

**Feb. 28, 2008**

**Conspiracy Theory Today:  
Religion, Race,  
and Social Change**



# I. C.T. & Social Change: The OKC Bombing



- ◆ McVeigh and Nichols as conspiracists, seeing themselves as “common law individuals” bound only by “natural law.”
  - Bombers’ influenced by “Christian Patriot” and militia movements.
  - Recurring theme: Conspiracy theory breeds real conspiracies.
- ◆ Fighting “savagery” with savagery: Timothy McVeigh and *The Turner Diaries*.
  - Plot of novel: Violent overthrow of ZOG (Zionist Occupational Government) by WASP terrorist network called “The Organization.”
  - Earlier *Turner* copycats: Robert Mathews and The Order.
  - Novel steeped in the “premillennial” theology of the Christian Identity movement: WASPs as the “real” chosen people (children of Adam & Eve), locked in combat with Jews (children of Eve & Satan) and their servants, the “mud people” (all non-whites).
- ◆ Role of entertainment in making McVeigh and Nichols: movies, talk radio (G. Gordon Liddy). 🔊
- ◆ Support for right-wing radical paranoia in mainstream media and politics: H. Ross Perot & others.
- ◆ OKC c.t.’s: The provocation motif again
- ◆ Background of the OKC bombers: Decline of American manufacturing and pressures on family farms as sources of their rage.

## II. C.T. and Social Problems: The African American Community

- ◆ Conspiracy theories prominent in African-American communities, as recorded in Patricia Turner's *I Heard It Through the Grapevine*
  - The “black telegraph”: Rumors trusted in black community because of black alienation from mainstream media ([MSM](#)).
  - Recent conspiracy theories originating in real problems of urban black communities
    - ❖ [Inner-city](#) businesses: [Church's Fried Chicken](#) & the KKK
    - ❖ Atlanta child murders and the CDC – origins in real medical abuses against blacks (Tuskegee experiment)
    - ❖ The O.J. Simpson case
  - [Nation of Islam](#) theology: blacks as [original inhabitants of Earth](#), whites as devils created by the evil black scientist [Yakub](#), the [Motherplane](#)
    - ❖ Reaction to/inversion of scientific and religious racism that was at its most intense in the early 20th century.
- ◆ More recent suspicions of plots against poor African-Americans
  - The “[Dark Alliance](#)” controversy: the CIA, the contras, and the crack epidemic; suicide of [author Gary Webb](#)
  - Hurricane Katrina and the New Orleans levees: suspicions originating in [history](#) & “environmental racism”



# Right-Wing Terrorists and Popular Culture

