

DEMONS FROM THE FAR SIDE OF TRUTH

by Kenn Thomas and Adam Parfrey

The term “conspiracy theorist” has a trifecta of propagandish intent: it deprives of credibility any perspective not directly approved by academic and political authorities; it implies that conspiracies don’t really exist; and it promotes a subgenre of *DaVinci Code*-type print and media entertainments.

When Jim Keith assembled volume one of the now out-of-print *Secret and Suppressed* in 1993, he and publisher Feral House were keenly aware of the institutional disapproval of non-sanctioned views of political assassinations, financial manipulations and the secret operations of military and intelligence black-ops.

Keith did not live to see an American president assume office as the result of a court decision, nor did he witness the 9/11 horrors and the US march to war over imaginary weapons of mass destruction. He did, however, with that first volume of *Secret & Suppressed*, help create the attendant popular culture of *X-Files* TV shows, Mel Gibson-styled *Conspiracy Theory* movies and a conspiracy-obsessed internet.

An *X-Files* offshoot program called *Lone Gunmen* used in its pilot episode concepts that explored in a Feral House book Keith co-wrote with Kenn Thomas called *The Octopus*, based on the conspiracy research of a writer named Danny Casolaro. The *Lone Gunmen* pilot episode included a “back door” computer system, called “Octium” in the show but identical to PROMIS in Casolaro’s research, that stopped a plane from crashing into Manhattan’s twin Trade towers. This aired in the March preceding the actual events of 9/11, making the show more known for its eerie predictive quality than for its connection to Casolaro and *The Octopus*.

Keith had died by then, and mysteriously so, from a knee injury he suffered at the Burning Man event in Black Rock, Nevada in 1999. Shortly thereafter, a scandal in the medical world caused a temporary suspension of knee surgeries when patients began dying from cartilage transplants tainted with clostridium bacteria. Keith had previously written about the CIA’s stockpiles of the same bacteria. Shortly after the knee-surgery scandal,

Keith's publisher Ron Bonds, whose IllumiNet Press published many conspiracy-oriented books, also died of clostridium poisoning from food he ate at a Mexican restaurant near his home in Atlanta, Georgia. In the end, the tainted cartilage samples from the hospital scandal were tracked to a tissue bank near Atlanta.

So Jim Keith became an odd footnote to the bizarre circumstance of the prediction of 9/11 by a TV show in a genre he helped create and popularize in part by editing the first volume of *Secret and Suppressed*.

And though Jim fully believed in *Secret and Suppressed's* sinister shadow histories, he was not above putting on his publisher with the inclusion of an article called "Secrets from the Vatican Library" which purported to have been written by a "member of the Franciscan order." It became clear that this piece was actually written by a prisoner named "Wayne Henderson" who had been (he and justicedenied.org says) falsely convicted of murder. As it turns out, this was not Jim Keith's sole intentional inside joke. He also wrote a couple UFO books under the pen name "Commander X." As Robert Sterling of The Konformist puts it, "many in the conspiracy field have long believed that Commander X was some sort of fascist Nazi propaganda, where good light-skinned aliens battle evil, large-nosed alien monsters. When looking at the work as satire rather than a disinformation vehicle, however, Commander X is quite a hoot."

When dressed down for the conspiratorial put-ons by his Feral House publisher, Keith begged forgiveness by comparing his style to Robert Anton Wilson in which "factions" become more stimulating and illuminating than cautious articles with obsessive academic sourcing.

Keith entered the annals long after the ascendance of stalwart champion conspiracy theorists—more rightly known as parapolitical scholars—Mae Brussell and Robert Anton Wilson, both of whom are represented in this second *Secret and Suppressed* volume. The hard data they harvested needs to be acknowledged by and before new readers.

Satirical factions and dismissible kookiness are not included—at least not intentionally—among *Secret and Suppressed II's* lineup of under or non-reported articles about America's shadow-side operations.

In the last piece of expository prose from his career, Wilson presents one final personal take at Adam Weishaupt, overlord of a central conception to many conspiracy-oriented readers: the Illuminati. "Perhaps Tom Jefferson got it right when he said that secret societies seemed necessary in Europe, haunted by monarchy and Papism, but not in the United States. Certainly when the Constitution remained the law of the land—before the Supremes selected Dubya—no sane person would feel the need for secret societies here. Do I dare add, "but now with the Constitution in cryonic suspension...?"

During George W. Bush's tenure, as conspiracies were happily pushed much more into the face of the American public than they had ever been, the very idea of their secrecy and suppression almost itself seemed to become history, or at least just the stuff of popular entertainment. At the end of Bush's presidency, conspiracy issues seem no less threatening and new shadows gather.

Secret and Suppressed II explores the current parade of cryptocracies, cults, secret societies and international Nazified elites. It examines what the periodicals and electronic media still refuse to take seriously: debates about the nature of evolution that offer more than a dumb show of crypto-Christians and pseudo-skeptics; details about occult themes running in the background of today's space program; symbolic resonances in popular cultures from Nashville to Santa Cruz; weather warfare technology, fusion reactors; and the technology of political disenfranchisement; unsettled arguments about historical conspiracies and just tidbits of oddball and underreported information that Keith called "demons from the far side of the Truth."