

Jan. 22-24, 2008

**Introduction:
The Conspiracy Industry**

I. Conspiracy Theory: The National Pastime?



Unique aspect of recent American culture: Popularity of conspiracy stories and paranoia as form of entertainment.


- *X-Files* as defining show of 1990s, paving way for more popular sci-fi/conspiracy dramas later: *24*, *Lost*, *Heroes*.
- Late-night conspiracy radio, 90s phenomenon still going strong: [Art Bell](#) on Nevada's KNYE .

9/11 and war on terrorism was supposed to bring a sober new realism. Has it?

- Obviously not based on [Internet](#) & TV ("[Conspiracy Zone with Kevin Nealon](#)").
- Conspiracy imagery has become a source of clichés, advertising ([U-Haul truck](#)), and children's toys.
 - ❖ "[Space Aliens](#)" family restaurant chain
- Latest thing (before movie flopped): the [Da Vinci Code](#) craze/[controversy](#).
- The 9/11 conspiracy boom ("Truth Movement"), led by [Alex Jones](#) & others.



II. The Conspiracy Industry and its Products

- ◆ A few of my "favorites":
 - The Pentagon made AIDs, or AIDs (HIV) is a [hoax](#).
 - Clinton, Bush, dope, and the Trilateral Commission.
 - Moon landing hoax, "[Monkey face](#)" and pyramids on Mars.
 - ❖ Bogus photographic mysteries an old problem: [spirit photos](#)
 - FEMA as the secret government
 - The New World Order: [NWO 101](#) 
 - The legend of the [Black Helicopters](#) and the [UN](#) invasion: [death of Jim Keith](#) ([titles](#)), as reported by Kenn Thomas (→).
 - Conspiracy theory in recent politics
 - ❖ Reagan: Iran-Contra, "October Surprise"
 - ❖ Clinton: Foster suicide, the [Clinton Death List](#) and the [Clinton Chronicles](#).
 - ❖ 2004 campaign: Kerry banning the Bible, Bush behind 9/11.
 - ❖ [2008 campaign](#): McCain as a (Vietnamese) "Manchurian Candidate," Obama as a "secret terrorist," Hillary as the conspiracy theory candidate.
- ◆ Sad immediate origin of many modern theories: agitated, poorly educated people watching scary movies and reading the newspaper.
 - The Black Helicopters and *Capricorn One*
- ◆ Term for the leading c.t. producers: "conspiracists"
 - Conspiracist tendencies, besides believing the most paranoid and complicated explanation is always best
 - ❖ "Fusion" conspiracism, [mixing different strains](#) from [left and right](#) until all logic is lost: Kenn Thomas & [Steamshovel Press](#), [Alex Jones](#) .
 - ❖ Popularity of "unified field" theories that explain everything ever all at once, as work of masons, [reptoids](#) (David Icke), etc.

