of the world still lives in the dark. They have no power grids. They get their lights from kerosene lanterns. So there if there is a world-wide blackout it will mostly concern the 1st world. Even then with occasional power outages most people are ready with lanterns, flashlights, power generators, and other sources of light and power. So the purveyors doom and gloom will be deeply disappointed when the mayhem that is supposed to occur when the power goes out will be anticlimactic.

There are claims about secret experiments known as the Montauk Project conducted at Camp Hero, Montauk, New York. Allegedly, the project was developing a powerful psychological war weapon. The project is often connected to other alleged government projects such as the Philadelphia Experiment and Project Rainbow, both of which involved the use of unified field theory to cloak vessels. Experiments involving teleportation, time travel, contact with extraterrestrials, and mind control are frequently alleged to have been conducted in the camp. Preston B. Nichols has written five books on the subject, including ***Montauk Project: Experiments in time***.

There are many unproven conspiracy theories of varying degrees of popularity, frequently related to but not limited to clandestine government plans, elaborate murder plots, suppression of secret technology and knowledge, and other supposed schemes behind certain political, cultural, and historical events. Some theories have dealt with censorship and excommunication from the law such as Holocaust denial. Conspiracy theories usually go against a consensus or cannot be proven using the historical method and are typically not considered similar to verified conspiracies such as Germany's pretense for invading Poland in World War II.

Chapter 7. Medicine:

The Subject of Suppressed-Invention Conspiracy also touches on the medical realm: proponents of more unlikely forms of alternative medicine are known to allege conspiracy by mainstream doctors to suppress their cures. Such conspiracies are often said to include government regulators, to the extent that a legal decision may be relevant. Some medical conspiracy theorists argue that the medical community could actually cure (like the noted Luigi di Bella's medicines) supposedly "incurable" diseases such as cancer and AIDS if they really wanted to, but instead prefers to suppress the cures as a way of maintaining the multi-trillion dollar "cancer industry."

The costs for long-term treatment are generally higher than for a one-time cure. Other medical conspiracies charge that pharmaceutical companies are in league with some medical practitioners to "invent" new diseases, such as ADD, ADHD, HSV, HPV and even HIV. Traditional, natural and alternative medicines: Many proponents of traditional, natural and alternative medicines claim that pharmaceutical companies and various government agencies conspire to maintain profits by ensuring that the general public uses only modern medicines.

For example, many countries have laws that prevent unproven medicinal claims from being printed on packaging, and advertisements, for medicines. Any substance for which medicinal claims are made are deemed "drugs." Proponents of traditional, natural and alternative medicines often claim that since herbs, and alternative medicines are of natural origin, they are not drugs and that such laws fallaciously define them as drugs in order to control and ultimately limit or prevent their distribution thus ensuring profits for the pharmaceutical industry.

That sounds like the argument for marijuana. Because it is a plant it is natural therefore it is not a drug. They could say the same for tobacco, heroin, cocaine, liquor and other chemical substances. As such the natural industry, don't seem to understand that natural supplements, may be plants but the active ingredients can be classified as drugs. One doesn't always know how much of the active ingredient one is actually ingesting because the dosage is going to be different. Whereas the refined products as easier to dose as they can control the amount of ingredients in the form of capsules and pills.

The Tuskegee Syphilis Study: The United States Public Health Service carried out this clinical study on 400 poor, African-American men with syphilis from 1932 to 1972. During the study, the men were given false and sometimes dangerous medicine, and adequate treatment was intentionally withheld so the agency could learn more about the disease. While the study was initially supposed to last just six months, it continued for 40 years.

Close to 200 of the men died from syphilis or related complications by the end of the study. It has been 25 years since the nation learned that more than 400 black men infected with syphilis went untreated for decades in a federally financed experiment in this rural Southern town laced with sandy roads and pine forests. Yet their families, the wives and children they may have unwittingly exposed to the disease, have remained largely unseen and unheard, bearing in silence a legacy of anger and shame as well as possible damage to their health. In an acknowledgment of the harm that may have been done, the Federal Government, since 1975, has been quietly running a small program that provides medical benefits to family members infected with syphilis.

"You get treated like lepers," said Albert Julkes Jr., 55, whose father was a participant in the project the Government called the Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male. "People think it's the scourge of the earth to have it in your family." Mr. Julkes, a retired customer service supervisor for a gas and electric utility, recounted his father's ordeal as he sat in the kitchen of his home just across the border in Columbus, Ga. "It was one of the worst atrocities ever reaped on people by the Government," he said. "You don't treat dogs that way."

In 1974 the Federal Government began making well-publicized reparations to the men who participated in the experiment, in which they were led to believe they were receiving free medical care, when its actual purpose was to study the long-term effects of untreated syphilis on black men. But since 1975, the Government has also been making amends to some of the families, providing lifetime medical

benefits to the 22 wives, 17 children and 2 grandchildren with syphilis they may have contracted as a direct result of the lack of treatment accorded the men in the study.

"What they deserve is the best medical care we can provide," said Dr. Bill Jenkins, who in 1969, while a statistician with the National Center for Health Statistics in Washington, was among several people who unsuccessfully tried to end the experiment. Dr. Jenkins, who said he was appalled by the experiment and haunted by his unsuccessful effort to halt it, is now an epidemiologist and devotes himself to running the Government's program to provide medical benefits to the men and eligible family members. "I try to give them the care that I would want to give to my mother," Dr. Jenkins said.

In addition to providing care to the family members, the program, at the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, called the Participants Health Benefits Program, also serves the eight surviving men. The program, formerly known as the Tuskegee Health Benefits Program, cost the Federal Government \$2.1 million last year, Dr. Jenkins said. But while the program treats physical ills, the family members' emotional wounds have gone largely unrecognized, some relatives say. The pain of Tuskegee is still very real even among grandchildren of the study participants, some of whom had not even been born when the study was officially ended after its existence was widely reported in the press in 1972.

"I'm angry about it, very, very angry about it," said Carmen Head, whose grandfather, Freddie Lee Tyson, participated in the study. Miss Head, who is 22 and lives in Fairfax, Va., said family members had told her very little about her grandfather's participation. The subject is taboo, particularly with her grandmother, she said, adding, "It's a painful issue in my family."

Miss Head's mother, Lillie Head of Waterbury, Conn., is one of many family members no longer living in the South. Mrs. Head said she had never learned whether her father was one of the more than 400 participants with syphilis or if he was one of some 200 men without syphilis who were in a control group.

"It was something to be ashamed of, so it wasn't talked about," said Mrs. Head, 52, a high school physical education and health education teacher. "We were really very disturbed after we found out my father was a part of it."

Martha Jernigan, 49, a home health aide in Tuskegee, said she has two cousins who are descendants of men in the experiment and knows many other relatives of participants who are living in the area. "They thought we were animals, stupid, that we didn't know better," she said. "Times haven't changed when it comes to blacks."

Herman Shaw, 94, a survivor of the study still living on his family farm in Tuskegee, sat on his front porch on Thursday sifting through photographs of his late wife, Fannie Mae. Mr. Shaw was able to offer one of the few memories of a wife's reaction to learning the truth about the study. "She was somewhat shocked, may I say," he said, "because it was a disease. It wasn't anything that we'd heard about and nobody seemed to know about."

Dr. Vanessa Northington Gamble, a medical historian and physician who directs the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in Medicine at the University of Wisconsin medical school, said such reactions are common among family members. "There is a lot of pain that people still express and feel about what the Government has done to them and their family members, their community," said Dr. Gamble, who has studied the experiment for years and is chairwoman of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study Legacy Committee, a group of experts formed last year to press for an official apology. "I talked to a woman in Wisconsin who knew that I'd been studying this," she recalled. "All of a sudden, she started crying, saying her uncle was also in the study."

The lingering shame and a distrust of the Government may be one reason that the number of family members in the Participants Health Benefits Program has never been high. Originally, 106 men who were in the experiment began receiving benefits in 1974, Dr. Jenkins said, but the number of wives appears never to have been very large. He said that in 1975, at what was probably the peak of participation by wives, only 50 had been tested. Of those, 27 were found to be positive for syphilis and eligible for the program.

In the study, which began in 1932, more than 600 men were recruited by Government health workers, who led them to believe they were receiving free medical treatment. Throughout the 40-year study, the men were never told of the experiment and those with syphilis were never told they were infected. They never received any treatment for the disease, even when the use of penicillin became routine in the 1940's.

When participants died, researchers offered their families free burials in exchange for the rights to do autopsies so they could gather their final data for the study, which researchers say was scientifically flawed from the start. Dr. Jenkins said that when the true nature of the study became known, some family members became so distrustful of the Government that they refused to be tested for syphilis. No effort was ever made to track down sexual partners of the men, other than their wives.

When the study was under way, some wives tried to enroll, believing the project was a reliable source of medical care. When they were turned away, many were upset, according to Dr. Jim Jones, a historian at the University of Houston and the author of "*Bad Blood*" (Free Press, 1993), which historians regard as the definitive account of the experiment. Dr. Jenkins said another reason the number of wives in the program might be low is that the men chosen for the study were supposedly in a latent, non-infectious stage of syphilis, unable to transmit the disease to their wives. That point, however, is still being debated. "It's unclear what stage of the disease the men were at," Dr. Gamble said. "So that brings the issues around to the women and children."

Nowadays, the Tuskegee experiment is so notorious that scientists resist doing anything that could be construed as continuing the so-called research. "No one has ever studied the health consequences to the families, not to my knowledge," Dr. Jenkins said. "We will not compile the data in any way to make an assessment of them as a group. It would seem too much like another study." If such an effort is organized, he added, "I don't want to have anything to do with it."

But Dr. Jenkins said even if researchers knew how many family members were infected with syphilis, there is no way to be certain whether the syphilis was contracted from the men in the study. The test for syphilis is a blood test for antibodies to the disease. A positive result indicates only that a person had syphilis at some point in their lives, with no indication of when or from where the infection arose.

Fred David Gray, a lawyer who has represented the participants in the study since 1972, winning them an out-of-court settlement totaling \$10 million, said that in 1974, as part of that agreement, the Government was ordered to provide lifetime health care for participants as well as some family members. "I hope to see and I think what the men would like to see is some final closure," Mr. Gray said in an interview on Thursday in his Tuskegee office. He said in the last 23 years, he has given out settlement payments to some 6,000 heirs and participants. It was soon after Mr. Gray and some of the survivors of the experiment held a news conference in April to request the Government apology that the White House said one would be forthcoming. Dr. Gamble said the study legacy committee she heads had been pressing for months for an official apology. But Dr. Jenkins said any form of apology should be seen not as an end but as a beginning.

"There's a tendency to believe that African-Americans are reluctant to participate in research because of this one study and I think that belittles the concerns of African-Americans," Dr. Jenkins said. "They are concerned about public health research because they're alienated from American society in any number of ways and this study is the bellwether.¹¹² It's much bigger than just this study and we're going to have to do a lot more work than just apologize for this."

As part of the settlement of a class action lawsuit subsequently filed by the NAACP on behalf of study participants and their descendants, the U.S. government paid \$9 million (unadjusted for inflation) and agreed to provide free medical treatment to surviving participants and to surviving family members infected as a consequence of the study. In 1974 Congress passed the National Research Act and created a commission to study and write regulations governing studies involving human participants.

Within the US Department of Health and Human Services, the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) was established to oversee clinical trials. Now studies require informed consent, communication of diagnosis, and accurate reporting of test results. Institutional review boards (IRBs), including laypeople, are established in scientific research groups and hospitals to review study protocols and protect patient interests, to ensure that participants are fully informed.

¹¹² The lead sheep in a herd of sheep. He's the one that wears a bell and leads the herd. If the shepherd or sheepherder wants to control the herd he must control the bellwether.

In 1994, a multi-disciplinary symposium was held on the Tuskegee study: ***Doing Bad in the Name of Good?: The Tuskegee Syphilis Study and Its Legacy*** at the University of Virginia. Following that, interested parties formed the Tuskegee Syphilis Study Legacy Committee to develop ideas that had arisen at the symposium. It issued its final report in May 1996. The Committee had two related goals: (1) President Bill Clinton would publicly apologize for past government wrongdoing related to the study and (2) the Committee and relevant federal agencies should develop a strategy to redress the damages. A year later on May 16, 1997, President Bill Clinton formally apologized and held a ceremony at the White House for surviving Tuskegee study participants.

Asbestos: Between 1930 and 1960, manufacturers did all they could to prevent the link between asbestos and respiratory diseases, including cancer, becoming known, so they could avoid prosecution. American workers had in fact sued the Johns Manville company as far back as 1932, but it was not until 1962 that epidemiologists finally established beyond any doubt what company bosses had known for a long time; asbestos causes cancer known as mesothelioma. HEW officials testified. As a result of public outcry, the CDC and PHS appointed an ad hoc advisory panel to review the study. It determined the study was medically unjustified and ordered its termination.

Drug Legalization: Some activists and spokespersons for legalization of drugs (especially marijuana) have long espoused a theory that government and private industry conspired during the first half of the 20th century to outlaw hemp, allegedly so that it would no longer provide inexpensive competition to pulp paper and synthetic materials. William Randolph Hearst is often pointed to as one of the businessmen responsible due to his involvement in the printing industry and his eminence in the public eye. An extensive study on the subject has been done by Jack Herer in his book ***The Emperor Wears No Clothes***. In his 1996, journalistic series and 1998 book, both entitled ***Dark Alliance***, Gary Webb asserted that the CIA had allowed Nicaraguan drug traffickers to smuggle cocaine into the USA and had allowed the subsequent crack epidemic in Los Angeles to help garner funds for the Contras efforts.

Creation of diseases: There are claims that AIDS is a human-made disease (i.e., created by scientists in a laboratory). Some of these theories allege that HIV was created by a conspiratorial group or by a secretive agency such as the CIA. It is thought to have been created as a tool of genocide and population control. Other theories suggest that the virus was created as an experiment in biological and psychological warfare, and then escaped into the population at large by accident. Some who believe that HIV was a government creation see a precedent for it in the Tuskegee syphilis study, in which government-funded researchers deceptively denied treatment to black patients infected with a sexually transmitted disease.

Big Pharmaceuticals: Everyone loves to hate drug companies. They make insane profits off of expensive products that people literally can't live without. Not surprisingly this is also fertile ground for budding conspiracy theorists with many accusing the pharmaceutical companies, along with other medical providers, of conspiring to keep people sick by not disclosing various cures that have already been found.

A variation on this conspiracy is claimed by Kevin Trudeau, author ***of Natural Cures "They" Don't Want You to Know About***. He claims that in the USA, "they" (pharmaceutical companies, the FDA and FTC) conspire to withhold natural cures because "they" can make more profit selling long-term treatments, that do not cure, in an endless trials and tests that turn patients into human guinea pigs.

Water fluoridation: Water fluoridation is the controlled addition of fluoride to a public water supply to reduce tooth decay. Although many influential health and dental organizations in the U.S. support public water fluoridation, or have found no association with adverse effects, efforts to introduce water fluoridation meet considerable opposition whenever it is proposed.¹¹³ Since fluoridation's inception in the 1950s, opponents have drawn on distrust of paid-for experts and unease about double-blind study findings.

Conspiracy theories involving fluoridation are common, and include the following claims that: Most of the arguments against fluoridation are based on ethical and moral issues, namely that water fluoridation is medicating large numbers of people without their explicit consent. Interestingly, they don't

¹¹³ I'll never forget when they tried to add fluoride into the water supply of Myton, Utah. The public outcry was based on conspiracy theories and rumors people had heard about but couldn't provide any supporting evidence.

typically complain about regulations that add "drugs" to other foods, like iodine added to salt, vitamin D added to milk, iron added to cereal, or folic acid added to flour.

Despite fluoride naturally occurring in food and water, a common argument against it is the appeal to nature. Most health effect arguments against water fluoridation (such as toxicity and mottled teeth) base their assumptions on much higher doses of fluoride than are allowed in municipal tap water and the excessive cherry-picking¹¹⁴ of studies. Additional studies on links between fluoride and cancer, and fluoride and bone fractures have been shown to be invalid. Other arguments are based on the false assumption that if fluoridation worked, there would be no tooth decay. A similar argument to that would be if vaccination worked we would have disease.

The favorite adverse effect of the anti-fluoride crowd, dental fluorosis, is a scary-sounding but rather benign condition in which the teeth become slightly stained. It is a purely cosmetic issue that does not lead to tooth decay, whereas removing fluoride from water does, if individuals do not brush their teeth regularly. In all but the most severe cases, the mottling is barely noticeable, and it's only significant in children whose teeth have not finished developing.

By comparison, drinking a lot of coffee or tea can also make your teeth yellow, though this is reversible. Dental fluorosis is a potential risk but is not problematic if the dosage is controlled. Drinking water with fluoride above "safe dosages," such as that found in some natural ground water wells in developing countries or in brick teas exposed to excessively fluorinated water, can also cause a more serious condition called skeletal fluorosis.

Deniers will typically claim 1,500+ EPA scientists are opposed to fluoridation. Upon closer inspection, however, this "study" is actually just a grievance letter written in 1999 by J. William Hirzy, Ph.D. on the letterhead of his local National Treasury Employees Union Chapter 280. The letter, far from representing the views of 1,500 scientists (the union represents all employees, which includes non-scientists such as lawyers is really the result of a poorly attended meeting of one local union chapter. With only 20 of said union chapter members in attendance. Hirzy and his followers were able to adopt a resolution opposing fluoridation.

When it became obvious to the wider union that Hirzy and his local chapter were falsely presenting their fringe position as representing the view of the entire union, the chapter officers who actually represented the majority of the members rapidly disowned Hirzy's position. After the above incident, Hirzy seems to have gone on to becoming the deniers' go-to guy.

Deniers will point to a 2006 500+ page report by the NRC's Committee Report on Fluoride in Drinking Water and claim that it opposes fluoridation, and of course claims will be accompanied by cherry-picked scare quotes. On closer examination, the study makes no claims against water fluoridation. The report merely reviews the evidence for safe levels. Science does that from time to time. Reappraises safe consumption levels given changes in technologies and lifestyles.

The report gives no support to fluoridation deniers as it suggests 2.0 ppm is a safe level. Most public water is fluoridated at a 0.7 ppm level, a third lower than what the NRC determined was still a safe level. In response to the misuse of the report, the report's chairman has stated, "I do not believe there is any valid, scientific reason for fearing adverse health conditions from the consumption of water fluoridated at the optimal level."

Deniers will also make various claims that the World Health Organization (WHO) opposes fluoridation. By way of evidence they will point to various WHO publications about the need to remove fluoride from water. Deniers miss that these guides are for people living in areas where there's a dangerous concentration in the local drinking water due to natural sources and a government unable to fund the technology to reduce it to a safe level. Deniers miss the notion that everything is poisonous in high enough concentrations. For example, vitamin A is critical to human health but a human (typically a child) can realistically poison himself by consuming too much. The same concept is found with other vitamins and minerals. The 2016 WHO report, *Fluoride and Oral Health*, clearly supports fluoridation for populations that would benefit from it.

¹¹⁴ Selective picking and choosing of evidence that specifically support their biased opinion

"But a bunch of western European countries oppose fluoridation!" Deniers will typically list nations that do not fluoridate their water. Mostly they're Western European nations which lends their position a gloss of respectability because, you know, apparently Western Europeans have their act together. What they ignore is water fluoridation is a public health measure created to benefit the poor without means to access dentists. They typically list nations like Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and other West European countries.

It goes without saying these nations provide excellent universal health care regardless of family income including free access to dental care for children. Most of these nations have dental care and surveillance at the school level. In addition to better access to childhood dental care, many of these nations don't fluoridate their water because they fluoridate their salt. For example, Switzerland, Germany, and France don't fluoridate their water but they fluoridate their salt.

I have friends from Eastern European countries, where they don't fluoridate their water. Also, because they lived under communist regimes until 1990, many people in those countries have terrible dental hygiene. One of my friends from Eastern Europe came to America to make a better life for herself. One of the first things she did was to get her teeth fixed. \$5,000 later she finally had a full set of teeth.

"But the freakin' Nazis fluoridated the water in their death camps!" This is one of those wonderful examples of an unsourced anecdote AKA faith promoting rumors, one that gets repeated as fact for decades. The suggestion is the Nazis fluoridated the water to pacify the death camp populations. Apparently, starvation, soldiers with guns, and machine gun towers that would mow you down if you got too close to the fence were not enough to mollify the death camp population. They needed to drug them up.

The claim is generally attributed to an early denier named Charles E. Perkins who wrote a book called ***The Truth about Water Fluoridation***. The claim is that Perkins' source was a worker at a German chemical company that ostensibly supplied fluoride to the death camps. However, Politifact casts some doubt on the Perkins origin. His actual book makes no mention of this. However, some allege he wrote a follow-on letter that made this claim. Suffice it to say there's zero documentation anywhere the Nazis ever used fluoride for mind control purposes.

"I'm fine with fluoride on toothpaste, but fluoride shouldn't be ingested!" Just as how other denialist circles have soft and hard nuances, anti-fluoridation people have their share of softcore anti-fluoride opinions. According to them, fluoride is fine when applied topically on toothpaste for instance, but not when it is part of the water supply systemic. The problem, particularly in the U.S., is that people, especially children, need more exposure to fluoride to appreciate the positive effects of decreasing cavities.

In the U.S., fluoridated water is how most children are exposed to fluoride, since, compared to Europe, children do not have school-based dental care and do not visit the dentist regularly. Additionally, fluoride, when swallowed, can be distributed throughout the body, which includes being in the saliva that covers the teeth. Nevertheless, fluoridated water has been shown with more than enough evidence to improve the quality of teeth in humans compared to its risks, if any, and removing them in water will reduce those benefits. The main problem is that it goes against the heaps of evidence demonstrating the safety and benefits of drinking fluoridated water.

In 2006 the National Research Council (NRC) published a review of the EPA's drinking water standard for fluoride. The report noted potential negative effects due to fluoridation, including cognitive impairment, impaired thyroid functioning, and increases in bone fractures, in addition to the fluorosis of children's teeth. The NRC called for a reduction of the EPA's limit of 4.0 mg/L of fluoride in drinking water. This was a much higher standard than the recommended levels for water fluoridation targeting levels from 0.7 to 1.2 mg/L.

The Harvard IQ study: "Developmental Fluoride Neurotoxicity: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis" evaluated the impact of highly elevated natural fluoride in Chinese water supplies on childhood development. Notice, they were studying fluoride poisoning. In short, they concluded that their results can prove nothing about US intentional water fluoridation, where the limits are strictly controlled.

I grew up in an age where there was no fluoridation in the water supply. By the time I started school my teeth were pretty bad. My son grew up in the age of fluoridation and he has never had a cavity. So enough said.

Vaccination Conspiracy Theories: Wherever there is an advancement, a conspiracy theory is going to follow. With vaccinations, the conspiracy theories are numerous. It is understandable that these theories exist, not in the least because only very few of us understand the chemistry behind creating a vaccination. Besides this, everybody loves a good conspiracy theory. According to The Vaccination Conspiracy the medical viability of these vaccinations may not be an issue, the ethical usage of these vaccinations are. In other words, although the government may require all citizens to obtain vaccinations for medical reasons, there may be other purposes the government may have, particularly for tracking and experimental weaponized purposes.

That sounds really scary and it makes us wonder whether we would be better off simply allowing ourselves and our children to be exposed to medical risks. Reports of the MMR vaccine causing autism are still rife, even though the doctor who first reported this has now admitted that his research was flawed and he has been struck off the register. There are reports of vaccines, such as the HPV vaccine, being completely ineffective because they are given too soon to matter, and other reports of vaccines being hidden pathogens to render women in underdeveloped countries infertile. However, moving away from vaccinations would be like dismissing centuries of medical research, research that can actually save us.

If we were to listen to every conspiracy theory that is out there, we would be living our lives in constant fear. The reality is that some people do live like that, but you don't have to join them. One of the reasons that conspiracy theories are so numerous is because of the rise of the internet, as explained by Las Vegas City Life. They said that: "Particularly with the rise of the Internet, it's possible to both generate conspiracy theories and proliferate them with extreme rapidity." In other words, don't believe everything you read on Facebook or Twitter! Or to quote my grandfather, "Don't believe anything you hear and only half of what you see"

Vaccinations and other types of health treatment, including pills, creams and lotions, are necessary for our survival. Before we had access to these, the average life expectancy was only around half of what it is now. Indeed, hygiene has a lot to do with that, but so have the breakthroughs in medical science. Those who believe in conspiracy theories are actually very dangerous: "Hundreds of have died in Pakistan as a result of a measles outbreak. [...] Many Pakistanis, especially in rural areas, view vaccination campaigns with suspicion as a western plot to sterilize Muslims. [...] "*Melanie's Marvelous Measles,*" written by some dope smoking hippie-dippy Age of Aquarius type who thinks Natural Equals Good [...] has added to this."

It is very important to understand the impact good vaccination programs have on the world. The Express Tribune reported that the reason mass vaccinations are so important is that even one weak link in the chain can bring everyone down. Of course, conspiracy theorists agree that we should keep our children healthy, but they also believe many of the diseases we vaccinate against are actually quite benign, including measles which killed hundreds of children when I was growing up. I remember my friends contracting polio and being confined to an iron lung. I remember how sick I was with the measles, chickenpox, and the mumps. I had an ancestor who had three wives and 32 children.¹¹⁵ Of those 32, he lost 8 children in a diphtheria epidemic and 6 in a typhoid epidemic.

Over the years in my travels I've had Hepatitis A, Malaria, Giardia, Amoebiasis, shigella, Aeromonas hydrophila among others. My sister had scarlet fever. Thank God for the medical technology that helped bring an end to all of these diseases. When I was in the Air Force there were 10 vaccinations we needed to have to be worldwide qualified for deployment. So please don't tell me how bad vaccinations are.

Of course, all of the pros of vaccinations can be added up again and again, but the conspiracy theorist will always reply with "you are bound to say that. My mind is made up don't confuse me with the facts." Are vaccinations just a massive ruse of some sort of hidden elitist world government to track us or sterilize people in a return to the Eugenics movement? No, but once such an idea finds its seed, it is hard to move away from it.

¹¹⁵ Yes, my ancestor was a Mormon polygamist.

Artificial diseases: There are claims that HIV is an artificial disease, with some theories alleging that it was secretly created by the CIA. Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan and others have claimed that diseases such as AIDS and Ebola are man-made and have been deliberately spread among black populations by white supremacists. Similar conspiracy theories allege that pharmaceutical companies assist in the creation of conditions and diseases including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), herpes simplex virus (HSV) and human papillomavirus (HPV).

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a brain disorder marked by an ongoing pattern of inattention and hyperactive-impulsivity that interferes with functioning and development. Inattention means a person wanders off task, lacks persistence, has difficulty sustaining focus, and is disorganized; and these problems are not due to defiance or lack of comprehension.

Hyperactivity means a person seems to move about constantly, including in situations in which it is not appropriate; or excessively fidgets, taps, or talks. In adults, it may be extreme restlessness or wearing others out with constant activity.

Impulsivity means a person makes hasty actions that occur in the moment without first thinking about them and that may have high potential for harm; or a desire for immediate rewards or inability to delay gratification. An impulsive person may be socially intrusive and excessively interrupt others or make important decisions without considering the long-term consequences.

Inattention and hyperactivity and impulsivity are the key behaviors of ADHD. Some people with ADHD only have problems with one of the behaviors, while others have both inattention and hyperactive-impulsivity. Most children have the combined type of ADHD.

In preschool, the most common ADHD symptom is hyperactivity. It is normal to have some inattention, unfocused motor activity and impulsivity, but for people with ADHD, these behaviors: are more severe, occur more often, interfere with or reduce the quality of how they function socially, at school, or in a job. Inattention: People with symptoms of inattention may often: Overlook or miss details, make careless mistakes in schoolwork, at work, or during other activities. Have problems sustaining attention in tasks or play, including conversations, lectures, or lengthy reading.

Not seem to listen when spoken to directly, Not follow through on instructions and fail to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace or start tasks but quickly lose focus and get easily sidetracked, Have problems organizing tasks and activities, such as what to do in sequence, keeping materials and belongings in order, do messy work and poor time management, and failing to meet deadlines; Avoid or dislike tasks that require sustained mental effort, such as schoolwork or homework, or for teens and older adults, preparing reports, completing forms or reviewing lengthy papers.

Lose things necessary for tasks or activities, such as school supplies, pencils, books, tools, wallets, keys, paperwork, eyeglasses, and cell phones. Be easily distracted by unrelated thoughts or stimuli. Be forgetful in daily activities, such as chores, errands, returning calls, and keeping appointments.

Hyperactivity-Impulsivity: People with symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity may often: Fidget and squirm in their seats, Leave their seats in situations when staying seated is expected, such as in the classroom or in the office, Run or dash around or climb in situations where it is inappropriate or, in teens and adults, often feel restless, Be unable to play or engage in hobbies quietly, Be constantly in motion or “on the go,” or act as if “driven by a motor,” Talk nonstop, Blurt out an answer before a question has been completed, finish other people’s sentences, or speak without waiting for a turn in conversation, Have trouble waiting his or her turn, Interrupt or intrude on others, for example in conversations, games, or activities.

Diagnosis of ADHD requires a comprehensive evaluation by a licensed clinician, such as a pediatrician, psychologist, or psychiatrist with expertise in ADHD. For a person to receive a diagnosis of ADHD, the symptoms of inattention and hyperactive-impulsivity must be chronic or long-lasting, impair the person’s functioning, and cause the person to fall behind normal development for his or her age. The doctor will also ensure that any ADHD symptoms are not due to another medical or psychiatric condition. Most children with ADHD receive a diagnosis during the elementary school years. For an adolescent or adult to receive a diagnosis of ADHD, the symptoms need to have been present prior to age 12.

ADHD symptoms can appear as early as between the ages of 3 and 6 and can continue through adolescence and adulthood. Symptoms of ADHD can be mistaken for emotional or disciplinary problems

or missed entirely in quiet, well-behaved children, leading to a delay in diagnosis. Adults with undiagnosed ADHD may have a history of poor academic performance, problems at work, or difficult or failed relationships.

ADHD symptoms can change over time as a person ages. In young children with ADHD, hyperactive-impulsivity is the most predominant symptom. As a child reaches elementary school, the symptom of inattention may become more prominent and cause the child to struggle academically. In adolescence, hyperactivity seems to lessen and may show more often as feelings of restlessness or fidgeting, but inattention and impulsivity may remain. Many adolescents with ADHD also struggle with relationships and antisocial behaviors. Inattention, restlessness, and impulsivity tend to persist into adulthood.

Scientists are not sure what causes ADHD. Like many other illnesses, a number of factors can contribute to ADHD, such as:

- Genes
- Cigarette smoking, alcohol use, or drug use during pregnancy
- Exposure to environmental toxins during pregnancy
- Exposure to environmental toxins, such as high levels of lead, at a young age
- Low birth weight
- Brain injuries

ADHD is more common in males than females, and females with ADHD are more likely to have problems primarily with inattention. Other conditions, such as learning disabilities, anxiety disorder, conduct disorder, depression, and substance abuse, are common in people with ADHD.

My son has ADHD and Asperger's. We got him diagnosed and medical intervention when he was two. Yes, he had challenges growing up but overall, he has been an awesome child. He is in college and is majoring in computer science. This something else that is common yet not understood is that people with ADHD and Asperger's are attracted to computers, many majoring in computer technology in college.

The importance is getting help early on. I've seen too many people in my own family as well as others who did not get the necessary interventions and have experienced many challenges: self-medication, relationship failures, criminal activity, and other social problems. So, I have no problem with those who need it to get the medication to live normal, happy, productive lives. I've seen both sides of the picture.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases: There are many different STDs and it is important to know the differences between them. Each STD can cause a different set of symptoms and have different long-term health risks. Many people will often confuse HPV, HSV and HIV, not realizing that there is a great deal of difference between the three viruses.

HPV: HPV, or human papillomavirus, is considered to be the most common STD in the United States. HPV is so common, in fact, that the CDC says nearly every sexually active man and woman in the country will contract the virus at some point in their lives. There are numerous strains of HPV and some can cause other health issues such as genital warts and certain types of cancers. You can get HPV from intimate skin-to-skin contact such as oral, vaginal or anal sex. Anyone who is sexually active can get HPV and the infection can be passed even when an infected person has no signs or symptoms. Sometimes, a person can develop symptoms years after they have contracted the virus.

There are vaccinations available to help prevent a person from contracting HPV. According to the CDC, the HPV vaccine is given in 3 shots. The second shot is given 1 or 2 months after the first shot. Then a third shot is given 6 months after the first shot. The CDC recommends receiving the full HPV vaccine series. The CDC recommends that all kids who are 11 or 12 years old should get the three-dose series of HPV vaccine to protect against HPV.

Teen boys and girls who did not start or finish the HPV vaccine series when they were younger should get it now. Young women can get HPV vaccine through age 26, and young men can get vaccinated through age 21. The vaccine is also recommended for any man who has sex with men through age 26, and for men with compromised immune systems through age 26, if they did not get HPV vaccine when they were younger.

HSV: HSV, or herpes simplex virus, is the STD that can cause genital herpes. There are two strains of HSV that can lead to genital herpes. They are known as herpes simplex 1 and herpes simplex 2. The CDC states that genital herpes is so common in the U.S. that about one in every six-people aged 14 to 49 has the infection. Genital herpes is spread through skin-to-skin contact. Therefore, transmission of the virus can occur during oral, vaginal or anal sex. Herpes sores contain fluid which carries the virus. Contact with this fluid will cause infection though it is also possible to contract the virus when no sores are present. Currently, there is no cure for genital herpes. Antiviral medications can help to prevent and shorten outbreaks. Additionally, there are daily suppressive therapies that can reduce the likelihood of transmitting the virus to a sexual partner.

HIV: HIV, or human immunodeficiency virus, is an infection that attacks the body's immune system. If left untreated, HIV can lead to AIDS, or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. HIV can make a person more susceptible to other infections. Only certain bodily fluids can transmit HIV from one person to another. These fluids include blood, semen, pre-seminal fluid, rectal fluid, vaginal fluid and breast milk. These fluids must come in contact with a mucous membrane or damaged tissue or be directly injected into the bloodstream from a needle or syringe for transmission to occur. In the U.S. the most common forms of HIV transmission are through oral, anal and vaginal sex. Sharing intravenous drug equipment can also lead to transmission of the infection. It is less common for HIV to be transmitted through a blood transfusion due to current screening standards of blood donations.

No effective cure for HIV exists but with proper medical care, HIV can be managed. Since the HIV/AIDS epidemic of the 1980s, treatments and medicines have been developed to help people with HIV live a long and healthy life. The CDC recommends engaging in the practices of safe sexual intercourse in order to prevent the spread of STDs. This includes the use of latex condoms. If you believe that you have been exposed to any of these STDs, you should have STD testing performed. This is the best way to know that current status of your sexual health. If available in your area, In-Home Collection even allows you to be tested at home, work or another location of your choice.

8. Space, NASA, and Extraterrestrials:

A sector of conspiracy theory with a particularly detailed mythology is the extraterrestrial phenomenon, which has become the basis for numerous pieces of popular entertainment, conspiracies alleging a government cover-up of the supposed Roswell UFO incident, Area 51, the Grey Aliens conspiracy, and allegations surrounding the Dulce Base. It is alleged that the United States government conspires with extraterrestrials involved in the abduction and manipulation of citizens. A variant tells that particular technologies, notably the transistor, were given to American industry in exchange for alien dominance. The enforcers of the clandestine association of human leaders and aliens are the Men in Black, who silence those who speak out on UFO sightings.

This conspiracy theory has been the basis of numerous books, as well as the popular television show *The X-Files* and *the Men in Black* film series. The X-Files based the plots of many of its episodes around urban legends and conspiracy theories, and had a framing plot which postulated a set of interlocking conspiracies controlling all recent human history. *10 Absurd Claims of Modern Flat Earth Conspiracy Theorists*: ELI NIXON FEBRUARY 1, 2016: If you've never made the mistake of scrolling down into the comments section of a NASA video on YouTube, you'd be forgiven for having a shred of optimism left for the future of our world.

Around 600 BC, the Greek philosopher Pythagoras started telling people that the Earth was a sphere. It seemed like a silly notion then. But as we know now, it was the first true step in understanding the nature of planetary behavior in the universe at large. By the Middle Ages, that knowledge was firmly entrenched in the annals of science. They still had to work out that the Earth wasn't the center of the universe, much to Galileo's dismay, but there was no question that it was a ball. Then, in the mid-1800s, Samuel Rowbotham came along and told everyone that they'd been wrong all along; the Earth was flat. Somehow, the idea picked up steam, and after a tumultuous century and a half, it hit the Internet in the form of the Flat Earth Society.

And yes, they're serious. The modern flat Earth conspiracy theory is much deeper than most other theories, mainly because nobody can quite agree on what they believe. It's a globular web of claims, counterclaims, ad hominem attacks on nonbelievers and believers alike, and denial of the scientific process to an extent that borders on neurosis. The only unifying belief within the theory is, in fact, belief in the theory. This leaves believers free to paint away from that core tenet in brush strokes wide enough to cover all the gaping cracks.

If nothing else, the mind-set engendered by flat-Earthers is at least admirable. It's a sense of pioneering, of discovery, of showing the world that there's always something more to uncover in life. Aristotle, Galileo, and all the great minds of history must have felt the same spark of excitement when faced with the mysteries of their own times. But some things are just stupid. One of the more popular flat Earth mantras is: "I don't know for sure that the Earth is flat, but until I see proof either way, it makes more sense than a globe Earth."

It's insanity at its finest, the equivalent of spending your whole life in a house with windows and questioning the existence of your front lawn because you don't have grass in your living room. It's easy to see Earth from space. Just look at any of the countless International Space Station (ISS) videos, or spend a few minutes watching a time-lapse video from Japan's Himawari-8 satellite, which takes a photo of Earth every 10 minutes from 22,000 mi. up. Check out that gorgeous Earthrise photo that William Anders snapped from the Moon in 1968 or the humbling perspective offered by the Cassini probe when it glanced back at our little blue dot on its trip past Saturn.

According to the Flat Earth Society, those examples and the millions like them, aren't proof because they're all fake. The idea is that all the videos released by NASA, the ESA, the CNSA, Roscosmos, and all the other space agencies are simply computer graphics. Pictures are photoshopped. Of course, the flat-Earthers disregard the amount of time and money needed to make just one video like that, let alone days' worth of continuous footage. Using the flat-Earthers' conditional logic, if the Earth is flat and space images are fake they believe, then the world's space agencies are lying about the Earth. And if an organization has

spent 70 years from 1946 to the present, creating fake images just to lie to people, they must have some kind of evil agenda. Otherwise, that's a long joke even by Dane Cook standards.

There are 9 ISS Videos Shot in A Zero-G Plane; the Moon Landings Were Faked; It's now been nearly four decades since Neil Armstrong took his "giant leap for mankind" if, that is, he ever set foot off this planet. Doubters say the U.S. government, desperate to beat the Russians in the space race, faked the lunar landings, with Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin acting out their mission on a secret film set, located (depending on the theory) either high in the Hollywood Hills or deep within Area 51. With the photos and videos of the Apollo missions only available through NASA, there's no independent verification that the lunar landings were anything but a hoax.

The smoking gun? Film of Aldrin planting a waving American flag on the moon, which critics say proves that he was not in space. The flag's movement, they say, clearly shows the presence of wind, which is impossible in a vacuum. NASA says Aldrin was twisting the flagpole to get the moon soil, which caused the flag to move. Never mind that astronauts have brought back hundreds of independently verified moon rocks. Also, how do these theorists know so much about the moon, if they have never been there?

Even if space pictures are fake, we still have to account for all the videos of weightless astronauts inside the International Space Station (ISS). According to flat Earth theory, these are faked, too. But this is a different, more blatant form of fakery. Rather than rely on CGI, most of these videos were filmed in parabolic flight, more commonly known as a zero-G airplane. Parabolic flight is real, of course, and it's often used to train astronauts to deal with movement in microgravity.

Greatly simplified, it's when a plane enters a controlled descent that allows the people onboard to "float" inside the plane. You can ride one yourself if you have a little extra spending money lying around. But it takes a heroic leap of logic to assume that simply because it's possible to do such a thing, NASA has spent more than half a century using it to counterfeit an entire public space program. The sheer number of videos spent picking apart this inane point is breathtaking. But this wouldn't be a true flat Earth theory if there weren't multiple, opposing viewpoints.

So, it's also possible or even 100 % confirmed (depending on whom you talk to) that NASA films their weightless astronauts under the ocean or in front of blue screens with wires that have been "computer graphic airbrushed out." So, what I want to know if the Flat Earthers believe we have to technology to fake all of our work in space, why is it so hard for them to believe we don't have the technology to actually go to space and take actual photos of our space missions?

Area 51: Theorists have even suggested that filmmaker Stanley Kubrick may have helped NASA fake the first lunar landing, given that his 1968 film 2001: A Space Odyssey proves that the technology existed back then to artificially create a space like set. And as for Virgil I. Grissom, Edward H. White and Roger B. Chaffee; three astronauts who died in a fire while testing equipment for the first moon mission? They were executed by the U.S. government, that feared they were about to disclose the truth.

The government has developed advanced aircraft and weapons systems at nearby Nellis Air Force Base, including Stealth bombers and reconnaissance planes. And the government's official line, that the details of Area 51 are classified for purposes of national security, is only seen as further proof that the military is hiding aliens or alien spacecraft.

Ever since an unknown object crashed near Roswell, New Mexico in 1947 there have been hundreds of conspiracy theories put forth concerning its true nature. Along with Area 51, which the US government didn't even acknowledge existed until 2003, these theories have formed the backbone of our culture's obsession with aliens and UFO's.

Reptilian Humanoids Control the World: The conspiracy theorist and New Age philosopher, David Icke, who wore only turquoise for a time and insisted on being called Son of God-Head, says these "Anunnaki,"¹¹⁶ with evidence ranging from Sumerian tablets describing the "Anunnaki," he translates as

¹¹⁶ The Anunnaki are a group of deities that appear in the mythological traditions of the ancient Sumerians, Akkadians, Assyrians, and Babylonians. The word consists of two root words: anu and ki. The word means the children of Anu and Ki. Anu was the god of the sky and ki was goddess of the earth. I couldn't find any reference to reptiles except in the deep recesses of David Icke's paranoid reptilian brain.

"those who from heaven came to earth." They have controlled humankind since ancient times. In his ancient-astronaut narrative, Icke argues that humanity has been genetically manipulated by the Babylonian Brotherhood, a hybrid race of human–extraterrestrial reptilians. They are responsible for Area 51, Oklahoma City bombings, 9/11, child abuse and fluoridation.

In *the Biggest Secret* (1999), Icke identified the Brotherhood as descendants of shape-shifting alien reptilian humanoids from the constellation Draco, who require periodic ingestion of human blood to maintain their human appearance and live in caverns inside the earth. They count among their number the British Royal Family, the Bush family, Henry Kissinger, Bill and Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, and Bob Hope. Diana, Princess of Wales was aware of this, undoubtedly leading to her death. Margaret Thatcher is also believed to have been an important figure in the reptilian secret army.

Encroaching on other conspiracy theorists' territory, Icke even claims that the lizards are behind secret societies like the Freemasons and the Illuminati. Since earning the dubious title of "*Paranoid of The Decade*" in the late 1990s, Icke has written several books on the topic, including his latest work, *The David Icke Guide to the Global Conspiracy*, while operating his own website, complete with promotional merchandise and advertisements.

David Icke's theory, which encompasses many other conspiracy theories, is that humanity is actually under the reptilians; he became the poster humanoid for the theory in 1998 after publishing his first book, *The Biggest Secret*, which contained interviews with two Brits who claimed members of the royal family are nothing more than reptiles with crowns. (Picture Dracula meets Swamp Thing). Going viral on YouTube, his theory posits that anyone holding a position of power or influence is actually a blood thirsty, extra-terrestrial, shapeshifting reptile. Since then he has written several books on the topic and not surprisingly been awarded the title "*Paranoid of The Decade*."

The Plan: In Washington, D.C., The Plan is a conspiracy theory regarding governance of the city. Theorists insist that some whites have had a plan to "take back" the city since the beginning of home rule in the 1970s, when the city started electing blacks to local offices. The theory has quiet, but considerable support. In some U.S. cities, that are governed by African American majorities, a persistent conspiracy theory holds that Caucasians are plotting to take over those cities.

It appears that Lillian Wiggins, a columnist for the Washington Afro American newspaper, was the first to articulate the conspiracy theory. In 1979, she wrote: "Many residents believe that the Marion Barry era may be the last time Washington will have a black mayor. If negative programming and characterization of black leadership are allowed to continue in the city of Washington and especially the black community, there is a strong possibility of the 'master plan' which I have so often spoken about maturing in the 1980s." Believers note that the Federal City Council, an organized group of civic and corporate leaders, mostly white, meets in secret and uses its power to influence the city's direction.

Anti-theorists note that instead of an organized conspiracy, there are market forces, demographics, and gentrification, at work which is happening quickly in the District of Columbia. Black residents have left the District, just as many whites moved to the suburbs beginning in the 1950s. Both groups left a decaying city, its crime, and its failing schools seeking "a better, safer life. One could argue that middle-class blacks abandoned the city. Was that part of 'the plan'?" Others counter that the existence of the theory reflects "the fears of a black community that already feels under attack in a city whose rising cost of living makes hanging on difficult. If such paranoia seems laughable, it reflects a reality that's easily illustrated in bright colors," although the theory has been around longer than the city's changing demographics.

Efforts to improve the District of Columbia Public Schools have been linked to the alleged conspiracy, as the improvements have tended to increase enrollment of white children. Although shifting demographics are broadening school demand, these are seen as either the implementation or the result of The Plan. Similarly, rising real estate values, increased business, more abundant night life and other factors which "would otherwise be viewed as a positive becomes evidence" of the scheme, even to those who benefit from the improvements.

One commentator opined "Don't ask Mayor Fenty or Schools Chancellor Rhee whom this world-class school system will serve if low-income black residents are being evicted from his world-class city in droves" and went on to claim "The scheme was odious: re-creation of a more sophisticated version of the

plantation-style, federally appointed three-member commission that ruled the city for more than a century until 1967." The Plan, and related fears, are said to have contributed to the defeat of incumbent mayor Adrian Fenty in the 2010 primary election. One observer noted: "A vote for challenger Vincent Gray, admirers of the D.C. Council chairman imply, stops The Plan dead, putting all those whiny newcomers in their place."

Antarctica Is an Impenetrable Ice Wall Built by The Reptilian Elite: They are among us. Blood-drinking, flesh-eating, shape-shifting extraterrestrial reptilian humanoids with only one objective in their cold-blooded little heads: to enslave the human race. They are our leaders, our corporate executives, our beloved Oscar-winning actors and Grammy-winning singers, and they're responsible for the Holocaust, the Oklahoma City bombings and the 9/11 attacks.

In the generally accepted flat Earth model, the world is a disc with the North Pole in the center. The outer rim is an unbroken ice wall that runs around the entire circumference of the Earth; Antarctica. For a visual, if the Earth was a pizza pie in this model, Antarctica would be the doughy crust. This ice wall serves to keep the Earth's oceans from spilling away, and nobody knows what exists on the other side.

There could be unknown wonders out there, or the ice could simply go on forever. Theories range from scientific speculation to religious fanaticism. One claim is that the Antarctic ice wall is surrounded by another ocean. Beyond that is "the forbidden continent, Antichthonic."

Samuel Rowbotham gave up trying to guess and simply said, "Human ingress is barred by unsealed escarpments of perpetual ice, extending farther than eye or telescope can penetrate and becoming lost in gloom or darkness...Considering that many explorers have traversed Antarctica and that the South Pole is now essentially a tourist destination, it's impossible to imagine anyone still falling for the "escarpments of perpetual ice" line. But then again, impossible is just another Tuesday on a flat Earth.

This seems like a given because the prevailing idea with this whole thing is that the Earth is flat. But when satellites and space stations don't exist, proof is suddenly hard to come by, and that's why this claim is so vehemently espoused; If you look out toward any unbroken horizon line, it looks like a flat line. But if the Earth was a sphere, it would curve somewhere because that's what balls do. Anyone can look at a Ping-Pong ball and see the curve.

The important bit, of course, is scale and position. From the surface of a large enough sphere, a 360-degree view shows a disc because your line of sight doesn't show anything beyond where the curve drops below the horizon line. You also can't look straight ahead and see the horizon dip on either side because the Earth isn't a cylinder, either. If you had an unbroken view of the horizon in all directions with no prior frame of reference, it would be easy enough to assume that you were standing on a flat, circular plane. Obviously, we do have a frame of reference. This isn't an uncharted mystery of the cosmos. It's something that kids learn in elementary school. But once you take the position that you're being lied to, suddenly all you can trust is your own eyes. And hey, the eye shows flat lines on all the horizons.

Gravity Doesn't Exist: Gravity is the force by which objects with mass attract each other. It's what keeps you on the ground, causes the tides, and keeps the planets orbiting the Sun. It's also why the Earth is a sphere or at least close to it. Gravity pulls the mass of our planet into hydrostatic equilibrium, the middle ground between inward and outward-pushing forces. Since a flat Earth wouldn't adhere to the laws of gravitation, it stands to someone's idea of reason that gravity doesn't exist.

Instead, we have Universal Acceleration (UA). UA says that the flat disc of Earth is constantly accelerating upward, like a big rocket ship. The effect, in principle, is the same. If you jump, you'll land again. But instead of you falling back to Earth, Earth is rising up to meet you. So, what causes it? This is where the waters transition from silly to insane. One theory is that the acceleration is caused by a blanket of dark energy rising up under the Earth. But again, nobody knows how that's supposed to work or why things that fly, like birds, don't just plummet to the ground. It's not like they constantly fly upward just to escape the giant Frisbee chasing them.

The Sun Isn't Millions of Miles Away: The Sun is really only 3,000 mi. away, and it's only 32 mi. wide. It's also a giant, interdimensional lightbulb that moves in a circle and shines on the flat surface of the world like a lighthouse. That sounds like a jab at flat-Earthers, but it's nearly word for word how they

describe it themselves. As previously mentioned, in the flat Earth model, the world is a circle with the North Pole at the center and a giant ice ring (Antarctica) around the edges.

Now move a flashlight in a gentle clockwise motion over a paper plate, and that's the Sun. Its circle of light doesn't touch the whole plate at once, which accounts for night and day. More importantly, it's something that anyone can envision without a science degree. I mean think about it, 93 million miles is difficult to comprehend. So, what about seasons or the midnight Sun at the poles? Assume for a second that the Sun does move around the Earth like that.

Maybe it wobbles a little, making the seasons. Maybe it moves closer to the North Pole in the summer and farther away in the winter, giving the northern latitudes periods of increased sunlight. Are you with me so far? But what about summer in the southern hemisphere when Antarctica has periods of 24-hour sunlight? If Antarctica was a ring around the perimeter of the Earth, there's no possible way that one segment of the ring would receive constant light unless the entire Earth was illuminated as well. Unless Antarctica's midnight Sun was a lie, too. If you're sensing a pattern, you're not alone. But here's where it gets crazy.

The Sky Is a Glass Dome: To be fair, not every flat-Earther believes this. Only the crazy ones. The idea is that the sky and everything in it are fake. What you're actually seeing is a dome that serves to hide the true nature of the heavens. Nobody knows what's up there because the dome gets in the way. Aliens, maybe. Or God, watching us like the good father in a confessional booth, while another priest behind a two-way mirror takes a turn bashing us into a confession for the inquisition. The origins of the dome theory are highly biblical and point to scriptures that describe God putting a "firmament" above the Earth.

Theories about what's on the other side of this dome range from a huge ocean to vast amounts of nothingness. Most people say that the Sun and the atmosphere are inside the dome and it's actually what holds the atmosphere in place in lieu of gravity. Nearly everyone agrees that whatever's out there, it isn't the outer space we know and love.

Some of my friends and I used to ask what we called imponderables: How high is up? Where does it end? If it does end, what's on the other side? So I suspect that if the flat earthers ever did that they would either end up sitting in a round corner and cry or check themselves into a mental hospital.

If living in an episode of the Twilight Zone isn't bizarre enough for you, there's an additional theory which says that there's also a hologram being projected onto the surface of the dome that gives us all the spacey things we see at night. To believe the hologram theory, you have to lube up and slide around some pretty inconvenient questions; like who put it there, how, and why? As usual, the answers fit neatly into two categories: paranoia and aliens.

More widespread is the belief that even if the whole sky isn't a hologram, the Moon certainly is. There are hours of YouTube videos of the Moon "glitching," "melting," and otherwise misbehaving, which is sure proof of a massive, centuries-old global conspiracy in anyone's book. It's definitely not an atmospheric effect, camera malfunction, video distortion, compression artifact, or any other reasonable explanation.

The Shadow Object Causes Lunar Eclipses: This next one is especially interesting in light of the upcoming total eclipse of the sun coming up on August 21, 2017. Some people call it the Shadow Object; others call it the Nega Moon. Nobody knows what it is, just that there has to be something that causes lunar eclipses. Traditionally, lunar eclipses occur when the Sun, Earth, and Moon line up, with the Earth in the middle casting its shadow onto the Moon's surface. If the Sun is only a couple of miles away and the Earth is flat, however, that kind of thing can't happen.

So, we've got the Shadow Object. This mysterious object is always in the sky. Periodically, it passes in front of the Moon, causing an eclipse. It's sometimes said to be another version of the Moon that's normally obscured by the glare of the Sun. Others say that it's really more of a generalized "thick darkness" that the Moon stumbles into now and then. As always, if the Moon is a hologram, there doesn't need to be any further explanation. It seems to me that the flat earthers have devised a solar system that is much more complicated than a spherical earth in a solar system where everything circulates around the sun. Where the earth rotates on its axis and by so doing it gives us 4 seasons, day and night, and climate zones. Of course unless you are a global warming/climate change nut.

Rockets Can't Reach Outer Space: In the past several years, advances in rocket technology have reached new highs. In December 2015, SpaceX successfully landed the first stage of their Falcon 9 rocket after carrying a satellite payload into orbit. In January 2016, Blue Origin completed their second landing with their own rocket, the New Shepard. Have you ever watched a rocket launch? It's an awe-inspiring sight. But unfortunately, it's one that strikes a chord with flat-Earthers. Whether suborbital like the Falcon and Shepard or fully space-bound like those that resupply the ISS, rockets don't launch entirely vertically.

Instead, they take an arc trajectory known as a gravity turn. As it leaves the launchpad, a rocket travels straight up. However, gravity is acting directly against the rocket's thrust in this position. So, as the rocket gains altitude, it will pitch slightly. This allows gravity to eventually pull the rocket nearly horizontal as it approaches the Karman Line, the point where the Earth's atmosphere technically becomes space, about 62 mi. up. It's a valuable technique for saving fuel because rockets use the majority of their fuel to accelerate to orbital speed in the moments before breaking past the Karman Line. But if you watch this flight arc from the ground, it looks like the rocket is curving along the bottom of a glass ceiling. According to flat Earth theory with its dome firmament, this trajectory arc is proof that rockets can't get into outer space. God forbid that the rocket malfunction and explode because that's the rocket hitting the ceiling. Every time. Never mind the tragic loss of life.

NASA Was Founded by Nazis: To the Flat Earth Society, NASA is the ultimate villain. Throw a healthy mix of Freemasons, Illuminati, lizards, and satanic forces into a blender, dust your slurry with magic fairy powder, and let it ferment. In a week, you'll end up with a fully formed NASA. The only thing worse are the people who control them. But since nobody's ever taken a picture of those guys, we don't know who to blame. However, it might be Nazis.

To tell this tale, we need to travel back to the magical decade known as the 1940s. World War II was in full swing, and a young engineer named Werner von Braun was building rockets for the Nazis. Von Braun is now famous for designing the V-2 ballistic missile that rained hellfire on London in 1944. After his surrender to the Allies in 1945, Von Braun went to work for the US Army and became one of the pivotal figures in the creation of the fledgling US space program. Von Braun spearheaded the development of the Saturn V rocket that launched the Apollo shuttles. NASA has since called him "the greatest rocket scientist in history.

"from these inauspicious beginnings came some of the greatest technological advances in history and a chance to finally dream of visiting new worlds. At least, depending on the shape of your planet. In flat Earth theory, NASA's Nazi origins were just the start. The whole organization is nothing more than a "pack of professional liars, pseudoscientists, charlatans, Freemasons, and Mormons." After all, "Apollo" is another name for Satan, right? What further proof do you need? All said and done, it's that line of thinking that almost makes this whole thing seem crazy if not insane.

Everyone needs someone to blame, whether it manifests as benign angst toward the government or vitriolic hate against the satanic Masonic warlocks who keep putting Leonardo DiCaprio into B-movies. If you have to change the literal shape of your world to finger a scapegoat for the unfocused discontent you feel with life, so be it. That's just part of being human.

However, don't broadcast it to the world as scientific fact. If you do, don't get upset when the rest of us point to your aluminum hats and call the guys in the white coats to come take you away. Far-fetched as the hoax theory may seem, a 1999 Gallup poll showed that it's comparatively durable: 6% of Americans said they thought the lunar landings were fake, and 5% said they were undecided. In one of the most popular conspiracy theories of our time proponents argue that the moon landing was actually an elaborate hoax and all the pictures supposedly taken hundreds of thousands of miles away were actually taken in studios right here on Earth.

HAARP: High Frequency Active Aurora Research Program Conspiracy theories: is an ionospheric research program funded by the U.S. Air Force, the U.S. Navy, the University of Alaska, and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). Many conspiracy theories surround HAARP. Some theorists believe that it is being used as a weather-controlling device that can trigger catastrophic events, such as floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, tidal waves, avalanches, and volcanic eruptions.

Others believe that the government uses HAARP to send mind-controlling radio waves to humans. High Frequency Active Aurora Research Program theory claims that HAARP could be used as a directed-energy weapon, weather control, earthquake induction device and for mind control. Hence the wearing of the aluminum foil hats to protect their brains from this HAARP.

In fact, one of my earlier investigations I was involved in when I became a PI, were claim by an elderly woman who insisted people were trying to kill her. We spent several months investigating her claims. We at our wits ends and wondering what to do next, until she brought out the football helmet covered in aluminum foil to protect her brain. That was when we finally had to pull the plug on the investigation.

Another theory claims that the Apollo astronauts found a human skeleton and footprints on the Moon. This was circulated despite the fact that there is no way for anything to decompose on the moon, because its lack of atmosphere would prevent this. The theory received more widespread attention when the satirical Weekly World News twice published stories about a human skeleton on the moon, first on Nov 28, 1989, and then again on Jul 15, 1997. This same story had been told before in a 1977 novel, ***Inherit the Stars***, by James P. Hogan.

Another well-known alien conspiracy is known as Project Blue beam, supposedly a NASA and government psychological operation involving a fake alien invasion, along with light and laser shows in the sky, and false reports of UFO landings, to fake the second coming of Christ, as depicted in the Bible's Rapture, in order to bring about a global New Age religion with the Antichrist as the head.

Area 51 and the Aliens: We may have the space age drink, Tang, thanks to the space program, but who gave us such innovations as the Stealth fighter and Kevlar? Aliens, of course. Conspiracy theorists believe that the remains of crashed UFO spacecraft are stored at Area 51, an Air Force base about 150 miles north of Las Vegas, where government scientists reverse-engineer the aliens' highly advanced technology. Fodder for this has come from a variety of supposed UFO sightings in the area and testimony from a retired Army colonel who says he was given access to extraterrestrial materials gathered from an alien spacecraft that crashed in Roswell, N.M. Some believe that the government studies time travel at Area 51, also known as Groom Lake or Dreamland.

Area 51 is proof positive that conspiracy theorists aren't used to rational thinking. I don't think any of them ever sat back and realized that the government needs to keep their activities secret. So they put out the rumor mill that there are aliens stored there so that they can test the SR-71, the U-2 spy planes, and the F-117 and other skunk works projects in secret. They know that the weirdos will spread the word about the aliens so that they can keep the skunk works projects secret.

Chapter 9 Miscellaneous: The Unified Conspiracy Theory

The Grand Unified Conspiracy Theory: It sounds complicated, but it's really not. The premise is simple – everything is a conspiracy.... Which ironically includes the conspiracies themselves.

There are many who would argue there is no such thing as a "unifying conspiracy," claiming that history is merely a record of the random path of evolution, the development of civilization into the "post-modern" era of industrial socialism. An excellent exposition on this theme is the book, *Who Rules America Now?* (1983) by G. William Domhoff, professor of sociology and psychology. In his own words, it was his purpose to:

"present systematic evidence that suggests there is a social upper class in the United States that is a ruling class by virtue of its dominant role in the economy and government. It will be shown that this ruling class is socially cohesive, has a basis in the large corporations and banks, plays a major role in shaping the social and political climate, and dominates the federal government through a variety of organizations and methods."

"The upper class as a whole does not do this ruling. Instead, class rule is manifested through the activities of a wide variety of organizations and institutions. These organizations and institutions are financed and directed by those members of the upper class who have the interest and ability to involve themselves in protecting and enhancing the privileged social position of their class. Leaders within the upper class join with high-level employees in the organizations they control to make up what will be called the power elite. This power elite is the leadership group of the upper class, for not all members of the upper class are members of the power elite and not all members of the power elite are members of the upper class. It is members of the power elite who take part in the processes that maintain the class structure."

While that appears correct, insofar as it goes, Domhoff's thesis has its shortcomings. His book contains factual and analytical confusion. Key elements are left out: racial, ethnic, cultural and religious data are carefully avoided. He simply refuses to look in certain places. That is clearly unscientific; one might say, unhistorical. But then, Domhoff never raises the question, "How did the power elite rise to power?" As a sociologist, his job is merely defining the social structure and behavior of this particular social class, leaving it to the historian or the anthropologist to explain how they came to be. As such, he may comfortably presume that the elite have always been in control; that they either inherited this power, or they married into it or they bought their way into the club.

Money is the primary determinant of class in his study, together with membership in certain types of organization, but not others. Masonic Lodges, B'nai B'rith, the National Academy of Sciences and the National Security Council are all too conspicuously absent, though Domhoff does observe the Council on Foreign Relations, and shows particular interest in the Business Council.

His presentation suggests the solution of engaging a third estate, the academic research community, the intellectual elite, to engineer the necessary social changes that will produce social Justice, meaning that academia will mediate disputes arising from the inevitable abuse of authority by this "power elite." Of course, that would also include the question of standing, the determination of whether a particular complaint is even acknowledged to exist. The problem with this is the intellectual elite are part of the social elite whether they want to admit it or not. I've seen case after case of abuses of power in the academic community. Therefore, I don't trust them any more than I trust the wealthy or the politically powerful.

Don't get me wrong, I have a love-hate relationship with the rich and powerful. For example, I've never worked for someone on welfare. The politically powerful can be bought and sold so that they do the bidding their constituents. The academics are a necessary evil in that in order to get good jobs we have to have that piece of paper that tells the world we are educated. The academics also determine who is eligible to issue that piece of paper. Brick and mortar schools, OK. Online schools not OK. In fact, they have determined that these are merely diploma factories. I don't think that any one has ever considered that those who graduate from brick and mortar schools are so full of bullshit their collective eyes are brown.

As to the question, "How does one become a member of the power elite?" Domhoff implies: "Go to a proper boarding school, then to Harvard, earn a Ph.D., seek positions of influence and power, and join the right social clubs." ... And exactly what are these "social clubs?" Domhoff suggests that their primary

membership is drawn from the Social Register. Their function is to enforce certain upper-class values, social attitudes, and to provide an atmosphere where "new ideas" can be floated like "trial balloons" ... something like a Fraternal Lodge, with holy Collective narcissistic resorts in Aspen, St. Moritz, Hollywood, Wall Street, the Florida Keys, London, Paris, and Cannes. One might suppose a highly-paid entertainer, a supermodel or a famous athlete would equally qualify for membership. And of course, the media and paparazzi are ever-present.

Domhoff indicates that the appreciation of real estate values through the escalation of land usage has always been a private concern of the upper class, especially at the local political level. This would explain why the rich built highly restrictive, gated communities, belong to golf clubs, have a home in every exclusive city around the world, why they send their children to the most expensive private schools and universities; so, they can brag to their friends how wonderful they are and so they can justify their elitism.

What's amazing in all of this is that Domhoff's thesis is based entirely upon the classic Marxist ideal of class conflict, to the exclusion of racial, cultural or religious concerns. And in this respect, the "politically correct" upper class of American society do certainly march to the beat of their own self-made drummers. In other words, Domhoff's theory of social elitism and the Unified Conspiracy Theory are not mutually exclusive concepts.

Observe how differently the professor's statement of purpose reads when one substitutes the words Freemason, Zionist, Marxist, Jew, Communist, Mobster, Tycoon, Capitalist, Socialist or Technocrat for the hypothetical and faceless term "power elite:" "those with the interest and ability to involve themselves ... with high-level employees in the organizations they control ... to become the leadership group of the upper class."

The leadership group of the upper class ... not all of whom are even members of the upper class."

I had to read those lines many times over, before their true meaning began to sink in. Of course. The way to join the "power elite" is to become a leader and a trend setter of upper class attitudes, social values and beliefs. The upper class are influenced through the medium of cultural, religious and educational institutions. They personal social worth by whom they know. That's why at various annual film festivals you will find the paparazzi, the fans, the celebrities, the wannabes, and the security hired to protect the celebrities.

Observe how the media, academia, churches and philanthropic institutions today are overwhelmingly socialist, globalist and Marxist; especially in terms of "developed" and "underdeveloped" nations. There is a clear agenda at work. Now observe how Domhoff refers to these institutions as being financed and directed by the "power elite." Just examine their names: Save the Children, Catholic Relief, the Peace Corps, Volunteers of Progress, The UN Refugee Agency, Agency for International Development among others. You only need to look, and see who are the donors, trustees and beneficiaries of our greatest philanthropies.

This "socio-political" agenda has been accomplished through the manipulation of our culture, by rewriting history, applying praise and guilt, making the upper class "feel good" about themselves when they behave in the "politically-correct" manner. Such conditioning is possible when a sect has achieved significant influence within academia and the media. You see, the wealthy are really just sheep. They play follow the leader of the current trends. They generally think and act in exactly the way they believe they are supposed to behave. One simply applauds the very mediocrity of the upper class; the more mediocre they are, the more accolades they are given. Members of Congress, and other high levels in government; celebrities who advocate everything from global warming to their favorite socialist candidate, and Noam Chomsky among other "experts" are splendid examples of this. Men of genius are as rare among the upper class as they are among "the little people."

Support from within the upper class is essential to the success of any cultural, political or religious movement; there has never been a case in history where this is not true. If a cabal for world dominion does exist, we would expect to find it operating within our cultural, educational and religious institutions; all of which are being drawn into academia and functioning in both capacities: indoctrinating the upper class with a desired set of social attitudes, and also purging these institutions of unwanted contrary influence: freethinking individuals (Those who fight political correctness), religious institutions that deviate from the

norms (Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses), Political Mavericks (Donald Trumps and the Conservative Tea Party Members), the Corporate world (Small businesses and rural farms and ranches), Academic institutions that deviate from the traditional schools and universities (BYU, Online Universities, and Applied Technical Colleges) Weed out the latter, construct barriers between the rich, the powerful, and the intellectual, and the commoner, or as they like to call us, "the little guy."

The existence of the "political-correctness" movement within academia is evidence that such a conspiracy very well may exist. Consider the following events, resulting from Lee Bass' 1991 endowment of \$20 million to Yale University in order to finance 7 tenured professors (\$14 mil), 2 associates (\$2 mil), and to provide logistical support (\$4 mil):

"When in 1995, Yale returned \$20 million given by Lee Bass to form a Western Civilization studies program, President Richard Levin claimed that logistical difficulties made implementing the project unfeasible and expensive. "Yale's approval of the new Ethnicity, Race, and Migration (ER&M) major on March 6, 1997 codifies the highly politicized nature of Yale's curricular policy. Over the past few years this policy has repeatedly thwarted attempts to bolster Western Civilization programs while encouraging ER&M, Feminist and Gay Studies majors. Those administrative obstacles supposedly fatal to the Bass proposal have not blocked the other two programs.

The rejected Bass grant represents more than just the careers of seven professors and two associates doubtless white native American males and their dependent families that might have been; it also represents their would-have-been protégés, the cumulative impact of their respective careers. The impact upon our posterity will certainly be greater than the loss of a football stadium. And it passed with hardly a blink and a whimper.

And so, while the upper class in America are focused upon trivial self-congratulation, they become increasingly predictable, increasingly controllable and increasingly naïve and cut off from the real world; precisely because of their mediocrity and conformism. This is the main theme of Dostoyevsky's novel, *The Idiot*, about how a few manipulative individuals can wreak havoc within a social structure at large.

It is also, for that matter, the methodology of the *Rules for Radicals*; Especially if one can keep the wealthy very busy and self-absorbed, and neatly concerned with socialist nicety, gossip and collapsible philanthropy, they will be incapable of mounting a serious resistance to any outside agenda even the most diabolical form of national subversion simply because they won't be able to see it coming. So it was the same with every kingdom, realm, and empire in history. The nobility got so absorbed in themselves they never the coming of their own demise.

In a more modern perspective, if an underground faction can gain control over the institutions of national culture, and thereby manipulate the attitudes and beliefs of the upper class, subversion of the nation will follow. Now for the test: one must ask himself, "Who are the "power elite," and what is their relationship with the upper class? Who controls the media, culture of entertainment and academia? Who created the media? Who are the main advertisers? Who controls the charitable foundations? Who are the accepted writers, professors, composers and thinkers? Who are the directors, programmers and editors? Who produces the "educational" industrial complex? These questions are easy enough to answer, just follow the money.

Are we afraid to see that the financiers, organizers and policy-makers are globalist, internationalist, multicultural, pro-communist and elitists? That they are all seeking the classic Marxist one-world government? Our social, cultural and educational institutions are all interconnected, they share a common goal, and they all exclude dissent. Professor Domhoff refers to these, collectively, as the "opinion shaping and policy making networks."

Conspiracy theorists also bring into the discussion the Council on Foreign Relations, but of more immediate concern are the National Security Council, the Secretaries of Treasury and Defense, the International Space Agency and the National Academy of Sciences. They are financed by and interconnected with the central banking firms, stock exchanges, multinationals and universities; that they represent the interests of the importers, the distributors, merchandisers and finance agents; that they are also among the largest developers and institutional property-owners. Since many of these theorists are snit-Semitic, they have an overwhelmingly urge to bring the Jews in the mix as the ones who control the whole

conspiracy. As one continues downward in his study of the power structure as it exists today, from the pinnacle to the base of the pyramid, to examine state and local governments, chambers of commerce, law firms, party bosses, union leaders, political activists and social scientists, teachers, media owners, advertisers, civil defense and communications, doctors and psychologists, committee-persons, planning boards, arts and cultural organizers; The same pattern emerges and once again, an almost-complete absence of dissent as the majority are lulled into a complete false sense of security.

My TI in Basic Training used to tell us that we were the ones who were designated to protect the freedoms of the majority of Americans. These people are those who are totally oblivious to anything else in the world. That's for us to worry about. The greatest concern is who shot JR Ewing? Who is winning the super bowl? And what celebrity is marrying and which ones are divorcing? As far as politics and religion most people have been programmed to avoid any discussion of politics, religion and history. Everything they know they get from the mainstream media or the fringe conspiracy theorists.

It is that silence of dissent that is so convincing. It is so very near complete, there is but the faintest wail. You can hear it in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, which postulates a time when no one will have the opportunity to be heroic, when great art will be sacrificed on the altar of universal happiness. Children will be bred by the state and conditioned to feel happy in their pre-assigned social roles. That was in 1932. Much of what he predicted has already occurred.

You can hear it in Dostoyevsky, *The Idiot*, is an ironic reference to the central character of the novel, Prince (Knyaz) Lev Nikolaevich Myshkin; a young man whose goodness and open-hearted simplicity lead many of the worldlier characters he encounters to mistakenly assume that he lacks intelligence and insight. In the character of Prince Myshkin, Dostoevsky set himself the task of depicting "the positively good and beautiful man." The novel examines the consequences of placing such a unique individual at the center of conflict, desires, passions and egotism of worldly society, both for the man himself and for those with whom he becomes involved.

"The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg" by Mark Twain also addresses this naiveté of the town that is supposedly incorruptible. They offend a stranger and he vows to get revenge. He introduces greed and discontent into the town and in the resulting chaos destroys the town from the inside out. Mark Twain had his own experience with the elite. Many from the ivy League didn't consider Twain a valid author because he did have a degree from Harvard or one of the other elite universities. Because of that he was also not allowed to join any of the elitist writers' societies. Later in his life after he had become a recognized author worldwide, he was given an honorary doctorate by Oxford University in England. He was proud of that degree because he figured he had made it. He enjoyed wearing his red robes at public events. I would guess he wanted to show off to the elites that he had an honorary degree. It is also to me that of all the critics who used to criticize his work so disparagingly are all forgotten, while Mark Twain is considered the father American Literature.

Theorists see that the work of Professor Domhoff and his colleagues, who are sociologists, psychologists and primarily Jews, is most enlightening; one might even say critical to our understanding of the situation in which we find ourselves today. So long as we are aware that they have an interest in deflecting our attention away from the significance of the fact that they are Jews. They seem so concerned that Jews are in charge. What about Muslims and the caliphate? Communists and the world revolution? American politicians who aren't Jewish but are also corrupted? Not all Jews are rich, powerful, or academics. What of those Jews? There are plenty Christians who are corrupt. What of them? The Conspiracy Theorists insist on oversimplifying events in the world as being a Jewish plot to destroy and enslave the world.

The Conspiracy Theorists also observe how, at the highest institutional levels, the power of Freemasonry has been largely overthrown from its preeminence of two hundred years past. The fall of Freemasonry has been matched by a corresponding rise in the power and prestige of the Jews, and of their centrality within cultural, scientific and educational institutions. It is as though the power structure that had been built by Freemasonry has become crystalized, institutionalized, and the Jews have quietly slid into the driver's seat, inviting in all of their friends.

The purpose of a conspiracy theory is to uncover who, or what, has been working so silently and invisibly all of these years to bring about our downfall and, perhaps, to understand why. At this point in the argument, The Conspiracy Theorists will present the barest outline of the history the all-encompassing grand conspiracy theory. Beginning as they are what matters is that the theory they are presenting can be reconciled with world power as it is known to exist today, and with the historical chain of events that has led to America's present condition. They try to reconcile current events with their own selective interpretation of the Judeo-Christian scriptures.

The picture, thus far unfolded, is that Freemasonry had successfully contained the forces behind the American Revolution. By 1789, the Masonic Lodges had achieved their objective in the creation of the Constitution of the United States of America. One could almost add an "Inc." onto the end of that, because this Constitution had been imposed for the singular purpose of restoring the briefly-sovereign states to their original condition as subsidiary incorporations under a higher authority.

Of course, no discussion can ignore the domination of the Rothschilds, Rockefellers and Warburg's, on international finance. The theorists believe that these "evil" organization are murdering America:

"Right now, I have reached the point to where I am totally saddened by the fact that there is such a mass betrayal of the Unites States of America by Americans born and bred here. What has become of the "home of the brave and the land of the free?" Friends, here is where we are at right now; We that are strong are going to have to bear with those of us that might be weaker. We that are more, more insightful into current events and history, and maybe even more spiritual in our thinking...must not leave behind our family and friends when it comes to, or, should it come down to having to locate a more geographically, safe place. Otherwise, be prepared for your very own "remember the Alamo. "My white brothers and sisters, it will be time to "go for all the marbles."¹¹⁷

At this point the Conspiracy theorists take on an interesting ride through history and explain how the Jews infiltrated and conquered many of the ancient empires, the Freemasons, and the Illuminati. The Illuminati, were agents of He-Khabbalot Yahudim.¹¹⁸ They managed to subvert the Freemasons and the institutions that they had so carefully constructed. Just as the Cabal¹¹⁹ in ancient Babylon twice betrayed that city, opening its gates first to Cyrus the Mede and later to Darius the Persian, so He-Khabbalot have thrown open America's gates to admit, first the Jews, and then the tide of third-world migration.

The Jews are merely instruments in the hands of He-Khabbalot; the Jews are the handiwork and also the carriers of the cabal. Interestingly, the Masonic Lodge teaches much the same thing: that the secret knowledge of Hiram Abiff was far older than even the Hebrews; that it reaches back before the time of Egypt of the pharaohs to Samaria, in the most distant past, and the Chaldean Magi.

¹¹⁷ This is a very good example of how Conspiracy Theorists regard themselves as the only true Americans, the ones who know more than the rest, who are more insightful, more spiritual, stronger than all the rest. It is up to them to save America from all the evil plotters in the world.

¹¹⁸ The Jewish kabbala: Kabbalah an esoteric method, discipline, and school of thought that originated in Judaism. A traditional Kabbalist in Judaism is called a Mekubbal (מקובל). Kabbalah is a set of esoteric teachings meant to explain the relationship between an unchanging, eternal, and mysterious Ein Sof (infinity)[4] and the mortal and finite universe (God's creation). Kabbalah originally developed within the realm of Jewish tradition, and kabbalists often use classical Jewish sources to explain and demonstrate its esoteric teachings. These teachings are held by followers in Judaism to define the inner meaning of both the Hebrew Bible and traditional Rabbinic literature and their formerly concealed transmitted dimension, as well as to explain the significance of Jewish religious observances. Historically, Kabbalah emerged, after earlier forms of Jewish mysticism, in 12th- to 13th-century Southern France and Spain, becoming reinterpreted in the Jewish mystical renaissance of 16th-century Ottoman Palestine. Safed Rabbi Isaac Luria is considered the father of contemporary Kabbalah.

¹¹⁹ A cabal is a group of people united in some close design together, usually to promote their private views or interests in an ideology, state, or other community, often by intrigue, usually unbeknown to persons outside their group. The use of this term usually carries strong connotations of shadowy corners, back rooms and insidious influence. The term cabal derives from Cabala (a word that has numerous spelling variations), the Jewish mystical interpretation of the Hebrew scripture.

And so it is with anything purported to be secret. Those in the know, the conspiracy theorists have figured out these secrets and now are the voice of warning as they interpret these secrets for the rest of us.

It was necessary for them to construct a dialectic, an antithesis, a contra-Freemasonic force that would act as a check and perpetual balance. This was the purpose for which the Illuminati were created, to act within both Freemasonry and the rising socialist movements, later Marxism, as agents-provocateur¹²⁰ in the service of the "Secret Chiefs," who themselves would be manipulating the two parties into a paralysis of equilibrium.

In their own version of world history, Napoleon and Lincoln were both collaborators in selling out to the Jews. Our forefathers who were Freemasons, wrote the Constitution, the Declaration Independence, and established our political, financial and religious institutions as a way to enslave all of us to the Jews. It was to this end that the tension in America was pushed to the extreme of the Civil War, to shatter the existing order so that the socialists could rise to equal power within the Republic. It was to this end that the Illuminati became active in the leadership of the abolitionists, the feminists, the utopians, the Unitarians and their allied socialist movements, organizing a coalition that still survives today.

It was this dialectic, a conflict between the two polarities of Masonic (pantheistic) capitalism and Illuminist (atheistic) socialism, that shaped America as we know it, with the financiers of the Jewish Kabbala characteristically playing both ends against the middle. They refer to a scripture from the Old Testament from Isaiah who they consider a false prophet, "from the mountain of the Lord's house" is described as an institution of education and law, neither a religion nor a national government, but a complete social governing system; that, as this new ordering of the ages progressed, nation-states would be superseded by global institutions, and that to crystallize these emergent institutions into the infrastructure of Zion, the Illuminati themselves, the agitators, the agents of change, would be transformed from revolutionaries into icons.

This reminds me of a man I met in North Carolina in the 70s who explained to me how the Jews and Blacks are related. He told me that when God created Adam he used white colored mud. Then he went to a swamp and used blue-black mud to create the Jew and the Black man. That is why they are not human and should not have the same rights as the rest of us. I wanted to laugh at his creative version of history and would have, but I didn't want him to think was part of the Jewish conspiracy.

The Illuminati, who had by the late-18th century gone underground to form cryptic reading societies, emerged from this developmental period as professors and ministers of the Enlightenment, politicians, academicians and social leaders. It is therefore not surprising to find that most of the Illuminati agents were indeed Gentiles, and not Jews. Against such a backdrop, neither is it surprising to find that the most honored of our Founding Fathers were also being played as pawns of the Jewish conspiracy

What we see here is evidence of how, some twenty-five years after the American Revolution, and thirteen years after creation of the Constitution, the two major factions of European-American Freemasonry had become submissive under Jewish leadership. The American Lodge of St. Andrew, which claims the Templar heritage, is being Illuminated by Sephardic Jews, as had their Stuart-Jacobean brethren in France been illuminated by the Ashkenazim.

The other Freemasonic lineage is the Hanoverian Lodge of St. John (the Pretender), whose roots go back to the British, French, Dutch and German Rosicrucian's. The Sephardic bankers of Holland had orchestrated and then financed the rise to power of Oliver Cromwell, who allowed the Jews to resurface in England, and then William, Duke of Orange, who chartered the Bank of England as a means of repayment to his benefactors.

By leveraging their capital stock in the British East India Company, controlled by the Sephardic Jews, with their existing holdings in the Dutch West India Company, who were controlled by the Ashkenazi Jews, the Jewish Conspiracy soon gained control of the capital stock of the Bank of England. This move corresponded with the Illumination of the Lodge of St. John (the Pretender) by way of the Rosicrucian's. Thus, virtually all of Freemasonry was Judaized over the course of three centuries.

¹²⁰ An agent provocateur is a person who commits, provokes, or who acts to entice another person to commit an illegal or rash act or falsely implicate them in partaking in an illegal act.

If one assumes this ultimate source of intrigue as being the Bavarian Illuminati, we know that their initiations were completed, not by Adam Weishaupt, but by the Baron von Knigge. The Baron, who had been Weishaupt's chief organizer and financier, was also a member of the Chabrath Zerek Boqer Aur, a much older Jewish-Masonic lodge based in Frankfurt, which was also the point of origin for the most powerful of the German-Jewish central bankers: the Rothschilds, the Speyer's, the Oppenheimers, the Seligman's, the Haber's and the Bethmanns.

So now the circle is almost complete. The Jews took over the freemason, they infiltrated the American government banks, then they infiltrated the European and British banking system and so now they are in a position to create money, and it is here that all of the threads in the Wacked out version of the conspiracy theorists' version of history come together at that same point, in time and place.

They now bring in the Kabbalah to show that the world has had this burning desire to know the secrets of Jewish mysticism. It was in 917 AD. that Aaron ben Samuel, a Babylonian scholar and a Jew, arrived in Italy. He carried with him the texts and ancient oral traditions of the Practical Kabbalists, known to have existed at least as far back as the time of King Solomon, who had himself been a sorcerer. Whereas the Speculative Kabbalists were well-known to be harmless mystics and holy men, the Practical Kabbalists were given over to the quest for worldly power, becoming the Grand Masters of illusion, the arch-deceivers.

In the meantime, a radical change had swept throughout Europe and the Islamic world. At the time of Aaron ben Samuel, the Jews were in control of virtually all commerce and banking throughout the Mediterranean, Northern Europe and eastward as far as Pakistan. This was the Golden Age of the Diaspora, when Jews had become privileged in virtually every court as doctors, advisors, financiers, navigators, mapmakers, scribes, lawyers, alchemists and astrologers.¹²¹ Then suddenly, with the start of the Crusades, the Jews were set upon, cast down and slaughtered throughout the Christian parts of the world.

The First Crusade, in 1095, was under the military leadership of Godfrey de Bouillon. After the sack of Jerusalem in 1097, Godfrey, allegedly a Merovingian and Grand Master of the newly-formed (1070 AD) Prier de Sion, co-founded the Knights Templar, an order of warrior-monks drawn from the ranks of the nobility, for the purpose of protecting pilgrims to the Holy Land.

The "calls for help" from the Byzantine Empire to fight the Turks have been perhaps overstated. The fortress of Constantinople contained a vast hoard of wealth dating back to Alexander the Great. The Byzantines could well-afford to hire on the Franks as mercenaries. The Church needed to transfer the Frankish Knights' loyalty from the French king to the Pope, and a Crusade provided the opportunity. While the main Turkish force was arrayed against Byzantium, the Crusaders struck at the exposed Turkish flank in Jerusalem.

There only remained the question of how the Knights would be paid. King Baldwin was appointed Prince of Jerusalem by the Holy See. The Knights Templar became his de-facto government, and they immediately set about fortifying their newly-created kingdom with modern castles built for them by the Masons. Within ten years, the Knights and an affiliated organization, the Knights Hospitaliers were to amass a vast fortune in land, castles and merchant fleets, as well as a banking monopoly that was protected by a special Papal dispensation allowing the Knights to engage in usury or collecting interest.

This is the key to understanding the Crusades: the rise in importance of merchant-banking. We must remember that, at the time, intelligence-gathering was an important function of the traveling merchant class, later called the merchant adventurers, and that the eleventh-century bankers and caravan masters formed the nexus of what was to evolve into our modern intelligence and banking systems.

The two functions are inextricable from one another. By either providing or withholding information, they could influence political affairs. By setting of rates of exchange, the merchant bankers could either drain a city of its capital, and send wealth and commerce its way. And thus, it was that the merchant bankers and the upstart Venetians were rising to challenge the temporal power of the Papacy, and usurp its role as king-maker. Thus, both the aristocracy and the Papacy were threatened.

¹²¹ We must remember that not all Jews were part of this privileged class of the rich and powerful. Most Jews lived in ghettos and just barely survived anyway they could. But the Christians and Muslims used the Jews as scapegoats to divert attention away from the Crusades and Jihad. Similar to what is going on today.

The ensuing call for Holy War was preached across Europe by itinerant monks such as the Benedictines, St. Bernard and the Cistercians who could whip the people of the towns they visited into a religious frenzy. To purge Christendom of evil heresy, and to avenge the "Blood of Christ," the mob would then be allowed into the Jewish quarter. In the murder and rampage that ensued, the Crusader Knights would suddenly appear on the scene as "Lords and Saviors" and thus whole armies could be marshaled "on-the-fly." And the occasion also demonstrated to the Jews how, during the Knights' absence on Crusade, there would be no one to protect them from the next mob, which could be summoned at any time by the Church.

And so, while on their way to the Holy Land, Godfrey and the Knights of the Priore de Sion had quietly strong-armed their way into the Jewish merchant-banking establishment, and taken over the operation. This was Pope Urban II's "Rough Wooing" of the Jews. After the first blood-letting, the surviving Jews were kept on as tax-gatherers, banking associates, war financiers, and brokers for converting loot into wealth. And it does make military sense, before marching off to fight the Turks, that one first "put the Jews in their place."

So, it is fair to say that a great portion of the Templar wealth had been stolen from the Jews, or that the Papacy had handed over the Jewish merchant-banking "franchise" to the Knights Templar in payment for their services; but the situation goes still deeper than that. From the captive Jews' perspective, while the Pope had indeed put a sword to their throats, the Templars helped bring in new business, in fact, a great deal of new business and it turned out that St. Bernard the anti-Semite was also a very talented salesman. This was the beginning of a very strange relationship when the Knights Templar and the Jews were becoming merchant-banking partners.

The Priore de Sion, parent organization to the Knights Templar, had actually been established before the First Crusade, and very likely to gather and evaluate Jewish and Islamic occultism as a sort of counter-intelligence operation who were to report directly to the Pope. The Jews had simply become too powerful in Europe, the Holy Roman Empire that had been created by Charlemagne was beginning to break up, and the Papacy was trying to draw the center of power from Paris to Rome. The Franks were to be merged into the Holy Roman Empire, and their power absorbed by the Church in Rome.

Thus, it was intended that the Knights Templar become an independent body, in order that they be removed from the French king's authority. At what point the confiscation of the Jewish merchant-banking establishment occurs is merely a question of opportunity. It was done when it could be done. The dates traditionally given for the foundation of the Knights Templar record stages in this institution.

But something else was happening that, in all likelihood, the Papacy had not foreseen. As the Templars began to learn the art of merchant-banking from their Jewish captives, they also began to assimilate the mythical and occult knowledge of the Jews. The Templars were becoming crypto-Jews themselves. In time, they would be seen as the "bad boys" of Christendom from the Papal perspective because of their willingness to deal with heretics and apostates.

There was still more at stake. Not only were the Knights stealing the Jewish banking enterprise, the Church was attempting to steal the Jewish mystique. The Crusades were being transformed by Urban II and his successors into a "Christian" attempt at creating a counterfeit Zion, a false fulfillment of the Hebrew Prophecies. The merger of the Franks is a perfect example of this. The Church succeeded with the Franks, but ultimately failed in her enterprise; the next attempt would be made by the Freemasons, the successors to the Knights Templar, at a later age.

The other thing to understand is the difference between the Knights Templar and the Knights Hospitaliers. The Templars were both a military and a religious order, and they took a vow of chastity. The Hospitaliers were not required to do this. And while the Templars were drawn into dealings at first with Jews, and later Turks, Arabs, Egyptians and Moors, the Hospitaliers remained aloof, thus displaying complete loyalty to their Pope, content to be his pit-bulls on a leash. The Templars were too-quickly becoming independent-minded, willing to compromise with heretics. And so, when tending to their own business matters, the Hospitaliers tended to align themselves with the Venetians.

So, a rift had appeared within Christendom: on the one hand the Hospitaliers and the Venetians, and on the other hand the Templars and the Jews. Urban II had perhaps bitten off more than he could chew.

He had acted out of opportunism if not desperation, and he was never in a position to seize the entire Jewish Nation. Has anyone been able to eradicate the Jewish Nation? That fact right there is proof positive that there is something to the legend of the Jews as the Chosen People.

The Crusades had not yet ventured into Spain or Poland. The Sephardic Jews still controlled a merchant-banking network that extended from Spain across Africa to Egypt, and from Poland across the Ottoman Empire to Arabia, and from Babylon eastwards almost to China. Sooner or later they would avenge their loss to the Christians. In the meantime, the Knights Templar had acquired the largest portion: they controlled money and trade from the Eastern Mediterranean to Italy and across Western Europe as far as the British Isles. But within this trade-zone, the Venetians and Hospitaliers controlled the sea lanes from Cyprus to Rhodes and Malta. This alliance was to last for nearly two centuries.

The Templars also had, from time to time, alternative trade routes running through Constantinople, and through Alexandria to Tunis and Sicily. And so, they were not entirely at the Venetians' mercy. But the Templars' prestige ultimately rested upon their presence in the Holy Land, or at least Cyprus, necessitating the goodwill of the Hospitaliers, and a working relationship with their Jewish merchant-bankers. Over time, that working relationship grew to a sort of fondness for Jews in general.

The notion that there existed apocryphal books that unlocked the secrets of the Hebrew Prophecies was irresistible to the Templars, and the Masons, the Hospitaliers and the Venetians, the Pope, and all his anointed monarchs of Europe. Of course, the complete Kabbala was known only to the Kalonymides and their Sephardic brethren. At the time, the Templars were shown only tantalizing bits and pieces. Before long, the Jewish servants were becoming the teachers, and the Templars began to quietly accept Jews into their ranks for the purpose of the knowledge and power to be gained. The hofjuden or the Court Jews were also beginning to rise in various European courts, at the invitation of aristocratic patrons. These are the beginnings of "Christian Cabbalism."

By degrees, as the mysticism released by the Kalonymides were "discovered" by Papal spies, the Crusades were transformed by the Papacy itself into a campaign against heresy, and the Christian Knights were redirected against fellow Christians. The horrors of the Albigensian Crusade and the Fourth Crusade are but the clearest examples. The Albigensian Crusade or the Cathar Crusade (1209–1229) was a 20-year military campaign initiated by Pope Innocent III to eliminate Catharism in Languedoc, in southern France. The Crusade was prosecuted primarily by the French crown and promptly took on a political flavor, resulting in not only a significant reduction in the number of practicing Cathars, but also a realignment of the County of Toulouse in Languedoc, bringing it into the sphere of the French crown and diminishing the distinct regional culture and high level of influence of the Counts of Barcelona in Spain.

The medieval Christian radical sect of the Cathars, against whom the crusade was directed, originated from an anti-materialist reform movement within the Bogomil churches of Dalmatia and Bulgaria calling for a return to the Christian message of perfection, poverty and preaching, combined with a rejection of the physical to the point of starvation. The reforms were a reaction against the often scandalous and dissolute lifestyles of the Catholic clergy in southern France.

Their theology, neo-Gnostic in many ways, was basically dualist. Several of their practices, especially their belief in the inherent evil of the physical world, conflicted with the doctrines of the Incarnation of Christ and sacraments, initiated accusations of Gnosticism and brought them the ire of the Catholic establishment. They became known as the Albigensians, because there were many adherents in the city of Albi, France and the surrounding area in the 12th and 13th centuries.

Between 1022 and 1163, the Cathars were condemned by eight local church councils, the last of which, held at Tours, declared that all Albigenses should be put into prison and have their property confiscated. The Third Lateran Council of 1179 repeated the condemnation. Innocent III's diplomatic attempts to roll back Catharism met with little success. After the murder of his legate, Pierre de Castelnau, in 1208, Innocent III declared a crusade against the Cathars. He offered the lands of the Cathar heretics to any French nobleman willing to take up arms.

From 1209 to 1215, the Crusaders experienced grand success, capturing Cathar lands and perpetrating incidents of extreme violence. From 1215 to 1225, a series of revolts resulted in the loss of

lands from the Crusades back to the Cathars. A renewed crusade resulted in recapturing the territory and effective destruction of Catharism by 1244. The Albigensian Crusade also had a role in the creation and institutionalization of both the Dominican Order and the Medieval Inquisition. The Dominicans promulgated the message of the Church to combat alleged heresies by preaching the Church's teachings in towns and villages, while the Inquisition investigated heresies.

The Fourth Crusade was another that exemplified the horrors of the overzealous crusades. The Fourth Crusade (1202–04) was a Western European armed expedition called by Pope Innocent III, originally intended to reconquer Muslim-controlled Jerusalem by means of an invasion through Egypt. Instead, a sequence of events concluded in the Crusaders sacking the city of Constantinople, the capital of the Christian-controlled Byzantine Empire.

In January 1203, en route to Jerusalem, the majority of the crusader leadership entered into an agreement with the Byzantine prince Alexios Angelos to divert to Constantinople and restore his deposed father as emperor. The intention of the crusaders was then to continue to the Holy Land with promised Byzantine financial and military assistance. On 23 June 1203, the main crusader fleet reached Constantinople. Smaller parties continued to Acre, in Palestine; now Israel.

In August 1203, following clashes outside Constantinople, Alexios Angelos was crowned co-Emperor as Alexios IV Angelos with crusader support. However, in January 1204, he was deposed by a popular uprising in Constantinople. The Western crusaders were no longer able to receive their promised payments, and when Alexios was murdered on 8 February 1204, the crusaders and Venetians decided on the outright conquest of Constantinople. In April 1204, they captured and brutally sacked the city, and set up a new Latin Empire as well as partitioning other Byzantine territories among themselves.

Byzantine resistance based in unconquered sections of the empire such as Nicaea, Trebizond, and Epirus ultimately recovered Constantinople in 1261. The Fourth Crusade is considered to be one of the more prominent acts in the Great Schism between the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, and a key turning point in the decline of the Byzantine Empire and Christianity in the Near East. Following the military setbacks and blunders that were more frequently occurring, the Knights Templar were forced to abandon Jerusalem. Most of them went to southern France, to live among the Diaspora Jews and the surviving Cathars, but this upset the balance of power, threatening both the French king and Papacy in Rome. The Hospitaliers more fortuitously entrenched themselves on the islands of Cyprus, Rhodes and Malta to await the outcome.

Philippe the Fair, King of France, had his own solution to the problem. Rather than wait for the Jews and Templars to play him off against the Pope, he would seize the Papacy and crush the Templars, behind whom hid the Jews. By murder, intrigue, and most likely with Venetian assistance, he eliminated two popes and placed his puppet Clement V on the Papal Throne. Meanwhile, it appears that Edward I of England surmised Philippe's intent with Venetian assistance, and correctly gauged the wind, because in 1301 he expelled the Jews from England and commenced his war against Scotland.

The Jews, if not the Templars, understood that Philippe was at the heart of the affair, and they endeavored to undermine his power by collapsing his currency, and they succeeded in devaluating this by 65%. That event set off civil rioting in Paris, and Philippe was forced to seek refuge in the Paris temple in 1305. The Templars did not simply throw Philippe to the dogs is evidence that they were either receiving faulty intelligence from their allies or they didn't believe what the intelligence was saying. For whatever reason, it appears that the Knights Templar were increasingly being targeted because of their naiveté.

In 1306, Philip the Fair attacked the Jews and expelled them from his kingdom. This was a direct blow to the Templar infrastructure, because without their Jewish partners, the Templars would be unable to maintain their financial empire, especially with the Venetians waiting in the wings. The Templars were caught in a trap. If they defend the Jews, they would be sealing their own fate, aligning themselves with heretics and worse. Up to this point they had refrained from killing fellow Christians, and the latter Crusades had been primarily Venetian and Hospitalier adventures. For the Templars now to draw swords against Christendom would destroy whatever good the Order had accomplished. They had but little choice except go out in a blaze of glory.

On Friday, 13th of October, 1307, Philippe the Fair suddenly arrested all of the Knights Templar in his realm that he could lay hands upon, put them to the torture, and extracted confessions of heresy and worse. They were then handed over to the Inquisitors of Pope Clement V, which upheld the convictions and sentences and had the Knights burned at the stake. Jacques DeMolay, then Grand Master of the Priure de Sion, was among the martyrs. To this day, Freemasonry still swears to avenge his death.

The properties confiscated from the Templars were divided up between Philip and the Venetians, with the Hospitaliers also inheriting a substantial portion but much appears to have slipped quickly through their fingers. The more successful of the Hospitaliers and their families later became prominent Papal and Swiss bankers. The famed Knights of Malta also came from their ranks, as did many Jesuits. The conspiracy theories allege that that Christopher Columbus had been a Knight Hospitalier who was married to the daughter of a Grand Master of the Knights of Christ, one of the Templars' successors. However, there is no evidence that this was true.

Some of the surviving Knights Templar had escaped to Argyll in Scotland, where they received protection from their allies, the Masons; this was the beginning of the "Accepted" rites of Freemasonry, the admission of non-stonemasons into the Masonic lodges. Others fled to Portugal and Spain, and still others to Germany and Poland. Many of these resumed their ties with Diaspora Jewry, and thus remained in contact with Kabbalistic teachings, which were now taking root in fertile soil.

Shortly after the Templar expulsions another order of Christian Kabbalists, the Rosicrucian's, began to emerge among the aristocracy in Central Europe. This is sometimes referred to as The Order of Strict Observance, which claimed a Templar heritage, and was a forerunner to the Illuminati. They continued the search for hidden knowledge, intent on unlocking the secrets of the Kabbalah, parts of which were still missing from their hands. Interestingly, there was an active Jewish presence in Poland, Austria, Hungary, France, the Germany and the Papal States at the same time, reflected in the rise of the hofjuden, or court-Jews in these same countries.

As the Protestant Reformation began to sweep across northern Europe in the 16th century, the Sephardic Jews and Jewish converts To Catholicism, were allowed back into the Protestant kingdoms, notably Holland, Denmark, Germany and The Hague. In France, the Houses of Guise and Lorraine remained outwardly Roman Catholic, but they had secretly embraced Rosicrucianism and were conspiring to capture the French throne. The Sephardic bankers quickly reestablished themselves as the most prominent merchant-financiers in Northern Europe; and this facilitated the infiltration of Jewish Kabbalists into the expanding Rosicrucian societies.

John Dee, Robert Fludd and others brought the Rosicrucian teachings to England during the reign of Elizabeth and, following the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, Jewish and Flemish mercers began to appear in more frequent numbers among the merchant-adventurers of London. By the time James I ascended to the throne, beginning the reign of the House of Stuart, Rosicrucian's were firmly entrenched within British Freemasonry, and by 1630 a Rosicrucian college had been established in London.

For some reason, the Sephardic merchant-bankers wanted to unseat the Stuart Dynasty, and they began an economic attack on the English crown from their base in the Netherlands, using the same tactics of currency devaluation that had been used against Philippe the Fair. Charles I, was never able to satisfy the Dutch Sephardim, even though he, too, patronized the Rosicrucian's.

As the currency-war intensified, Oliver Cromwell began his civil war, supported by the merchant-adventurers, and financed by the Dutch Jews. More and more Sephardim began slipping into England from the Netherlands, and these often intermarried with wealthy British merchant families. Lady Diana Spencer had such a pedigree, dating back to a Jewish mercer who married into the English nouveau-riche, and then purchased a false pedigree and coat-of-arms. There is no proof of this either. The person who wrote this ant-Semitic article to explain how the Jews and Catholic military orders intertwined with the royalty of Europe and tried to obtain the mysticism and the occult of the Jewish Kabbala.

It seems humorous to me that many Christians and Muslims have had this desire to possess the knowledge of the Jewish Kabbala because they believed that if they did, they would be able to possess the power and wealth of the Jewish people. This had nothing at all to do with religion. It had everything to do

with the lust for power, wealth, and real estate. This is nothing new. This lust and greed has been plaguing mankind ever since antiquity.

By the time of the Glorious Revolution that put William, the Duke of Orange, on the throne and led to the establishment of the Bank of England in 1694, Kabbalism and Rosicrucian teachings had become firmly entrenched within Scottish, French, and finally British Freemasonic Lodges. This marked the appearance of the "higher degrees," sometimes referred to as the Jewish Degrees (John Daniel, *Scarlet & the Beast*): the formation of the Bank of England consummated this 4-way marriage of British Freemasonry with the Sephardic merchant bankers, the merchant adventurers, and the Rosicrucian Kabbalists.

The world money system with the exception of the Venetian-Swiss-Papal branch of the Hospitaliers was once again in the hands of the Jews, and the Freemasons were now their silent partners. Henceforth, international Jewry would have it in its power to bring down the entire European economic system, or any part thereof. Needless to say, this gave both the Sephardic bankers and the hofjuden direct access to the various Crowns of Europe, and considerable influence over subsequent policy.

But the memory of Edward I of England, who had expelled the Jews during the Second Crusade, ran deep. The "Secret Chiefs" understood that England would never be large or diverse enough to serve as the staging-ground for Jewish world dominion, as foretold in the Hebrew Prophecies. Nor, for that matter, could any country in Europe. Now we get to the crux of the matter. These anti-Semitic writers have outed themselves. The real reason for their fear and loathing of the Jews is that they allege the Jews are going to dominate the world.

The spirit of nationalism was also beginning to emerge in Europe by the 17th century, and not only the monarchs and Papacy, but also the common people had demonstrated time and again their willingness to attack the Jews whenever they grew too strong. The Jews needed a place to lay the foundation of Zion, and America was the natural target.

This is not to say that the Jews actually initiated the African slave trade in the New World, although it is interesting to note how the pattern of Sephardic settlement in the Americas exactly parallels the development of the slave trade. Nor is it necessary to argue that the Jews were the originators of the emergent ideals of the "Brotherhood of Man" and "Citizens of the World," soon to be infused into the Abolitionist ideology. The germs of such ideas had long been nascent within Christianity. It was only necessary that the "Secret Chiefs" perceive how these developments could be harnessed to serve the Jewish interest, and that through quiet financial support, the proponents of such ideals might be channeled in the right direction.

The key to understanding this is in the Hebrew Prophecies themselves. It is made absolutely clear that the Jews are first to achieve dominion over the nations of the earth, and then Zion will be proclaimed over the whole. The word "Zion," in Hebrew, has an unknown origin. So, whatever the theorists tell us it means proves that they are on drugs. The Jews tell us that Zion refers to Jerusalem. It has a symbolic meaning as a homeland or land of freedom for all Jews.

The Illuminati, ("enlightened") is a name given to several groups, both real and fictitious. Historically, the name usually refers to the Bavarian Illuminati, an Enlightenment-era secret society founded on 1 May 1776. The society's goals were to oppose superstition, obscurantism, religious influence over public life, and abuses of state power. "The order of the day," they wrote in their general statutes, "is to put an end to the machinations of the purveyors of injustice, to control them without dominating them". The Illuminati, along with Freemasonry and other secret societies, were outlawed through edict, by the Bavarian ruler, Charles Theodore, with the encouragement of the Roman Catholic Church, in 1784. In the several years following, the group was vilified by conservative and religious critics who claimed that they continued underground and were responsible for the French Revolution.

Many influential intellectuals and progressive politicians counted themselves as members, including Ferdinand of Brunswick and the diplomat Xavier von Zwack, who was the Order's second-in-command. It attracted literary men such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Johann Gottfried Herder and the reigning dukes of Gotha and Weimar.

In subsequent use, "Illuminati" refers to various organizations which claim or are purported to have links to the original Bavarian Illuminati or similar secret societies, though these links are unsubstantiated. They are often linked conspiracy to control world affairs, by masterminding events and planting agents in governments and corporations, in order to gain political power and influence and to establish a New World Order. They are central to some of the most widely known and elaborate conspiracy theories. The Illuminati have been depicted as lurking in the shadows and pulling the strings and levers of power to organize the dialectic counterbalance to the power of Freemasonry.

Between 1797 and 1798, Augustin Barruel's *Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism* and John Robison's *Proofs of a Conspiracy* publicized the theory that the Illuminati had survived and represented an ongoing international conspiracy. This included the claim that it was behind the French Revolution. Both books proved to be very popular, spurring reprints and paraphrases by others. A prime example of this is *Proofs of the Real Existence*, and *Dangerous Tendency, Of Illuminism* by Reverend Seth Payson, published in 1802. Some of the response to this was critical, for example Jean-Joseph Mounier's *On the Influence Attributed to Philosophers, Free-Masons, and to the Illuminati on the Revolution of France*.

The works of Robison and Barruel made their way to the United States, and across New England, Reverend Jedidiah Morse and others gave sermons against the Illuminati. Their sermons were printed and the matter was followed in newspapers. Concern died down in the first decade of the 1800s, although it revived from time to time in the Anti-Masonic movement of the 1820s and 30s.

Several recent and present-day fraternal organizations claim to be descended from the original Bavarian Illuminati and openly use the name "Illuminati". Some of these groups use a variation on the name "The Illuminati Order" in the name of their own organizations, while others, such as the Ordo Templi Orientis, have "Illuminati" as a level within their organization's hierarchy. However, there is no evidence that these present-day groups have amassed significant political power or influence, and most, rather than trying to remain secret, promote unsubstantiated links to the Bavarian Illuminati as a means of attracting membership.

The Illuminati did not long survive their suppression in Bavaria, and their further mischief and plotting in the work of Barruel and Robison must be considered as the invention of the writers. However, conspiracy theorists and writers such as Mark Dice have argued that the Illuminati have survived to this day. Many conspiracy theories propose that world events are being controlled and manipulated by a secret society calling itself the Illuminati. Conspiracy theorists have claimed that many notable people were or are members of the Illuminati. Presidents of the United States are a common target for such claims.

Other theorists contend that a variety of historical events were orchestrated by the Illuminati, from the French Revolution, the Battle of Waterloo and the assassination of U.S. President John F. Kennedy, to an alleged communist plot to hasten the "New World Order" by infiltrating the Hollywood film industry. Some conspiracy theorists even claim that the Illuminati observe Satanic rituals.

The full Unified Conspiracy Theory is indeed a very difficult concept to master, because the subject is inherently mystic and mysterious; it is hard to believe that such power really does exist, or that mere words might destroy whole nations. The Unified Conspiracy Theory is a conspiracy theory, popular among kooks who see a revolution, a conspiracy, betrayal, secrecy, and treason around every corner. They maintain that all of reality is controlled by a single evil entity that has it in for them. It might be a political entity, like "The Illuminati," or a metaphysical entity, like Satan, but this entity is responsible for the creation and management of everything bad.

Michael Barkun coined the term "superconspiracy" to refer the idea that the world is controlled by an interlocking hierarchy of conspiracies. Similarly, Michael Kelly, a neoconservative journalist, coined the term "fusion paranoia" in 1995 to refer to the blending of conspiracy theories of the left with those of the right into a unified conspiratorial worldview. When facts appear to be threatening one's favorite conspiracy theory, creating a superconspiracy can be very useful as a way of dismissing them all as 'part of the cover-up'.

One should not count on being able to "convert" conspiracy theorists. However, we have some very basic questions which any self-respecting conspiracy theorist should really take the time to reflect upon. Consider the following:

Logistics

- How large is the supposed conspiracy?
- How many people are part of this conspiracy?
- Are there enough of them to carry out the plan?
- What infrastructure and resources does it need?
- How much time and money did it take and where did this money come from?
- If there are many thousands of conspirators, how are they organized?
- Where are the secret conferences held?
- How do they keep track of membership?
- If they are organized through known channels or entities, how do they keep non-members who work there from uncovering the conspiracy?

For instance, the Nazis pulling off the Reichstag fire only required a handful of men and minimal amount of money, while something like faking the Moon landing would require tens of thousands of co-conspirators and untold sums of money to pull off; the rock samples alone might require a decade to forge. This is not to say that a massively large project cannot remain secret: the Manhattan Project created a whole multimillion-dollar industrial infrastructure and managed to remain outside of the public eye basically until the people running it decided to go public in the most explosive way imaginable.

But even that required massive resources to keep secret, was amenable to the kind of compartmentalization that makes keeping large things secret comparatively easy. Even if you are running a factory with thousands of employees, if they aren't told why they're doing what they're doing, then they can't spill all that much, and in the end the project wasn't even secret to the people it needed most to be kept secret from; such as foreign powers like the Soviets, and other enemies; to say nothing of the fact that you could probably have pieced together its existence from a number of open sources for example, noticing the significant drop in the number of American nuclear physicists who published articles during the period, a sign they had been reassigned to Manhattan. The Soviets were aware of this, as it happens, and at about the same time their own publications in the field started not to be published in accessible journals; a sign that they knew.

Benefits

- Who gains what from the conspiracy and for what price?
- Is this the easiest way of gaining it?
- If not, why was it chosen over the easiest way?
- If it is an old conspiracy; who gains what from maintaining it?

Again, the Nazis used the Reichstag fire to scapegoat the communists, it is considered an important factor in their rise to power, and it is hard to imagine that there was an easier way to do it. Conversely, while faking the Moon landing might have been a way to have something to show for the Apollo project, the simpler solution would have been to actually land on the Moon. Also, Richard Nixon is dead, and no one in power has any reason to care about making sure everyone thinks we went to the Moon while he was president.

Exposure

- How likely is it to remain covered up if it has gone on for a long time?
- If there are thousands of conspirators, and the conspiracy has gone on for decades, why have none of them defected?
- Why have none of them leaked the story?

- If many conspirators are dead, why have none of them told the truth on their deathbeds, or in their wills?
- There are many intelligence agencies associated with rival nations, with the ability to expose secrets.
- If, say, the United States government is running a global conspiracy, why haven't the French, Russian, or Chinese intelligence agencies ever revealed it in order to cause a major scandal in the United States?
- If they have, when and where did they do so?

It should be noted that with government-based conspiracy theories one can have issues with the fact there are things about WWI, 100 years ago, that are still classified and therefore unknown to the general public, nullifying these types of questions even with a skeptic, however, these involve what might be termed "rigidly defined areas of doubt and uncertainty" and usually there is significant supporting evidence from other sources.

Plausibility

- Does belief in this theory require accepting inherently contradictive premises that the conspiring entities are incredibly competent, bone stupid, organized, clever, and hopelessly incompetent—all at the same time?

A notorious example Chemtrails. If the U.S. government wished to use chemicals to have effects at ground level, high-altitude dispersion would be the most expensively, stupidly ineffective approach imaginable (as well as readily detected by, say, spectrographs and air sampling). So this theory would require believing in an entity (the U.S. government) that is well-resourced, competent, clever, well-advised, and at the same time hopelessly stupid.

Other examples are "secrets" simultaneously well and carefully kept by extremely powerful and aggressive entities, and known to one or (especially) more "bozos on the bus," who know all about it and talk about them openly on the Web and in real life. Apart from chemtrails a common example is the highly organized and thoroughly secret system of concentration camps operated by FEMA, an agency famous for its amazingly chaotic, clumsy, and ineffective handling of rescue and recovery after Katrina. Alternatively, use any other intensely secret program that could be easily discovered and verified by anyone with a common piece of scientific equipment (or Google).

Denial

Denial is strongly linked with conspiracies in two senses. In one, the conspiracy theorist is in denial of the "official story," which is more often than not the one supported by facts. However, in the second sense, anyone denying the existence of a conspiracy inadvertently proves that it must exist. Denial of on-going conspiracies can be taken as proof that said employees are "in on" whatever conspiracy they are busily denying. Usually, the more they deny, the more conspiracy theorists will take it as proof because, well, "they would say that, wouldn't they!" Furthermore, if people do not deny the theory, this can also be taken as proof on the grounds that "it has never been denied." This applies equally to anyone involved in a large, perhaps mysterious, enterprise, such as "scientists," "the Army," "automobile manufacturers," "Big Science/Petroleum/Tobacco/Florists" etc. That this entire line of reasoning is circular hardly needs pointing out.

A conspiracy theory becomes a total crackpot conspiracy theory when all evidence that might disprove the theory instead becomes co-opted as proof of the "cover-up" of said theory; requiring loyalty, resources, and competence on the part of the conspirators far in excess of what any actual conspiracy can muster.

Dismissal

"Conspiracy theory" can also be used as a snarl word to dismiss a valid worry that a group is up to something. For example, in 1956, the FBI instituted a program called the Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO). They spied on radicals on the left and the right. The objectives were to engage in surveilling, infiltrating, discrediting, and disrupting extreme American political organizations. Considering the sheer number of conspiracies, however, it's inevitable that one or two of them might just be right, but this by no means says that they are generally valid because once a conspiracy theory has been "proven" it ceases to be a conspiracy theory in this sense and just becomes a conspiracy. In 1971 Congress launched an investigation into the program. Many of their tactics were illegal and therefore made information gathered inadmissible in court. They also learned that it wasn't just the FBI, it also involved the CIA, the NSA and the Pentagon. After investigation J. Edgar Hoover shut it down. Under Obama once again the FBI, the CIA, and NSA spied on American citizens, allies, and anyone else who was deemed an enemy of Barack Obama's. Also upon further investigation it was discovered that Kennedy, LBJ, Nixon, and Clinton also used intelligence agencies to spy on Americans.

What They Don't Want You to Know

"There's a similar kind of logic behind all conspiracy theorists. I think ... They don't undertake to prove that their view is true so much as to attack what the other side is saying." (Goertzel) One of the most successful driving forces behind the spread and acceptance of conspiracy theories is the entire concept that they're secret and forbidden pieces of information. This goes far beyond them being merely "juicy" celebrity gossip but right to the heart of how we place value on information. The conspiracy wants everyone to know that they are the only ones to have the inside scoop, they have figured out the plan.

Things become valuable for their rarity, and occasionally for their utility, although a very common but highly useful thing is still cheap; contrast iron and wood for construction with gold and silver, which have useful electronic conduction properties or novel chemical applications but the price of which is derived from their rarity. If it wasn't for this rarity they would be just cheap pieces of metal, used rather than being held in high regard for specialist applications.

The same applies to information; rarity increases value. And just as we can value useless things because they are rare, we can still value information that is rare regardless of its truth value. This is something that has wider reaching consequences in almost all forms of enticement. Fad diets, for example, display this particular turn of phrase very well as healthy eating advice is simple, effective and "free," but make it some "secret trick" and people will spend mega bucks happily despite a free and effective alternative being available.

Within the realm of conspiracy theories, information is highly valuable; indeed, it is made valuable by becoming part of the conspiracy. "What They don't want you to know" is a phrase that is heard and seen everywhere in the conspiracy universe. Because if information is suppressed by the powers that be to keep it away from the masses it must be secret, it must be rare, it must be valuable and therefore it must be true. Therefore, the theory continues to be used to add value, amidst the illusion of truth, to the secret information. In actuality, truth is not a factor. The stranger the conspiracy the better.

It's the same force that drives people to brag about a celebrity that only they have heard of, or say "I know something you don't know," even though this defeats the purpose; nothing is cooler than knowing something someone else doesn't. There are a few other subtle factors at play to boost this. The idea of information being suppressed and withheld romanticizes the idea of the conspiracy. If knowing something that others don't is a big, fat, multi-layered chocolate cake, then being the underdog and fighting against the people who want to stop you is the rich, orgasm-inducing, triple-chocolate icing that spells your name and shouts "happy birthday" with the load of sparklers that gracefully sits atop.

A figure of hate and mistrust to aim emotions at augments the experience; the Illuminati, the mainstream media, it really doesn't matter so long as it's something to absorb additional hatred and scorn. Thus the "powers that be" reinforces the special nature of the information that the conspiracy theory purports to reveal.

The knowledge suppression aspect plays nicely into our thinking about the abhorrence of censorship and the desire to do something good in the world. Meanwhile, the rich and powerful aspect plays nicely into the distrust and hatred people hold for corporations, governments or any organization that exists in the abstract rather than personal.

It's easy to demonize an institution, a person less so. When a skeptic wanders into a conspiracy theorist discussion to refute facts, the ad hominem responses of conspiracy advocates tend to be of the type "you work for the Illuminati," "you're paid by Big Oil," "you're a NASA stooge," or one of countless other very similar such accusations. It's never "you are the Illuminati" or "you work for Big Oil." No, they are faceless and easy targets. Even in the circumstances when conspiracy theorists are capable of pointing the finger at a person they can identify outright; it's always faceless government. They are an easy target because they can't be personified.

Although in the last 40 years personal attacks against individuals have become more and more common. For example, look at the attacks against Reagan, Both Bushes, Clinton, and Obama. Now we even have people make threats to do bodily harm to Trump because of what they see as the embodiment of evil: corporate wealth and political power.

These factors raise the value of the information conspiracy theorists ascribe to "evidence," but unfortunately for them such clichés don't comment on the truth of such information; in fact, they probably count against such things being true. That's why I always say consider the source because for these people it's very likely that this isn't their first conspiracy so they probably already have a reputation for being about one brick shy of a full load.

Latching onto tragedy

An unfortunate and sometimes callous tendency of a diehard conspiracy nut is to instantly claim that a tragedy, be it a shooting, bombing, suicide, or simply stubbing their toe in the morning, is in some way fabricated by or the fault of the government or corporations, religion, or any other vast mysterious conspiracy. This is often done as a form of confirmation bias, motivated primarily by the earnest fervor and outrage that typically dominates a conspiracy theorist's life. Sometimes, such claims are also made cynically, either for political or financial profit. Just look at the mainstream media or the talk show hosts who see conspiracies around every corner depending on their political perspective.

An even more unfortunate corollary of this is that any attempts at alternative explanations or deviations from conventional wisdom are easily smeared as "conspiracy theories," and an overwhelming sentiment thus obtains where tragedies such as mass shootings, bombings, or suicides are "sacred" or "forbidden," and any discussion, whether in good faith or not, is fundamentally disrespectful. This line of reasoning is much more often used cynically by political figures to stifle discussion which could potentially reveal their incompetence, malfeasance, or general corruption.

Misperception of Social Systems

Many of us enjoy more convenience and comfort than ever before. America is more likely to be sitting in long drive-thru lines these days than at the cobbler's table or behind the plow. Yet there is great anxiety about our 240-year-old republic. It might be that Americans fear the institutions we built, governmental, corporate, and societal. They have grown too large, too far of their area of expertise and responsibility. Some wonder: "Are analysts reading our text messages through the cloud? Are newsmen colluding over what they think the best course for the masses might be?" Only 32 percent of Americans say they trust the media; 19 percent say they trust the federal government to do what is right. 2016's "rigged" paranoia might be some side effect of this trivial sense that we are not quite in control, our institutions have grown too extensive to be accountable to us. All of a sudden, we feel less in control of our own destinies.

Social systems exhibit complex forms of order and incorporation which emerge from the non-intentional consequences of intentional action; these developing orders can be mistaken for conspiracies by people who have no real concept of social structure and therefore believe that every aspect of society must be the product of someone's will. For instance, "free" capitalist markets tend to generate oligarchies or even monopolies wherever economies grant competitive advantages and where there is a high transaction cost

for consumers who switch suppliers. For an observer who naively believes that a free market is a level playing field, the formation of oligopolies¹²² seems like an incongruity, which the conspiracy theory conveniently explains.

A variation on this is found when practices that are common in one context are not generally known to the wider public. For instance, the intelligence agencies of the US and USSR during the Cold War routinely shared information which was kept secret from the citizens of both countries. In business, certain levels of collusion among competitors, especially in oligopolistic markets, are fairly common. Such practices look conspiratorial to outsiders and may even be conspiratorial in a strict sense of the term but have little in common with the fantastic conspiracies postulated by crackpots.

A third form of this misperception occurs when conspiracy theorists assume, on the basis of ignorance and stereotyped thinking, that the group who is seemingly responsible for something is innocent. For instance, conspiracy theories suggesting that examples of ancient monumental architecture such as the Egyptian or Mayan pyramids, Stonehenge, the Easter Island statues, must have been the products of aliens because they assume that humans did not have the technology to create these formations. They underestimate ancient humans by judging them in the context of modern technology. If we can't do it today, then someone other than ancient man created these structures; therefore, they assume it was little green men from Mars.

The 9/11 attacks provide an example of all three forms of this misperception. Many powerful American individuals and institutions benefited from the attacks, including the Bush regime itself and its allies in the military-industrial complex. However, this is in no way an indication that the attacks were an American conspiracy; this is just how global geopolitics works: when something major and unexpected happens, one interest group or another will find a way to benefit from it.

As Noam Chomsky has pointed out, 9/11 conspiracy theories actually get in the way of a realistic understanding of global geopolitics and the often-amoral rules by which it is played. Likewise, in the immediate aftermath of the attacks the Bush regime acted quickly to return to Saudi Arabia high-ranking Saudi officials and members of the Bin Laden family who were in the US at the time; this might seem conspiratorial to the average American but is consistent with standard diplomatic practice.

Third, as Immanuel Wallerstein has observed, 9/11 truthers under-estimate the actual organizational capacity of Al-Qaida. As soon as I saw the first planes hit the towers I knew immediately that it was Al-Qaida. Those of us who had served in the military and saw the bombings of Khobar Towers and the US Embassies in Tanzania and Kenya know that 9/11 was their handiwork. Then conspiracy theorists began assuming that $2+2=5$. They had no knowledge of civil engineering, chemicals, extreme heat, aircraft, physics, and all the other scientific principals one would need to know in order to calculate how the towers fell down in light of the attacks from the aircraft. Of course, that didn't stop Michael Moore or Alex Jones from assigning blame to the government, corporations and international intrigue.

Overall, conspiracy theories tend to depend on the fallacious belief that everything that happens in society must have been intended to happen by some specific agent, when in actuality many important and also many everyday events are the unintended or unforeseen consequences of intentional action.

Slippery slope

One common theme in conspiracy theories is that if one conspiracy theory is real, then all the others have to be as well. If 9/11 is an inside job, then the Illuminati are real. If Michael Jackson and Tupac or substitute any celebrity, is alive, then NASA is concealing evidence of intelligent extraterrestrials. And they continue to stretch the truth until it is barely recognizable. There are, however, a group of CTs that group ALL Conspiracy Theories into one big one. Every tragedy was caused to distract from the real problems. War was caused to further the of the Illuminate or fill in the blank. A world event was staged to distract us, and a celebrity death was designed to hide their whistleblowing along with every secret society being created to further their plans.

¹²² A market structure in which a small number of firms has the large majority of market share. Such as the big auto companies, or major banks, or oil companies.

The Conspiracy Mentality

Daniel Pipes, in an early essay "adapted from a study prepared for the CIA," attempted to define which beliefs distinguish 'the conspiracy mentality' from 'more conventional patterns of thought'. He defined them as: appearances deceive; conspiracies drive history; nothing is haphazard; the enemy always gains power, fame, money, and sex. Evidence suggests that Conspiracist-minded people tend to think both they are "too special to be duped" and that they desire "uniqueness" provided by belief in conspiracy theories. The problem is that they are naïve, ill-informed, illiterate, ignorant, and just plain gullible. They get so sensitive about the subject they lose all reason and in the end, they play the fools and the objects of derision.

As I researched this book, I had to shake my head and laugh at the things people believe as fact. They don't stop and think about what nonsense comes out of their mouths. They try to make everyone believe that they have the inside scoop on this stuff. They are the only ones who have figured out the secrets of the universe. Yet the only thing they really show us is their own ignorance. As Abraham Lincoln said, "You can fool some of the people all of the time. You can fool all of the people some of the time. But you can't fool all of the people all of the time." When it comes to conspiracy theorists, they are the ones who can be fooled all of the time.

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Nixon's conspiracy theories were the motivating force behind another break-in that the SIU planned but never executed. Liddy's post-prison memoir, *Will*, gives a rationale for burglarizing Brookings: "Daniel Ellsberg had been associated in the past with Morton Halperin and the Brookings Institution and, according to Colson as relayed by Hunt, either or both of them were believed to be using Brookings for storage of substantial additional amounts of classified documents at least as sensitive, if not more so, than the Pentagon

Papers. Further, the Brookings security vault might have evidence shedding light on the identify of any of Ellsberg's criminal associates in the purloining of Top Secret Defense files; whether Paul Warnke and Leslie Gelb were among them; and whoever delivered the classified documents to the Soviet Embassy [sic]." Liddy proudly presents his elaborate plan to firebomb Brookings "by use of a delay mechanism timed to go off at night so as not to endanger lives needlessly" (as if the pursuit of this conspiracy theory was worth some casualty risk) and sneak burglars disguised as firefighters in to empty the vault. If Liddy is to be believed, the reason this plan never got carried was that the White House didn't want to pay for a fire engineDude, Where's My Country by Michael Moore (2003)

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This page was last modified on 31 May 2016, at 18:56.

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