

## Introduction to PARANOIA: The Conspiracy Reader, Volume 1, April 2010

Dear Readers,

Well, it's 2010 and the world is falling apart. But don't say we didn't warn you.

The economy, which supposedly hit bottom last year, is still in freefall. The unemployment rate, so say economists who are not afraid to say so, is actually twice the official number. Even after the recession ends, it could take ten years for the unemployment rate to return to pre-recession levels. This last warning comes from that bastion of radical economics, the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

But nothing surprises *PARANOIA* readers anymore, does it?

*PARANOIA: The Conspiracy Reader* grew in 1992 out of material collected by a group called The Providence Conspiracy League, which met in a small bookstore in Providence, Rhode Island, called Newspeak. The first issue was photocopied at Kinko's. The print run was a few hundred copies.

Through the 90s and into the new millennium, the cryptocracy's agenda became undeniable: from the Ruby Ridge FBI fiasco, to the Waco massacre, the OKC bombing and 9/11, *PARANOIA* was there connecting the dots. In hindsight, *PARANOIA* was a time capsule, capturing the first decade of an America in decline.

Careening into 2008, the economy screeched to a halt, and well over 500 magazines and newspapers "stopped the presses," permanently. *PARANOIA* magazine was not immune to the forces that were pummeling the print media. By 2009, over half the magazines we were paying to print were being destroyed by the retailers, unsold. This magazine "consignment" paradigm was clearly unsustainable in the new internet economy.

Was *PARANOIA* doomed to become a collection of virtual bytes that could only be read on a computer screen? We found a middle path, the new "print on demand" technology that allows publishers to print in small quantities, as needed. The idea hadn't yet caught on in the ad-driven magazine industry, where mass-production and mass-circulation are a necessity.

Welcome to *PARANOIA*, the magazine that became a book. What you're holding in your hands is volume one of *PARANOIA: The Conspiracy Reader* in book format. It contains the same kind of content as the magazine did, and you can buy it in the same places you used to buy the magazine—only on the book shelf rather than the magazine rack.

In keeping with *PARANOIA*'s peculiar fusion of conspiracy and kook, this volume contains a few vintage interviews from back issues, including the late great grandfather of the Apollo hoax, Ralph René; ancient secret society researcher, William Bramley; eminent dot connector, David McGowan; and ukulele crooner, Tiny Tim. We've also packed in several new interviews, including self-proclaimed JFK "witness," Roderick A. MacKenzie, III; astrotheologist, Acharya S; Apollo hoax videographer, Jarrah White; 9/11 scholar, David Ray Griffin; and secret society historian, Craig Heimbichner.

We're also proud to present several articles by the best conspiracy and paranormal researchers in the biz; of course, all the writers and interviewees in this volume are appreciated beyond measure. We'd like to thank contributing artists, Lee Harvey Roswell, Saint John, James Quigley, Iona Miller, John Moore and Ned Sonntag. We'd also like to thank our two editorial assistants, Liz Lee and Mark Elliott, for their editing and proofreading assistance on this volume.

In other exciting news, in early 2009 *PARANOIA* was approached by an archivist at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, offering space in their Poage Political Archives, which focuses on JFK assassination research and other fringe political materials. This means you can now take a road trip to Waco to visit all 51 original issues of *PARANOIA* at Poage Legislative Library, Baylor University, 201 Baylor Avenue in Waco, Texas. For directions or information call 254-710-3540.

The whole set of back issues has also been archived at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston, Rhode Island. The Robert L. Carothers Library, located in the center of campus, was founded in 1892 and houses 1.4 million volumes. In 2009, the *PARANOIA* collection was updated, replenished, and moved to the Special Collections Unit located on the second floor of the Library. For directions to the URI campus, go to [www.uri.edu](http://www.uri.edu).

Last but not least, due to a high demand for sold-out back issues, you can now download PDFs of select vintage issues of *PARANOIA* for FREE at [www.paranoiamagazine.com](http://www.paranoiamagazine.com). And of course, there are back issues of *PARANOIA* still in print—we have included a list at the end of this volume. You can purchase back issues by mail or on the *PARANOIA* website, where you can do some free reading as well.

So to our new readers in the book world, welcome to *PARANOIA*! To our old magazine format readers, we hope you like our new, more sustainable book format. Thank you for making this great leap with us.

Sincerely,

Al Hidell and Joan d'Arc