

## CONSPIRACY THEORY COMPENDIUM

### SECTION 1 - AVIATION

Numerous conspiracy theories pertain to air travel and aircraft. Incidents such as the 1955 bombing of the Kashmir Princess, the 1985 Arrow Air Flight 1285 crash, the 1986 Mozambican Tupolev Tu-134 crash, the 1987 Helderberg Disaster, the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 and the 1994 Mull of Kintyre helicopter crash as well as various aircraft technologies and alleged sightings, have all spawned theories of foul play which deviate from official verdicts.

#### BLACK HELICOPTERS

This conspiracy theory emerged in the US in the 1960s. The John Birch Society originally promoted it, asserting that a United Nations force would soon arrive in black helicopters to bring the US under UN control. A similar theory concerning so-called "phantom helicopters" appeared in the UK in the 1970s.

The theory re-emerged in the 1990s during the presidency of Bill Clinton, and was "energetically" promoted by writer Jim Keith in his book *Black Helicopters Over America*. By the 2000s, the term "black helicopters" became a shorthand for antigovernment conspiracy theories that "stretch the bounds of credulity", such as those espoused by militia groups and a number of guests of talk show host Glenn Beck.

#### CHEMTRAILS

A high-flying jet's engines leaving a condensation trail (contrail)  
Also known as SLAP (Secret Large-scale Atmospheric Program), this theory alleges that water condensation trails ("contrails") from aircraft consist of chemical or biological agents, or contain a supposedly toxic mix of aluminum, strontium and barium, under secret government policies.

#### KOREAN AIR LINES FLIGHT 007

The destruction of Korean Air Lines Flight 007 by Soviet jets in 1983 has long drawn the interest of conspiracy theorists. The theories range from allegations of a planned espionage mission, to a US government cover-up, to the consumption of the passengers' remains by giant crabs.

#### MALAYSIA AIRLINES FLIGHT MH370

The disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 in southeast Asia in March 2014 has prompted many theories. One theory suggests that this plane was hidden away and reintroduced as Flight MH17 later the same year in order to be shot down over Ukraine for political purposes. American conspiracy theorist James H. Fetzer has placed responsibility for the disappearance with the then Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Historian Norman Davies has promoted the conspiracy theory that hackers remotely took over a Boeing Honeywell Uninterruptible Autopilot, supposedly installed on board, remotely piloting the aircraft to Antarctica.

#### MALAYSIA AIRLINES FLIGHT MH17

Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was shot down over Ukraine in July 2014. This event

has spawned numerous alternative theories. These variously include allegations that it was secretly Flight MH370, that the plane was actually shot down by the Ukrainian Air Force to frame Russia, that it was part of a conspiracy to conceal the "truth" about HIV (seven disease specialists were on board), or that the Illuminati or Israel was responsible.

## SECTION 2 - DEATHS AND DISAPPEARANCES

Conspiracy theories frequently emerge following the deaths of prominent leaders and public figures.

### DEATH OF NERO

In ancient times, widespread conspiracy theories were circulated pertaining to the death of the Roman emperor Nero, who committed suicide in 68 AD. Some of these theories claimed that Nero had actually faked his death and was secretly still alive, but in hiding, plotting to reestablish his reign. In most of these stories, he was said to have fled to the East, where he was still influential. Other theories held that Nero would return from the dead to retake his throne. Many early Christians feared Nero's return to resume his vicious anti-Christian persecutions. The Book of Revelation alludes to these conspiracy theories in its description of the slaughtered head returned to life.

### JOHN F. KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

John F. Kennedy in the presidential limousine shortly before his assassination. In modern times, multiple conspiracy theories concerning the assassination of John F. Kennedy in 1963 have emerged. Vincent Bugliosi estimated that over 1,000 books had been written about the Kennedy assassination, at least ninety percent of which are works supporting the view that there was a conspiracy. As a result of this, the Kennedy assassination has been described as "the mother of all conspiracies". The countless individuals and organizations that have been accused of involvement in the Kennedy assassination include the CIA, the Mafia, sitting Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson, Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro, the KGB, or even some combination thereof. It is also frequently asserted that the United States federal government intentionally covered up crucial information in the aftermath of the assassination to prevent the conspiracy from being discovered.

### DISAPPEARANCE OF HAROLD HOLT

At approximately 12:20pm on 17 December 1967, then-Prime Minister of Australia Harold Holt, disappeared while swimming at Cheviot Beach, near the town of Portsea in Victoria. While it is presumed that Holt drowned, the topic is still described as one of the biggest unsolved mysteries in Australian history and has spawned many conspiracy theories. The conspiracy theories have been widely criticised by the public and by members of Holt's own family.

In 2007, television presenter Ray Martin hosted the television special *Who Killed Harold Holt?*, which first aired on the Nine Network on 20 November 2007. While the special explored numerous theories about Holt's disappearance, it gave particular credence to the theory that he committed suicide. In the lead-up to the airing of the program, Holt's biographer, Tom Frame, described the allegations made in the special as "unjustified and contrary to all the evidence" in an opinion piece

published in The Australian newspaper, while Holt's son, Sam, said he was "amazed that people can still keep bringing up [these] fallacious theories".

Another conspiracy theory is that Holt was actually a spy for the Chinese government (under both the Nationalist and Communist governments) ever since he began studying at the University of Melbourne in 1929 and that he "pretended to drown", instead theorising that once below the surface two Chinese frogmen transported him to China in a submarine. This theory also claims that the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) covered up any evidence. This theory was first promoted in British writer Anthony Grey's 1983 novel *The Prime Minister Was a Spy*, which attracted controversy in Australia.

Other conspiracy theories claim that Holt was assassinated. Targets of these claims include North Vietnam and the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

#### DEATHS OF OTHER PROMINENT FIGURES

The deaths of prominent figures of all types attract conspiracy theorists, sometimes elaborating on historically verified conspiracies such as the assassination of U.S. President Abraham Lincoln, as well as the deaths of Martin Luther King, Jr., Eric V of Denmark, Dmitry Ivanovich, Sheikh Rahman, Yitzhak Rabin, Zachary Taylor, George S. Patton, Diana, Princess of Wales, Dag Hammarskjöld, Kurt Cobain, Michael Jackson, Marilyn Monroe, Tupac Shakur, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, John Lennon, Jimi Hendrix, Notorious B.I.G, Pope John Paul I, Jill Dando, Olof Palme, member of Linkin Park Chester Bennington, Paul Walker, biological warfare authority David Kelly, Haitian president Jovenel Moïse, Indian freedom fighter Subash Chandra Bose, and Bollywood star Sushant Singh Rajput.

There are also claims that deaths were covered up. Such theories include the "Paul is dead" claim alleging that Paul McCartney died in a car accident in 1966 and was replaced by a look-alike Scottish orphan named William Shears Cambell who also went by Billy Shears, and that The Beatles hinted at this in their songs, most noticeably "Revolution 9", "Strawberry Fields Forever", "Glass Onion", and "I Am the Walrus", as well on the covers of *Abbey Road*, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, and *Magical Mystery Tour*. Another is the conspiracy theory, widely circulated in Nigeria, which alleges that Nigerian president Muhammadu Buhari died in 2017 and was replaced by a look-alike Sudanese impostor. Many fans of punk-pop star Avril Lavigne claim that she died at the height of her fame and was replaced by a look-alike named Melissa. The Melania Trump replacement theory proposes the same of the former US First Lady.

Inverted theories concerning deaths are also known, prominently claims that Elvis Presley's death was faked and that Adolf Hitler survived the Second World War and fled to the Americas, to Antarctica, or to the Moon. Theories that Hitler had survived are known to have been deliberately promoted by the government of the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin as part of a disinformation campaign.

Theories of a cover-up surrounding the 1974 disappearance of Lord Lucan following the murder of his family's nanny include, for example, allegations of a suicide plot whereby his body was fed to tigers at Howletts Zoo. Numerous conspiracy theories have also attended the 2007 disappearance of English girl Madeleine McCann.

The murder of Democratic National Committee employee Seth Rich spawned several right-wing conspiracy theories, including that Rich had been involved with the leaked DNC emails in 2016, which runs contrary to US intelligence's conclusion that the leaked DNC emails were part of Russian interference in the 2016 United States elections.

### SECTION 3 - ECONOMICS AND SOCIETY

#### NEW WORLD ORDER

The New World Order theory states that a group of international elites control governments, industry, and media organizations, with the goal of establishing global hegemony. They are alleged to be implicated in most of the major wars of the last two centuries, to carry out secretly staged events, and to deliberately manipulate economies.

The New World Order has been connected to a wide range of actors including the Illuminati, Jews, colluding world governments or corporations, NGOs such as the World Economic Forum, and secretive organizations such as Bohemian Grove, Le Cercle, and Skull and Bones. Theorists believe that a wide range of musicians, including Beyoncé and Whitney Houston, have been associated with the "group." Prominent theorists include Mark Dice and David Icke.

#### PREDICTIVE PROGRAMMING

Many theorists allege that the contents of fictional media, in a process called "predictive programming," are manipulated to reference planned false flags, technological innovations, social changes, and other future events. These references are understood to be a conditioning and brainwashing tool, such that the public becomes more accepting of these events than they would be otherwise.

Predictive programming has been used to explain events such as the September 11 attacks and COVID-19 pandemic, and has been connected with media such as Die Hard, The Simpsons, and Contagion.

#### GEORGE SOROS

Hungarian-American investor George Soros has been the subject of conspiracy theories since the 1990s. Soros has used his wealth to promote many political, social, educational and scientific causes, disbursing grants totaling an estimated \$11 billion up to 2016. However, theories tend to assert that Soros is in control of a large portion of the world's wealth and governments, and that he secretly funds a large range of persons and organizations for nefarious purposes, such as antifa, which some conspiracy theorists claim is a single far-left militant group.

#### FREEMASONRY

Conspiracy theories concerning the Freemasons have proliferated since the 18th century. Theorists have alleged that Freemasons control large parts of the economies or judiciaries of a number of countries, and have alleged Masonic involvement in the British enquiry regarding the sinking of the Titanic and in the crimes of Jack the Ripper. Notable among theorists has been American inventor Samuel Morse, who in 1835 published a book of his own conspiracy theories. Freemason conspiracy theories have

also been linked to certain antisemitic conspiracy theories.

## SECTION 4 - ESPIONAGE

### ISRAEL ANIMAL SPYING

There are conspiracy theories alleging that Israel uses animals to conduct espionage or to attack people. These are often associated with conspiracy theories about Zionism. Matters of interest to theorists include a series of shark attacks in Egypt in 2010, Hezbollah's accusations of the use of "spying" eagles, and the 2011 capture of a griffon vulture carrying an Israeli-labeled satellite tracking device.

### HAROLD WILSON

Numerous persons, including former MI5 officer Peter Wright and Soviet defector Anatoliy Golitsyn, have alleged that former British Prime Minister Harold Wilson was secretly a KGB spy. Historian Christopher Andrew has lamented that a number of people have been "seduced by Golitsyn's fantasies".

### MALALA YOUSAFZAI

Conspiracy theories concerning Malala Yousafzai are widespread in Pakistan, elements of which originate from a 2013 satirical piece in Dawn. These theories variously allege that she is a Western spy, or that her attempted murder by the Taliban in 2012 was a secret operation to further discredit the Taliban, and was organized by her father and the CIA and carried out by actor Robert de Niro disguised as an Uzbek homeopath.

## SECTION 5 - GOVERNMENT, POLITICS, AND CONFLICT

Political conspiracy theories may take generalized and wide-ranging forms concerning wars and international bodies, but may also be seen at a localized level, such as the conspiracy theory pertaining to the 118th Battalion, a British regiment stationed in Kitchener, Ontario, during World War I, which was believed by some in Kitchener to still be present years after the war ended and to be controlling local politics.

### CRISIS ACTORS

Further information: "Crisis actor" as a conspiracy theory motif  
Crisis actors are individuals who portray disaster victims in first responder training exercises. Conspiracy theories allege that mass shooting and similar traumatic events are actually staged, with victims and their families being portrayed by covert crisis actors.

### ILLUMINATI IN EUROPE

Conspiracy theories concerning the Illuminati, a short-lived 18th-century Enlightenment-era secret society, appear to have originated in the late 19th century, when some Catholic conservatives in Europe came to believe that the group had been responsible for the French Revolution of 1789–1799.

## FALSE FLAG OPERATIONS

False flag operations are covert operations designed to appear as if they are being carried out by other entities. Some allegations of false flag operations have been verified or are subjects of legitimate historical dispute (such as the 1933 Reichstag arson attack). Such allegations have attached to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the Oklahoma City bombing, the 2004 Madrid train bombings, and the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident.

## ISIS

The rise of ISIS gave rise to conspiracy theories that it had been created by the US, CIA, Mossad, or Hillary Clinton. The same happened after the rise of Boko Haram.

## 9/11 2001 ATTACK ON UNITED STATES

The theory is that the Twin Towers collapsed in controlled demolitions, a theory rejected by the scam on the American people called the 9/11 Commission.

## THE CLINTONS

The Clinton body count conspiracy theory, notably asserts that former US President Bill Clinton and his wife Hillary Clinton have assassinated fifty or more of their associates and enemies. Such accusations have been around at least since the 1990s, when Bill Clinton was accused of multiple crimes including murder.

## JEFFREY EPSTEIN

The 2019 death of Jeffrey Epstein, an American financier billionaire and convicted sex offender with ties to Bill Clinton, Donald Trump, and other members of the elite.

## FEMA

The United States' Federal Emergency Management Agency is the subject of many theories, including that the organization has been building concentration camps in the US to prepare for imposing martial law and genocide.

## DEEP STATE

The "Deep state" in a sense refers to an unidentified insider "power elite" who manipulate a nation's politics and government. A 2017 poll by ABC News and The Washington Post indicated that 48% of Americans believe in the existence of a conspiratorial "deep state" in the US.

## BIDEN-UKRAINE CONSPIRACY THEORY

The conspiracy theory holds both that Ukraine (rather than Russia) had interfered in the 2016 United States elections, and that then-Vice President Joe Biden had intervened to protect a company in which his son Hunter was involved. Allegations that Joe Biden and his son Hunter Biden coordinated efforts against anti-corruption investigations in Ukraine into the Ukrainian gas company Burisma, on whose Board Hunter Biden sat.

## SECTION 6 - MEDICINE AND SCIENCE

### ALTERNATIVE THERAPY SUPPRESSION

A 2013 study approved by the University of Chicago suggested that almost half of Americans believe at least one medical conspiracy theory, with 37% believing that the Food and Drug Administration deliberately suppresses 'natural' cures due to influence from the pharmaceutical industry. A prominent proponent of comparable conspiracy theories has been promoted by the author Kevin Trudeau.

### COVID-19 PANDEMIC

A number of conspiracy theories have been promoted about the origin and purported motive behind the SARS-CoV-2 virus and its spread. Some claimed that the virus was engineered, that it may have been a Chinese or United States bioweapon, a Jewish plot, part of which is to force mass vaccinations or sterilizations, spread as part of a population control scheme.

### FLUORIDATION

Water fluoridation is the controlled addition of fluoride to a public water supply supposedly to reduce tooth decay. Although not all but many dental-health organizations support it, some conspiracy theorists claim that it was a way to dispose of industrial waste, or that it exists to obscure a failure to provide dental care to the poor. A further theory promotes that fluoridation makes people more docile and easier to control.

### VACCINATIONS

It is claimed that the pharmaceutical industry has mounted a cover-up of a causal link between vaccines and autism. The anti-vaccine movement has been promoted by a number of prominent persons including Rob Schneider, and Jim Carrey. Vaccine conspiracy theories have been widespread in Nigeria since at least 2003, as well as in Pakistan. Such theories claim that vaccines are part of a secret anti-Islam plot.

## SECTION 7 - OUTER SPACE

### NASA

The most prolific theories allege that the US Moon landings were staged by NASA in a film studio, with some alleging the involvement of director Stanley Kubrick. The Soviet space program has also attracted theories that the government concealed evidence of failed flights.

### GARY MCKINNON

A theory, emerged following the activities of hacker Gary McKinnon, it suggested that a secret program of crewed space fleets exists, supposedly acting under the United Nations.

### EXTRATERRESTRIALS AND UFOS

Among the foremost concerns of conspiracy theorists are questions of alien life;

for example, allegations of government cover-ups of the supposed Roswell UFO incident or activity at Area 51. Also disseminated are theories concerning so-called 'men in black', who allegedly silence witnesses.

#### CATTLE MUTILATIONS

Multiple reports of dead cattle found with absent body parts and seemingly drained of blood have emerged worldwide since at least the 1960s. This phenomenon has spawned theories variously concerning aliens and secret government or military experiments. Prominent among such theorists is Linda Moulton Howe, author of *Alien Harvest* (1989).

### SECTION 8 - SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

#### WEATHER AND EARTHQUAKE CONTROL PROJECTS

Numerous theories pertain to real or alleged weather-controlling projects. Theories include the debunked assertion that HAARP, a radio-technology research program funded by the US government, is a secret weather-controlling system. Some theorists have blamed 2005's Hurricane Katrina on HAARP. HAARP has also been suggested to have somehow caused earthquakes, such as the 2010 Haiti earthquake, the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami or the 2013 Saravali earthquake. Some HAARP-related claims refer to mind-control technology. Also of interest are cloud-seeding technologies.

#### MKULTRA

Genuine American research in the 1950s and 1960s into chemical interrogation and mind-control techniques were followed by many conspiracy theorists (like Project Monarch), especially following CIA Director Richard Helms's 1973 order to destroy all files related to the project. These theories include the allegation that the mass fatality at Jonestown in 1978 was connected to an MKUltra experiment.

#### RFID CHIPS

Radio frequency identification chips (RFID), such as those implanted into pets as a means of tracking, have drawn the interest of conspiracy theorists who posit that this technology is also planned to be widely implanted in humans in the future.

#### TECHNOLOGY SUPPRESSION

Numerous theories pertain to the alleged suppression of certain technologies and energies. Such theories may focus on the Vril Society Conspiracy, allegations of the suppression of the electric car by fossil-fuel companies, and the Phoebus cartel, set up in 1924, which has been accused of suppressing longer-lasting light bulbs. Other long-standing allegations include the suppression of perpetual motion and cold fusion technology by government agencies, special interest groups, and independent inventors.

#### WEAPONRY



Subjects of theories include: the Philadelphia Experiment, a supposed attempt to turn a US Navy warship invisible; the Montauk Project, a government program to learn about mind control and time travel; and the "tsunami bomb", which is alleged to have caused the Indian Ocean tsunami. Other theories include Peter Vogel's claim that an accidental explosion of conventional munitions at Port Chicago was in fact a nuclear detonation, and a theory promoted by the Venezuelan state-run TV station ViVe that the 2010 Haiti earthquake was caused by a secret US "earthquake weapon".

#### TARGETED INDIVIDUALS

An ongoing conspiracy that government agents are utilizing directed energy weapons and electronic surveillance to harass members of the population. Theorists often cite research into psychotronic weapons, the Cuban Health Attacks, and the Microwave Auditory Effect as proof of their theory. There are over 10,000 people who identify as Targeted Individuals.

#### SECTION 9 - FALSE HISTORIES

##### POPE SYLVESTER II (FROM 999 TO 1003)

Some theories claim that the dates of historical events have been deliberately distorted. These include the phantom time hypothesis of German conspiracy theorist Heribert Illig, who in 1991 published an allegation that 297 years had been added to the calendar by establishment figures such as Pope Sylvester II in order to position themselves at the millennium.

##### NEW CHRONOLOGY

A comparable theory to the one purposed by Heribert Illig, is associated with Russian theorist Anatoly Fomenko, who holds that history is many centuries shorter than widely believed, numerous historical documents have been fabricated, and legitimate documents destroyed, all for political ends. Adherents of have included chess grandmaster Garry Kasparov.

##### ANCIENT ADVANCED CIVILIZATIONS

Another claim is that world governments have hidden evidence for an advanced worldwide civilization with access to free energy and that Earth was partially populated by giants.