

# YOU ARE BEING LIED TO

The Disinformation Guide to  
Media Distortion, Historical  
Whitewashes and Cultural Myths

Edited by Russ Kick

**disinformation®**

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To Anne Marie, who restored my faith in the truth.

—Russ Kick

Thanks of a personal nature are due to Anne, Ruthanne, Jennifer, and (as always) my parents, who give me support in many ways. The same goes for that unholy trinity of Billy, Darrell, and Terry, who let me vent and make me laugh.

I'd like to thank Richard Metzger and Gary Baddeley for letting me edit the book line and taking a laissez-faire approach. Also, many thanks go to Paul Pollard and Tomo Makiura, who turned a bunch of computer files into the beautiful object you now hold in your hands. And thanks also head out to the many other people involved in the creation and distribution of this book, including everyone at Disinformation, RSUB, Consortium, Green Galactic, the printers, the retailers, and elsewhere. It takes a lot of people to make a book!

Last but definitely not least, I express my gratitude toward all the contributors, without whom there would be no *You Are Being Lied To*. None of you will be able to retire early because of appearing in these pages, so I know you contributed because you believe so strongly in what you're doing. And you believed in me, which I deeply appreciate.

—Russ Kick

Major thanks are due to everyone at The Disinformation Company and RSUB, Julie Schaper and all at Consortium, Brian Pang, Adam Parfrey, Brian Butler, Peter Giblin, AJ Peralta, Steven Daly, Stevan Keane, Zizi Durrance, Darren Bender, Douglas Rushkoff, Grant Morrison, Joe Coleman, Genesis P-Orridge, Sean Fernald, Adam Peters, Alex Burns, Robert Sterling, Preston Peet, Nick Mamatas, Alexandra Bruce, Matt Webster, Doug McDaniel, Jose Caballer, Leen Al-Bassam, Susan Mainzer, Wendy Tremayne and the Green Galactic crew, Naomi Nelson, Sumayah Jamal—and all those who have helped us along the way, including you for buying this book!

—Gary Baddeley and Richard Metzger

Disinformation® is more than it seems. Literally. From early beginnings almost a decade ago as an idea for an alternative *60 Minutes*-type TV news show to the book that you are now holding, Richard Metzger and Gary Baddeley have taken a dictionary term and given it secondary meaning to a wide audience of hipsters, thinkers, anti-establishmentarians, and the merely curious.

The Disinformation® Website <[www.disinfo.com](http://www.disinfo.com)> went live on September 13, 1996 to immediate applause from the very same news media that it was criticizing as being under the influence of both government and big business. The honeymoon was short—some three weeks after launch, the CEO of the large US media company funding the site discovered it and immediately ordered it closed down. Needless to say, Metzger and a few loyal members of his team managed to keep the site going, and today it is the largest and most popular alternative news and underground culture destination on the Web, having won just about every award that's ever been dreamed up.

Disinformation® is also a TV series, initially broadcast on the UK's Channel 4, a music imprint in the US in a joint venture with Sony Music's Loud Records, and a huge counterculture conference, the first of which was held shortly after the turn of the millennium in 2000. By the time this book rests in your hands, Disinformation® will probably have manifested itself in other media, too.

Based in New York City, The Disinformation Company Ltd. is a vibrant media company that Baddeley and Metzger continue to helm. They still look for the strangest, freakiest, and most disturbing news and phenomena in order to balance the homogenized, sanitized, and policed fare that is found in the traditional media.

Disinformation is a member of the Razorfish Subnetwork <[www.rsub.com](http://www.rsub.com)>, an entertainment company based in New York and Los Angeles. Jeff Dachis is CEO and executive producer. Craig Kanarick is co-founder and executive producer.

# INTRODUCTION

*You Are Being Lied To*. It takes some nerve to give a book that title, eh? It came to me very early in the process, when this collection was just a germ of an idea. I did pause to wonder if it was too audacious; after all, I didn't want my mouth to write a check that my butt couldn't

## A NOTE TO READERS

As you'll notice from the size of this book, my plan (luckily endorsed by Disinformation Books) was to cover a whole lot of ground from various angles. I wanted to bring together a diverse group of voices—legends and newcomers; the reserved and the brash; academics and rogue scholars; scientists and dissidents; people who have won Pulitzer Prizes while working at major newspapers and people who have been published in the (*very*) alternative press. Somehow, it all came together.\* The group between these covers is unprecedented.

However, this has led to an unusual, and somewhat delicate, situation. Nonfiction collections typically are either academic or alternative, leftist or rightist, atheistic or religious, or otherwise unified in some similar way. *You Are Being Lied To* rejects this intellectual balkanization, and, in doing so, brings together contributors who ordinarily wouldn't appear in the same book. Some of the contributors were aware of only a handful of others who would be appearing, while most of them didn't have any idea who else would be sharing pages with them. All this means is that you shouldn't make the assumption—which is quite easy to unknowingly make with most nonfiction anthologies—that every contributor agrees with or thinks favorably of every other contributor. Hey, maybe they all just love each other to death. I don't know one way or the other, but the point is that I alone am responsible for the group that appears here. No contributor necessarily endorses the message of any other contributor.

—Russ Kick

\* Well, it didn't *all* come together. You'll notice that among the contributors whose politics are identifiable, there is a large concentration of leftists/progressives. I did try to bring aboard a bunch of conservative journalists and writers whose intelligence and talents I respect (in other words, *not* know-nothing propagandists like Rush Limbaugh). However, none of them opted to join the festivities. Some ignored my invitation; some expressed initial interest but didn't respond to follow-ups; and two got all the way to the contract stage but then bailed. So when rightists continue to moan that their voices are excluded from various dialogues, I don't want to hear it. Their ghettoization appears to be self-imposed to a large extent.

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## Disinformation Books Roundtable

Compiled by Alex Burns

Get past Y2K and The X-Files, and it's no secret that fringe subcultures, conspiriolog, and emerging worldviews have been changed forever by global media vectors. One barometer of this seismic shift in consciousness is how people perceive their milieu and who controls relativistic 'information' and 'truth' in a chaotic era.

"Are we being lied to, why, and by whom?"

*Disinformation Books posed this predicament to social activists, media analysts, cutting edge scientists and philosophers, avant-garde artists, counterculture icons, and conspiracy theorists. The answers we received about "the Big Lie" ranged from sociopolitical critiques to personal reflections; they were always illuminating and provocative.*

I'm the biggest liar I have to deal with,  
with my hopes, fears, biases, and psychological defenses  
subtly distorting the way  
I perceive the world and react to it.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Of course! It's part of life on earth to be lied to by others at times, and part of our growth challenge is to find a reasonable compromise between being naively trusting and pathologically paranoid.

But it's not the lies of others that worry me the most, but rather our habit of lying to ourselves, with no conscious awareness of it. I'm the biggest liar I have to deal with, with my hopes, fears, biases, and psychological defenses subtly distorting the way I perceive the world and react to it.

That's why, in addition to my psychological research on others, I've devoted a lot of time to studying myself and trying out systems of self-knowledge. My current best understanding (subject, I hope, to further growth) of my and others' minds and ways of knowing them better is expressed in two published books, *Waking Up* (1986) and *Living the Mindful Life* (1994), and a new book, *Awakening Mind: Meditation Training for the Scientifically Inclined* (2000).

In them I try hard not to lie to myself or others and to share the best knowledge and methods I have.

**Charles T. Tart** <[www.paradigm-sys.com/cttart/](http://www.paradigm-sys.com/cttart/)> is internationally known for his psychological work on the nature of consciousness (par-

ticularly altered states of consciousness), as one of the founders of the field of transpersonal psychology, and for his research in scientific parapsychology. His many books include *Waking Up: Overcoming the Obstacles to Human Potential* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala Books, 1986), *Living the Mindful Life* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala Books, 1994), and *Awakening Mind: Meditation Training for the Scientifically Inclined* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala Books, 2000).

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Being very self-centered, I never pay attention to what other people say! So let them be the judges of their own pronouncements.

**Hans Moravec** <[www.frc.ri.cmu.edu/~hpm/](http://www.frc.ri.cmu.edu/~hpm/)> is director of the Robotics Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, and is cited as a key influence upon the "Extropian" philosophical school. His many books include *Robot: Mere Machine to Transcendent Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998)

and *Mind Children: The Future of Robot and Human Intelligence* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

I lie all the time, don't you?

"How are you?" "Fine."

One of the scariest of lies is the politician or prospective mate who promises, "I'll never lie to you." The deeper message there is: "I lie about lying." And: "I'm completely irresponsible."

**Stewart Brand** is a member of the Global Business Network <[www.gbn.org](http://www.gbn.org)>, and founder of the Long Now Foundation <[www.longnow.org](http://www.longnow.org)>. He is author of over 20 books, including *The Clock of the Long Now* (New York: Basic Books, 2000) and *The Media Lab: Inventing the Future at MIT* (New York: Penguin USA, 1988).

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

When Windows 98 was released, Microsoft paid strategically placed journalists to write favorable pieces about its new operating system. When this fact was leaked to other, possibly more upstanding press members, the Evil Empire covered by diverting the press'attention with a "Blue Screen of Death" at Win 98's unveiling. Ho, ho, ho. . . oops.

I don't know how high that particular story rates on the truth-scale, but I do know that after the Department of Justice announced its ruling in its anti-trust case against the Evil Empire, Bill Gates appeared almost immediately on NBC News to steer, counteract, and spread new memes. This is fishy because Microsoft and NBC are partners. Is the biggest network actually going to cover the facts of the case when it's in its best interest to make its Goliath business partner look good? The Emperor has a direct link to the minds of his minions because he's in bed with their media outlet.

How could an arrangement like that ever be conducive to an informed society? It couldn't, and more and more of these vertical alliances are forming: AOL and Time Warner, ABC and Disney . . . Hell, it's even happened in the Open Source community where VA Linux Systems owns the parent company of Slashdot—the major news outlet for the Open Source community.

If the news media and the corporations of this country are one and the same, we have been and will be lied to more and more.

**Roy Christopher is editor of Front Wheel Drive <frontwheeldrive.com>, and one of the Internet's leading interviewers of subculture and new science icons.**

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

No, we are never lied to.

Politicians would never lie, because they are at our service, and not at the bidding of the richest financier. The CIA and intelligence establishment would never lie, because their sole job is to protect the national security and only do what is necessary to protect freedom throughout the world. The Pentagon and defense industry would never lie, because all they are interested in is securing the blessings of liberty, and are doing so altruistically. The FBI and police forces would never lie, because they are only interested in stopping evil,

If the news media and the corporations of this country are one and the same, we have been and will be lied to more and more.

predatory criminals who use the legal system that clearly is to their benefit. Businesses would never lie, because they are only interested in giving us more information about their products via commercials so we can make better purchasing decisions. And, of course, religious leaders would never lie either, because they are only interested in spiritually saving others and have a duty to God to tell the truth.

The funny thing is, most people take on faith these denials of deceit, and get really upset if someone points out how full of shit our given assumptions are. Which leads me to conclude that the biggest liars of all are ourselves.

As even Fox Mulder would put it, "I want to believe."

**Robert Sterling is editor of the Konformist <www.konformist.com>, and a bona fide agent provocateur.**

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

"The Immortalization of Humanity"

The history of the world is the history of lies. It is probably true that no area of history, religion, politics, or science is free from fabrica-

The history of the world is  
the history of lies.

tion or deception. My mind is particularly tuned to scientific or medical hoaxes. Of course, the word "lie" may sometimes be too strong, because there are many viewpoints on truth, and there are many unreported stories that are not quite lies.

To me, the most unreported story deals with evolution of human lifespans and intelligence. Although we hear news reports about how humans will live longer in the future, we rarely hear reports that our children or grandchildren will be immortal by the end of the century.

Given the tremendous advances in molecular biochemistry that will take place by 2100, we will certainly uncover the molecular and cellular mysteries of aging, and therefore many humans will live forever, assuming they don't suffer a fatal accident. I am amazed that this obvious concept is not discussed more often or taken more seriously. Of course, the ecological, economic, political, social, and religious implications will be extreme. Imagine an immortal Pope discussing the afterlife with his followers—or the growth of two social classes, those that can afford immortality and those too poor to gain access to the required anti-aging "treatment."

**Clifford A. Pickover <www.pickover.com> received his Ph.D. from Yale University and is the author of over twenty books, including *The Girl Who Gave Birth to Rabbits: A True Medical Mystery* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2000).**

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The powerhouse Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek introduces the important idea that truth can function as a lie.

What this means is that someone may well tell me the truth, but still they lie in the way they tell it. And I don't mean a white lie or something trivial like that. I mean that in a mediatized corporate culture, truth (sincerity, facts, disclosure) functions even more effectively than lies in trapping people into the system and making them complacent.

(Honestly, this is one of the things that irritates me about lots of conspiracy theorists. They write as if it were some big secret that corporations make deals, shoddy goods, pollute the environment, etc.)

I just saw a pathetic movie with Winona Ryder called *Boys* (1996). It's set in a boys' boarding school and one of the boys wants to hide the unconscious Winona Ryder in his room. He can't get his friends to leave and they keep bugging him, "What's the big secret," blah,

No one believes anything,  
so the actual content of a statement is not  
so relevant any more.

blah, blah. Finally, the kid says, "There's an unconscious woman in the car and I want to hide her in my room." At this point, the other guys laugh and walk off, sure that this is a crock.

Lies and truth today are more complicated than they've ever been because we live in a highly cynical culture. No one believes anything, so the actual content of a statement is not so relevant any more.

Think about this politically. We hear all sorts of things—yes, experiments were carried out on African American men in Tuskegee; yes, American military personnel and civilians were horribly exposed to radiation during US nuclear tests; yes, major players in the tech industry give loads of money to politicians of all shapes and sizes. These are true statements, but they function as a lie that makes us think that the system is fair, just, and inclusive.

Think about how information works (and this is one of the things that drives me crazy when I try to do political work). Before anything happens, everyone says, "Oh, well, first we need more information"—again, as if it were a mysterious fact to be documented that the police force is racist, for example. And then what happens, well, we get different kinds of information.

One kind would be confirmation of the obvious—but then wrapped in all sorts of explanations: "Things are changing," "We've hired new people," "The problem is under investigation." Another kind of information would be a horrible admission: "Oh yes, cigarettes are nicotine delivery systems"—but then the information is wrapped in an excuse: "People want nicotine delivery systems." Other excuses include deflections: "But isn't poverty really the big issue," and "What about the farmers?"

So anyway my point is simply that lies and truth are irrelevant. What is relevant is a strong understanding of the system, how power works, and how to change it.

**Jodi Dean is professor at the Department of Political Science, Hobart-William Smith Colleges <[www.hws.edu/PEO/faculty/dean/index.html](http://www.hws.edu/PEO/faculty/dean/index.html)>. She is author of several books including *Aliens in America: Conspiracy Cultures from Outerspace to Cyberspace* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1998).**

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We are not being told the truth about quantum physics by most of the physicists writing for the general public. Not so much that they are lying, but rather, they are not aware of David Bohm's solutions to many of the key problems they present as unsolved mysteries.

A good case is Julian Barbour's book *The End of Time: The Next Revolution in Physics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Julian is a good man, a brilliant man, a good writer, and a serious thinker. He does an admirable job within the mainstream quantum metaphysics that simply assumes that the quantum wave function is a

complete description of reality at the individual level with no additional "hidden variable." Julian's solution to the problem of time in quantum gravity falls apart when one applies Bohm's ontology to the problem. His book is actually a good indirect argument for Bohm's ontology.

From what I hear we are being lied to about the existence of real mechanical flying saucers from advanced intelligence not from our time. I could be wrong about this. But my best Baysean estimate based on imperfect, incomplete information is that our military has such captured alien machinery but has not been able to reverse engineer them, in any fundamental way, because of really stupid security restrictions that weed out the very people who could actually figure it out as "loose cannons," such as myself as the prime example.

I have been told this by various intel types for the past 30 years or so. My suspicion, based on my own probably direct contact with them in 1953, is that there are dormant conscious nanocomputers in the thin skin of the fuselage. They will respond, "wake up" as it were, when touched, I mean literally touched, like the finger of the ape touching the Black Monolith in the film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), by the right people. This may just be my teenage fantasy of course. On the other hand it might be the reality. A simple test will decide.

**Jack Sarfatti <[www.stardrive.org](http://www.stardrive.org)> is senior consulting scientist to the International Space Sciences Organization <[www.issso.org](http://www.issso.org)>. Founder of Esalen Institute's legendary "Physics Consciousness Research Group," he would make a great script-writer for *The X-Files*.**

These days, everyone's speaking  
the truth, or at least  
they've managed to convince themselves  
and their followers that they are.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Are we being lied to? No, we're not. Not any more.

We've moved beyond that, at least in Australia and, I suspect, in most other countries of the Western world.

These days, everyone's speaking the truth, or at least they've managed to convince themselves and their followers that they are. Whether you believe that AIDS isn't related to HIV, that air pollution doesn't cause the greenhouse effect, that tobacco smoke isn't carcinogenic, that there are no stolen generations of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, that Microsoft benefits the world economy, that Bill and Monica only discussed debt reduction policies for the Third World, you can now find people who agree with you, and you can find—or buy—a scientific study to back you up.

And that's the truth. Pure and simple.

Axel Bruns is an Internet researcher at the University of Queensland and Production Editor of *M/C - A Journal of Media and Culture* <[www.api-network.com/mc/](http://www.api-network.com/mc/)> and *dotlit: The Online Journal of Creative Writing* <[www.dotlit.qut.edu.au/](http://www.dotlit.qut.edu.au/)>.

Of course we are. Daily/hourly, by the whores of the New World Order agenda (One World Government, Global Governance, "the Third Way," Globalism... monikers change, but the song remains the same).

If you really want a thorough background on this Grand Design, which will incorporate all sovereign nation-states into a bloated, socialistic Oligarchy—one-currency, one-military, redistribution of wealth (like the white-owned farms in Zimbabwe—theft, by any other name), go no further than these texts:

*America's Secret Establishment: An Introduction to the Order of Skull & Bones, Chapter 322* by Dr. Antony Sutton (Bundaberg, QLD [Australia]: Veritas Press, 1986); *Tragedy & Hope* by Carroll Quigley (Palos Verdes, CA: GSG & Associates, 1975); *The Fearful Master: Inside the United Nations* by G. Edward Griffin (Boston MA: Western Islands, 1964); *The Unseen Hand* by A. Ralph Epperson (Tucson, AZ: Publius Press, 1985), and *Proofs of a Conspiracy* by John Robison (Appleton, WI: American Opinion Books, 1967).

Or ask yourself this question: If every Secretary of State in the US Government, and every President (with the exception of Ronald Reagan), since about 1913, as well as the heads/producers/senior editors of CNN, ABC, CBS, NBC, Gannett, yaddayadda, were all members of, say, the National Rifle Association or the John Birch Society, do you think there'd be a shit-storm of protest? Damned straight there would be.

But when the so-called “Right” (or even concerned Libertarians) questions having such high-power slots filled consistently, as if by birthright, by members of the Council on Foreign Relations and Trilateral Commission (the two prime-movers of NWO-schemes), “we” (as I count myself of the Right/Libertarian axis) are called “kooks,” “crackpots,” “wearers of tin-foil hats” for daring to cast light on such schemers.

Todd Brendan Fahey is founder of Far Gone Books <[www.fargone-books.com](http://www.fargone-books.com)>, and one of America's most illuminating renegade minds. His novels include *Wisdom's Maw: The Acid Novel* (Los Angeles: Far Gone Books, 1996) and *Hell Bottled Up!: Chronicles of a Late Propaganda Minister* (Los Angeles: Far Gone Books, 2000).

We are being lied to all the time, but not all lies are conscious or deliberate. Some of the worst lies may come from our trusted friends because they themselves may have picked up the lies from a trusted source. Misinformation spreads like a virus without regard to the underlying truth of the news. Juicy gossip involving sex, power, and celebrities carries much more viral spreading power than mundane facts. Simplistic explanations are much more satisfying than truthful ones. The seeker of truth must sit awake in a lonely tower, prepared to question everything and anything that comes his or her way, or risk succumbing to the soporific comfort of the common wisdom.

Richard Brodie <[www.memecentral.com](http://www.memecentral.com)> is author of several books, including *Virus of the Mind: The New Science of the Meme* (Seattle: Integral Press, 1996). In a previous incarnation, he was the original author of Microsoft Word, and PA to Gates of Borg.

The seeker of truth must sit awake  
in a lonely tower, prepared  
to question everything  
and anything that comes his or her way,  
or risk succumbing to the  
soporific comfort of the common wisdom.

Do I feel we are being lied to? I think we are lying to ourselves. We want to believe someone is piping some sort of untruth into our brains so that we can

release ourselves from the responsibility of taking care of ourselves and those around us.

I don't believe that some group of people is "in charge" of our world, and disinforms the greater population. I believe that we find people and institutions on whom we can project our own powerlessness, and then they rise to the occasion.

I believe that when a group or individual has monopoly over the technology of communication—be it language, television, or the Internet—then he or they can maintain an unfair advantage in promoting a particular worldview. The Catholics did it with religion, the British did it with language, Hitler did it with radio, the Americans with TV and now the Internet. It's not lying, exactly—it's just presenting magic tricks as reality. Usually, though, it's our greed that is exploited by such trickery.

I think we lie to ourselves that this situation has existed throughout history, and is essentially unchangeable.

I think we can stop lying to ourselves any time we choose, that we

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are afraid to do so, and that many people have learned to gain power by exploiting this fear.

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Lying is such a touching, all-too-human quality. Let's not get rid of that one. Or pretend we can erase this evil aspect. No more healing, please. We can expect the worst, in this respect, with the human DNA having been mapped. Some mega-Christian American scientist will discover the "lying sequence" and push for "global treatment." Staged by organized goodwill.

Praise the Liar, blast the Truth agent!

In the news media context it is becoming more and more easy to deconstruct, and even more effective, ignore propaganda. I would not call it lying what CNN is presenting us. We could accuse some Pentagon officials of that. The news media are just sheep. One can attack them for being tame. Behaving like a herd.

Of course there are hardly any courageous dissenters within the mainstream media, with the exception of, let's say John Pilger, Germaine Greer, and a few others. It is bloody hard to be an investigative journalist. Most people working in the news industry are rewriting press releases from wire agencies and other firms.

News is a commodity like any other. And there is amazingly little of it. Surprise, surprise. The reprocessing of news worldwide, on television, radio, in print media, on the Net, is a fascinating process. With amazing speed a news meme is traveling through the Networks, replicating and mutating along the way. See all these poor bastards, hooked on their screens, doing their copy-paste thing. Are they lying? No. This is clear case of finding one's self beyond, or beside the borders of Good or Evil. *Information im aussermoralischen Sinne.*

The war in Kosovo could be a good example. There was enough information about the dreadful situation there, before 1998, when the armed conflict really started. By the end of 1998, things started getting blurred. It became obvious that the Serbian army, warlords, and media manipulators very well knew how to deal with the Western media industry. So did the Kosova-Albanian side and their UCK army.

Then, by the end of March 1999, the Western media jumped on it, without having possibilities to check facts on the ground. There was little else for them to do then but become slaves of the Pentagon.

The reason for this is a simple one: time. Facts need to be checked. In the realtime 24/7 news economy there is no time for this. Everything has to be reported, instantaneously. If you don't, others will report it first.

Paul Virilio has already pointed at this mechanism. It might take at least five, ten years to reconstruct what really happened there. Who killed who. Who fooled which news organization. The War Tribunal in the Hague will play a role in this, so might some documentary video makers, NGO researchers. The amount of information these people will produce about Kosovo will be overwhelming. The truth might be hidden there, somewhere, under a pile of self-replicating complexities.

**Geert Lovink** <[thing.desk.nl/bilwet](http://thing.desk.nl/bilwet)> is a co-founder of Amsterdam's Digital Cities project <[www.dds.nl](http://www.dds.nl)>, the *Next Five Minutes* conference series <[www.n5m.org](http://www.n5m.org)>, and the Nettime discussion list <[www.nettime.org](http://www.nettime.org)>. He was previously editor of *Mediamatic* <[www.mediamatic.nl](http://www.mediamatic.nl)> for four years.

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Everyone is always being lied to, all the time. All communication lies. It is always in some way *different* from that to which it refers. It can even refer to things that don't or can't exist. This fundamental, inescapable nature of all communication is the real conceptual core of the experience of paranoia.

Paranoia is the partial realisation of the truth of the lie. Partial, because doomed to the futile illusion that, "the truth is out there." Of course most people, most of the time, prefer to accept the lie, rather than accept the truth of the inescapability of the lie.

This was Nietzsche's great insight. We lack the strength to live with lies, determine what are good lies to live by, bad lies to fight. We want what we can't have—the unmediated truth. We accept some lies as more true than others on the most spurious grounds. Because they conform to our desires, our weaknesses, our interests. Or we lie to ourselves about the fact that we see through the lie, and pretend we believe it.

There is a whole pathology of the lie. There are good and bad lies, ethical and unethical lies, useful and harmful lies, and it behooves

us to tell the difference, deploy them with cunning, read them with subtlety. But there are only lies. And that's the truth of it.

**McKenzie Wark** <[www.mcs.mq.edu.au/~mwark](http://www.mcs.mq.edu.au/~mwark)> is a senior lecturer in Media Studies at Macquarie University (Australia). He edits Pluto Press, Australia's media.culture book imprint <[socialchange.net.au/pluto](http://socialchange.net.au/pluto)>, and is author of four critically acclaimed books, including *Sensoria* (Sydney: Pluto Press Australia, 2000) and *Virtual Geography: Living with Global Media Events* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994).

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We are all lied to all the time about drugs. In this deceitful atmosphere few people dare to discuss the spiritual experiences some drugs can induce, the insights they can provide, or simply the pleasure of taking them. We hear a lot about drug "abuse," which is certainly something to be discouraged, but almost nothing about drug "use."

Worse still, our children are lied to at school. They are told that all illegal drugs are dangerous and are given no useful information on how to use drugs carefully and with respect. They stand no chance of developing a healthy (let alone sacred) relationship to powerful drugs and as a consequence are likely to follow only one of two courses—avoid them altogether (the minority), get mired in abuse and confusion.

Let's get the drugs out of the hands of criminals and into the hands of a controlled marketplace (with lots of tax gained for our governments as a side effect). Then, I believe, we might hear the truth.

**Susan Blackmore** <[www.memes.org.uk](http://www.memes.org.uk)> is senior lecturer in psychology at the University of the West of England. She is author of seven books, including *The Meme Machine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) and *Dying to Live: Near-Death Experiences* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1993).

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Corporate public relations (PR) is the art and science of presenting information in such a way as to maximize profit. Sometimes it is proactive, like advertising.

## We want what we can't have—the unmediated truth.

The promotion of the Gulf War is a particularly dramatic example—Iraqi atrocities were concocted and promoted by Hill & Knowlton, on the payroll of the Kuwaiti government, to convince US taxpayers to support the war.

Other times it is defensive, and intended to defuse criticism and prevent erosion of corporate liberties. "Black Websites," for example, are employed by companies engaged in dangerous or reprehensible pursuits, in anticipation of a disaster or public outcry. When an oil spill or embarrassing discovery finally occurs, the "black Website," prepared months or years in advance, communicates the company's essential innocence, heartfelt shock, and commitment to future improvement.

Corporate PR is always one form or another of lying—from the "white lie" to the worst kind of disinformation. It is protected in the US as free speech.

This is because in the 1870s corporations succeeded, with the help of lots of PR, in getting themselves defined as "persons" under the law, with all the Constitutional rights thereto attendant.

Because the direction of corporate PR is always to maximize profit, and because it is so astoundingly powerful and widespread, its cumulative effect is to conform public consciousness, democratic processes, and even the Constitution to the corporate pursuit of gain. Next to corporate PR, all the lying in the media and government combined vanishes into near insignificance.

**Ray is part of @TMark** <[www.rtmk.com](http://www.rtmk.com)>, a shadowy company at the forefront of twenty-first century corporate consulting. Just ask **George W. Bush** <[www.gwbush.org](http://www.gwbush.org)>.

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The answer is "yes," of course we are lied to, over and over. Truth has become a very rare commodity in our culture. The most obvious example faces the American voter every day now in this election year: the lie that the two candidates represent a choice, when both are the pure products of the corporate oil and military industry. With politicians so bought and paid for, every false "issue" of contention between the two, trotted out and tracked through stilted polls by the compliant media, serves as another lie.

Media even present the evidence of extra-electoral manipulation as merely convenient coincidence. For instance, fires near the Los Alamos national laboratories drew the attention of the country to that area, followed shortly by the mysterious disappearance and reappearance of computer hard drives at the Los Alamos facility. Just coincidence, the voter/viewer was told.

Coincidence also that fallout from the event tarnished the reputation of Energy Secretary Bill Richardson, until then a top contender for the vice presidency on the Gore side of the military party. Richardson is now passing nuclear weapons plants contracts out as fast as he can to the likes of Bechtel National, Inc., just to hold on to his job.

Religion, the classic liar of history (see: Acharya S., *The Christ Conspiracy*), also remains one in current affairs. The Vatican, for instance, recently proclaimed that the "Third Secret" of the Fatima visions of the Virgin by three children in 1917 was a prediction of the 1981 assassination attempt against Pope John Paul II.

In reality, the sole survivor of the Fatima visions, Sister Lucia, working from notes she jotted in 1944, had said the vision showed the Pope "killed by a group of soldiers who fired bullets and arrows at him, bishops, priests and nuns and other people, who died one after the other."

It fell to Mehmet Ali Agca, the man who fired the shots at John Paul, to issue a statement from prison about the extent to which the Vatican had distorted its interpretation of the third secret. Agca also claims that the Vatican itself set up the assassination.

In parapolitical history, someone named Michael Ledeen, identified by Danny Casolaro as a peripheral player in the Octopus conspiracy, planted a story that the assassination attempt against JP II had a Bulgarian/Stasi/Soviet link, but no one believes that now. If the Vatican did indeed have this information 64 years prior to the assassination, one would think it would have re-routed the papal parade that day, or at least would have told the Pope to duck.

**Kenn Thomas is founder of Steamshovel Press and editor of *Steamshovel Review* <www.steamshovelpress.com>. He is author of over ten books including the two-volume *Cyberculture Conspiracy: A Steamshovel Press Reader* (Book Tree Publishers, 1999-2000), *Maury Island UFO: The Crisman Conspiracy* (Atlanta, GA: IllumiNet Press, 1999), *The Octopus: The Secret Government and Death of Danny Casolaro* (Los Angeles: Feral House, 1996).**

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#### "Popsicle Lies"

The Popsicle Index is the % of people in a community who believe a child can leave their home, go to the nearest place to buy a popsicle, and come home alone safely.

When I was a child, the Popsicle Index was 100%, the Dow Jones Index was around 500, and debt per person was almost nothing. Today, the Popsicle Index is reaching new lows, the Dow Jones is reaching new highs, and debt per person just went over \$100,000 in the US.

I used to work at the US Department of Housing and Urban Development <www.hud.gov>. HUD's deeper mission was to shift control of community resources to outsiders. It made the Dow Jones go up.

We lied about what we were doing. We lied to ourselves, each other, the press, the people. Every effort was made to make sure information was not integrated, accessible. We were lost in a mapless world. Data at HUD was like cigarettes in a prison.

When I left, I started a company that helped Web users make money maps—graphic-like comic books of how all the money worked where they lived. The money map tool, Community Wizard, was destroyed when the Department of Justice and HUD targeted and destroyed the company and seized our digital systems and databases.

**Catherine Austin Fitts is president of Solari <www.solari.com>, a progressive investment advisory company. She was formerly Assistant Secretary of State for Housing and Urban Development under President George Bush from 1989 to 1990.**

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Lies are the *koine*, the common tongue of the world. I know the counter person at the copy store is lying about having done my order—so I lie about when I brought it in.

What a small thing. Yet, here is how it works. Ten million small rain drops fill up a pond. The people that are looking for the big lies from Big Brother or whoever, miss the point, they are looking at waves and thinking that's what's keeping them from seeing the Real. (A little Chaos Theory might help here.) It's the whole pond, and none of us even cares that we are filling it.

When I wrote this note back to Alex Burns I started to tell him I that I had misfiled the e-mail so it was late. Well, one less drop for today.

**Don Webb is an award-winning author of over 200 short stories and articles. His novels include *The Double: An Investigation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998) and *Essential Saltes* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999). In another life, he was contributing editor for *FringeWare Review* <www.fringeware.com>.**

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Of course, I feel like I'm being lied to all the time by 3M—the Multinational Military Media mouthpiece that I wrote about in my first novel, *The Kafka Chronicles*, a story that partly dealt with the Big Lies being broadcast during the Gulf War. It's such a strange sensation, being glued to the tube as a kind of willing media victim, a casualty of the propaganda wars, quite literally allowing all of that top-down disinformation to enter my bloodstream like a language virus gone out of control.

Lying is an art form. Take it from me, a fiction writer (i.e. one who manipulates language to try and re-tell the Truth so that the word

Lying is an art form. Take it from me, a fiction writer.

actually has meaning again). At one point in my novel, in a section called "Our & We," the narrator says:

"Language: ultimate strategy: get the lingo: then turn on the jingo spectacle: turn on the vid: then ransack the id."

In those glory days of a kindler, gentler nation reaching out to an orgasmic convergence of a thousand points of light, there was nothing but the promise of a lackluster Vision Thing—and endless news polls telling us that "we" actually wanted to be lied to, that "we" preferred it that way.

Again, from *The Kafka Chronicles*:

"We be the ones: we be the ones who die for them: who them?: turn on the t.v. and find out: they ain't ashamed to show they face: they

got us support: they say **we**: they say ours: they say us: **we** deliver on command.”

**Mark Amerika is one of America's most important and acclaimed experimental novelists. He is publisher of the Alt-X Network <www.altx.com>, described by *Publishers Weekly* as “the publishing model of the future.” His novels include *The Kafka Chronicles: A Novel* (Tallahassee, FL: FC2, 1993) and *Sexual Blood* (Tallahassee, FL: FC2/Black Ice Books, 1995).**

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Can we blame Big Business and Government for lying to us—when lying is integral to our culture?

First thing in the morning, find in the mailbox envelopes consciously designed to look like utility bills or cheques: Tear them open and find that they're advertisements, junk mail. They lied.

Turn on the television, commercials tell us a product makes us younger, more attractive: It's a famous old lie, yet that's the point: We accept it.

We accept ads for “psychic hotlines” that take advantage of stupid people, though everyone but that stupid person knows that these are con

## Well, shit, when are we *not* being lied to?

artists. We know that government-sponsored TV ads lie about how buying a state-lottery ticket will change your life. But we accept the lie.

Many years ago, as an executive assistant in a New York City public relations firm, I was startled when PR press releases I'd typed up for the local papers were reprinted almost verbatim. The articles, in many instances, were giddy reports on the wonders of new drugs, diets, and health “systems,” with no mention of possible contraindications. When I questioned this, I was fired.

The same thing happens in our newspapers every day: PR is published as news....We accept that political TV ads lie—we shrug it off. Recently here in California the pharmaceutical industry ran a TV ad “warning” people that legislation making it possible to buy cheaper prescription drugs from, say, Canada would endanger them: They implied the drugs would be impure. Drugs from Canada? Impure? The ad was ripely deceptive.

But it's okay, it's permitted. That's our culture. We're a culture of liars. It extends to everything we do so naturally our acceptance of lies is perfected in government.

**John Shirley <www.darkecho.com/johnshirley> was once described by William Gibson as “Cyberpunks' Patient Zero, first locus of the virus, certifiably virulent.” He was the original script-writer of *The Crow* (1994). He is author of the radical, prophetic cyberpunk trilogy *Eclipse*, *Eclipse Penumbra*, and *Eclipse Corona* (Northridge, CA: Babbage Press, 2000).**

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Well, shit, when are we *not* being lied to? What's that phrase from *The X-Files*, “I want to believe”? Think how mind-numbingly easy it is just to believe, not to question the information bombarding us every day. Our minds fill in the cognitively dissonant spaces. Most of us spend so much mental and spiritual time and effort just to stay alive and well and possibly happy that there is little room left to question lies, but they surround us like an acrid fog. Any group, company, or institution with a vested interest in the economic and social status quo is suspect, and invariably guilty.

The word from the conspiracy crowd (and certain of their friends shirking about the shadows of the military and bowels of government) is that people will start to care about the lies when there are three colors and styles of clothes, cars, and personal computers, and stops on every highway (online and on land) to check I.D.s. If this is true, then disinformation and spin control will never end. It is far easier and more profitable to let us *think* we have a choice than through any jackbooted door-smashing tactics. It is insidious and will continue to be so. Probably the best hope right now is a simple awareness that guides our perception. Keep the early-warning system alive.

A quick scan of the available “conspiracy” literature is a real head-spinner. If you read too many of these stories (and who ever stops at just one?), the paranoid mindset is guaranteed to take over. What was that noise on the phone? Who is that in the rearview mirror? Why is there tape over the envelopes in my mailbox? The paranoid style will become part of your life, like eating and breathing and looking for someone to get naked with.

Ever since the first time that doctor smacked you on the butt, you have been lied to. You're a grown-up now.

**Greg Bishop is editor of *The Excluded Middle* <www.excludedmiddle.com>, an influential conspiracy magazine, and coauthor of *Wake Up Down There!: The Excluded Middle Reader* (Kempton, IL: Adventures Unlimited Press, 2000).**

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We are certainly being lied to every day, especially by government and the media, who work hand in hand to create imaginary Menaces, usually to “children,” which they say can only be prevented by repressive legislation.

The Child Molester Menace, the Drug Menace, the Assault Rifle Menace, the School Shooting Menace—all are imaginary Menaces created by the media, assisted by government.



I remember recently seeing a TV news broadcast about some teenagers in Connecticut who stole some prescription drugs from their parents' medicine chest, and had to be hospitalized. As footage ran of the zonked-out kids being loaded into ambulances, a giant marijuana leaf was displayed prominently on the screen.

On the extremely rare occasions when some little psycho shoots up a school, every TV station runs the same story for weeks, when in fact more kids are struck by lightning on the playground than are shot by other students.

And always, the "solution" is more repressive, civil-liberties-eroding legislation, or lawsuits.

So, the next time your TV set warns you about a Menace, remember, the real menace is their lies.

**Mike Hoy is president of Loompanics Unlimited <[www.loompanics.com](http://www.loompanics.com)>, described as "the best book catalog in the world."**

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Are we being lied to? The answer is on an almost inconceivably huge scale, the size of which is indicated by two books, the well-known *The Chalice and the Blade* (1987) by Riane Eisler, and the newly published *Darwin's Lost Theory of Love: A Healing Vision for the New Century* (2000) by myself. (This new book can be browsed in its entirety on iUniverse.com <[www.iuniverse.com](http://www.iuniverse.com)>, or purchased from same, Amazon.com, or your local bookstore).

In brief, it shows how for over a century the completing half for Darwin's theory of evolution was shoved out into Never Never Land by the dynamics of the prevailing dominator paradigm for science as well as politics and economics.

In plain language, the scientific and biography-writing establishment, by and large a brilliant and well-meaning bunch, wholly the captives of paradigm, for a century sold us the Big Lie about Darwin and who we really are and can become.

They tried to convince us that in the holy pursuit of survival of the fittest, our species is driven by "selfish genes" to tromp over the rights of all others in a meaningless world run by a "blind watchmaker," thereby requiring huge armies to protect us from one another and offering consumption of everything in sight as our only salvation.

What Darwin actually said was that what drives evolution at the level of emergence for our species is primarily moral sensitivity, love, cooperation, and above all the drive of MIND, (i.e. consciousness, education, and learning).

**David Loye, Ph.D. <[www.partnershipway.org](http://www.partnershipway.org)> is author of many books, including *Darwin's Lost Theory of Love: A Healing Vision for the New Century* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse.com, 2000), and *An Arrow Through***

***Chaos: How We See into the Future* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions International, 2000). He coauthored *The Partnership Way: New Tools for Living and Learning* (2nd edition, Brandon, VT: Holistic Education Press, 1998) with Riane Eisler.**

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"The Genetic Theology Movement"

Many scientists portray their ideas as products of serenely dispassionate analysis, even when strong religious sentiments are involved. Recently, the language of genetic evolution theory has provided new ways to cloak religious faith behind the veneer of serene dispassion. While unbelievers may formulate these newfangled mixes of science and religion, the ideas themselves are very much funded and publicized according to their popularity in a world of believers.

A prime example is the notion that evolution has produced a genetically innate "God module" in the brain. Superficially, this thesis arises from observations that specific regions of the brain are associated with some kinds of religious experience.

Yet the reasoning is about as sound as observing that specific brain regions are associated with differential calculus, and then concluding that genetic evolution has given us a "calculus module."

One can easily envision how a "calculus module" would help early hunter-gatherers compute the trajectory of a spear, enhancing survival and reproduction. Yet neither the "God module" nor the "calculus module" corresponds to the actual history of human thought. No gene has ever been identified for these "modules" either.

Instead, the "God module" belief infects new minds by connecting to monotheistic religions that have been around for the past few thousand years. It especially harkens to the notion of a "God-shaped vacuum" in the hearts of unbelievers. Thus, the "God module" idea spreads as a religious thought contagion in its own right, exquisitely adapted to an environment filled with impressive technologies and scientific jargon.

**Aaron Lynch <[www.thoughtcontagion.com](http://www.thoughtcontagion.com)> is author of *Thought Contagion: How Belief Spreads Through Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), and recently contributed "The Memetic Mind: Natural Selection in Mental Software" to Robert J. Sternberg and James C. Kaufman's collection *The Evolution of Intelligence* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 2001). He is an editor of the *Journal of Memetics: Evolutionary Models of Information Transmission* <[www.cpm.mmu.ac.uk/jom-emit/](http://www.cpm.mmu.ac.uk/jom-emit/)>.**

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We tend to think of conspiracies of disinformation as deliberate, conscious efforts by a cabal of evil people. But my multi-disciplinary research over the last several decades shows that we are all to various degrees implicated in perpetuating disinformation.

Why? Because there are aspects of what we have all been taught as knowledge and truth that are not true—or are at best half-truths. For

example, we are taught that human nature is inherently bad: We are evil due to original sin or selfish genes. So the debate between fundamentalist religious dogma and sociobiological scientific dogma is not a substantive one. Indeed, it serves to conceal the fact that both camps perpetuate the belief that there is something inherently wrong and evil about humans—and that hence we need to be rigidly controlled.

My books, *The Chalice and the Blade* (1987), *Sacred Pleasure* (1995), *The Partnership Way* (2nd edition, 1998), and most recently *Tomorrow's Children* (2000), re-examine these kinds of myths. They show that they are a very important part of the belief system that has

for most of recorded history maintained the configuration of what I have identified as a dominator model of human relations. This is a way of relating based on ranking of “superiors” over “inferiors”—men

that we use to perpetuate the game of consciousness. With a little nudge, “your” consciousness could be centered in your computer, your desk, your refrigerator, or a thousand miles away (if you don’t believe that, then either present yourself for a demonstration, or count me in your own list of liars). It could be centered in [US Drug Czar] Barry McCaffrey.

The most pervasive lie is that our personalities, our personas, our egos, are something separate from everyone/everything else. The tough part here is the “whom.” Who made this lie? Did we create it for ourselves? Did our parents and social institutions create it for us when we were children? Did “God” make the Big Lie?

## I believe that I am being lied to by the American dieting industry.

If you are a believer in “truth,” it might be uncomfortable to accept that everything you perceive is part of a spectrum of relative lies, but the ramifications are intriguing. What kind of really creative whopper can you convince yourself to believe that will make “your” life more fantastic?

**Phil Farber** <members.aol.com/pstuart> is editor of *Paradigm Shift* <www.paradigmshift-zine.com>, an online journal about magick, music, hypnosis, media, NLP, and consciousness. He is author of *FutureRitual: Magick for the 21st Century* (Chicago, IL: Eschaton Productions, 1997).

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I believe that I am being lied to by the American dieting industry.

The industry holds out the promise that there is a program, food, dietary supplement, or piece of exercise equipment or some combination of these that will produce a lifetime of thinness for most fat people.

During the last 30 years huge sums of money have been spent on dieting programs, foods, supplements, and exercise equipment. During the same period of time the average American has been getting fatter. What other proof is needed that, for most people, most of the time, these things do not work?

**Russell Williams**, self-described as “23 year member of the leadership of the fat acceptance community.” He is vice president of the **International Size Acceptance Association** <www.size-acceptance.org>.

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The public is not being told the truth about our federal criminal justice system. They’re being lied to, mostly by Republicans and centrist Democrats like Clinton who have helped dismantle Fourth and Fifth Amendment protections, as well as make the system increasingly retributive and decreasingly humane.

For example, most people have no idea that federal parole was eliminated in 1987. Most people think that federal prisoners get

paroled and run out and commit crimes, but this is completely untrue. Most people think that federal prisoners only serve a small portion of their sentences. They don’t know that *all* federal prisoners must serve at least 85 percent of their sentences, and with some crimes—not necessarily violent ones—100 percent must be served.

Many people think you can get probation for a first-time offense for all kinds of crimes and are completely unaware of the mandatory sentencing requirements that take any discretion away from sentencing judges to assess, for example, an offender’s social and personal situation, both of which may be good reason to be lenient, or not.

Most people think that the police can’t use illegally-seized evidence. This is also untrue. Illegally-seized evidence can be used to obtain legally-seized evidence, or to impeach your defenses at trial. For example, the police illegally tap your phone and find out that someone is bringing you a few ounces of marijuana. They go talk to the supplier, get him to name you, then get him to cooperate and soon, based on an illegal wiretap, you are arrested. The charges stick.

Where is this system that coddles the accused? I haven’t seen it in my professional career. And if you’re ever arrested for a federal crime, you won’t see it either.

**Lawrence Stanley** is a defense attorney specializing in the First Amendment and intellectual property.

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Anybody who labels the ongoing centralization of political power and the increasing tax burden in this country as “progressive.” “Medieval” is more like it!

While their motives may be well-intentioned, and the term “progressive” has such a benign ring to it, I wish they would acknowledge that they are perfectly comfortable with wielding a system that orders men with guns (i.e. armed federal agents) to force other people to submit to their bidding. Never in their wildest dreams would they personally extract money from their neighbors at gunpoint to achieve a social goal. What makes it right, then, to send a surrogate to do so?

Ultimately, it is never a wise idea to entrust the possession of firearms and the sole legal authority to use them in the hands of a small class of legislators and bureaucrats. Such a concentration of power historically attracts unsavory, ambitious people whose agenda will most assuredly be different from what is considered “progressive” these days.

Perhaps Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis put it best in *Olmstead v. United States* (1928): “The greatest dangers to liberty

lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well meaning but without understanding.”

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Are “we” being lied to? Easy answer: by (a) broadcast media that pander to quarter-minute attention spans and focus on profitable infotainment while pretending that glib pronouncements intoned by inbred talking heads actually contribute to informed decisions; (b) economic analysts wearing blinders who take the NASDAQ and S&P figures as reliable indicators of the well-being of an at-risk, interconnected ecosystem; (c) political image spinners who adroitly conceal the puppet strings attached to their clients while their corporate handlers trot out phony ethics and faux-environmentalism; and (d) rose-colored glasses vendors who insist the present system is actually sustainable if we just get the global marketplace opened up, create more niches for laborers edu-doctrinated into First World thinking, and allow geo-corporatism to prove Marx the fool.

But the heavy-duty liars are the paradigm mongers—left and right—who sell quick-fix, end-state, absolute ideas wrapped in hype and hope. It’s the finders of simplicity which is not there who are the most dangerous liars of all because they believe their own deceptions. Self-proclaimed right-thinking minds drive off alternatives and limit the channels to truth by silencing the wisdom of soft voices. In an era of image over substance, the most adroit, convinced, and convincing liar wins in a delusion that fantasies are facts. They look into mirrors of their own imaginings and see “truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.” Because it is their delusion, it fits. The big lie is that there is only one path to truth, and the liars are those who brilliantly deceive themselves.

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I think that the most serious lying that takes place occurs when people lie to themselves. This is well-documented in the field of social psychology. People typically hold a distorted perception of the world—based on their pre-existing belief systems. Somehow, mysteriously, all events seem to confirm what they have already known all along. This is true, oddly enough, across the whole spectrum of belief systems.

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Self-proclaimed right-thinking minds drive off alternatives and limit the channels to truth by silencing the wisdom of soft voices.

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I’m not interested in the “lie” question, so I’ll pass.

**Kevin Kelly <[www.well.com/user/kk](http://www.well.com/user/kk)> is editor-at-large for *Wired* magazine. His latest book is *New Rules for the New Economy* (New York: Viking Press, 1998).**

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With all respect—no. The question is silly . . . in my view. Too silly for me to facilitate.

**Michael Albert is editor of *Z Magazine* and ZNet <[www.zmag.org](http://www.zmag.org)>, founder of South End Press, and one of America’s most influential progressive social activists.**