

Criminalizing the Opposition: A “Conspiracy Theorist” Confesses to His Petty Crimes

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“Our research has shown for the first time the role that conspiracy theories can play in determining an individual’s attitude to everyday crime. It demonstrates that people subscribing to the view that others have conspired might be more inclined toward unethical actions.” – Professor Karen Douglas, University of Kent press release for the research, entitled “Belief in Conspiracy Theories and Intentions to Engage in Everyday Crime,” in the *British Journal of Social Psychology*

Let me be perfectly clear from the outset.

I am not referring to the conspiracy theories of George W. Bush, Colin Powell, Barack Obama, Hilary Clinton, Donald Trump and other such luminaries concerning events such as the attack of September 11, 2011, weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, the ongoing war on terror, Julian Assange’s alleged ties to Russia, etc. These people’s conspiracy theories have nothing to do with petty crime, for their handiwork is grand indeed. They are “big people”. In any case, I don’t know what small stuff they might be up to when not killing so many people all around the world.

I got to thinking about my petty crimes after reading a profound article in [The New York Post](#) how the aforementioned Professor Douglas and her comrades at two English research universities have proven – “backed up by science” as the Post’s Rob Bailey-Milado says – that “little people” like me who have concluded that the U.S. national security state conspired to kill President Kennedy, to take one example, are inclined to take to the dark side and pilfer M&Ms from the candy counter and stuff like that.

“Sure,” Bailey-Milado writes in his elegant style, “we’ve been saying this about our wack-job uncle for years.” Such a nut case might be a “9/11 denier” or believe “the ancient pyramids were built by aliens” or “myths surrounding the Mueller report to the chilling ‘secret’ behind Disney’s ‘Frozen’.”

As we all know, all these nutty beliefs are of equal value and validity, and to even harbor the thought that Bailey-Milado might have the CIA’s 1967 secret Dispatch – [Doc 1035-960](#), showing how to counter and discredit the claims of conspiracy theorists – pinned over his desk or in his mind is to risk further accusations of being wacked-out and in need of examining one’s proclivity toward everyday crimes. So I won’t go there. I’m guilty enough.

So bless me, folks, for I have sinned. Let me confess.

Last week, after reading the *Post* article and the study itself, I found myself in my local co-op

market. You might wonder where I had been looking for myself when I found myself there, staring into bins of dried fruit, but let's just say I had been around. When you're lost and wacked out, you never know where you are or why you believe what you believe.

I was trying to decide whether to get the dried pineapple, mango, or figs. It was a tough choice, sort of like staring at forty different tubes of toothpaste on the store shelf and wondering which to buy or if the one advertised as specially for women would work for a man since men must have different teeth. The comparison is not exactly apt, I guess, for you can't test the toothpastes there, but the fruit looked so edible. So, when no one was looking, I first tried the pineapple, then the mango, and finally the figs. I thought I saw the store manager see me when I took the fig because I was so enjoying the fruits of my crime that I let my guard down.

When I was leaving the store, I had the odd thought that the cop car in the parking lot was there for me, so I turned and went out via the sidewalk, sighing in relief as I did. As I was walking home, I thought of my narrow escape and the brilliance of the study that connected my conspiratorial thinking to my criminal activity with the fruit. I also couldn't help thinking how the figs had reminded me of my latest conspiracy theory, but one supported by sources as confidential as those referenced by *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*. In addition, like those devotees of truth and confidentiality, I will never reveal my sources.

Legend has it that Isaac Newton discovered the law of gravity while sitting in a garden, watching apples fall perpendicularly to the ground. However, this is not true. I have learned from my confidential sources that his nickname was Isaac "Fig" Newton and that those who claim the Fig Newton cookie was named after Newton, Massachusetts are involved in a great cover-up.

My sources tell me that when Isaac was a child, he was so fond of figs that his mother had to warn him against eating too many, for as you probably know, figs, like prunes, are filled with fiber and possess a laxative quality. Isaac was defecating so much and so often that his mother was alarmed. But a mother's panic at a child's toilet habits can be a source of insight years later.

So it was that years later it was Isaac's experience on the potty that gave him his great insight into gravity. Reflecting back on his childhood, he realized that shit always went down, never up (there were no electric fans in those days, so no one would say that it went up when "shit hit the fan"). He remembered his mother's loving words when as a boy he would tell his mom he had to "take a shit," she would always remind him that it was always better to give than take, so he should "give a shit."

Also, it was Isaac's chore to take the family potty out behind the house where it was emptied down into a deep hole about six feet under. Thus, the adult Isaac came to call his discovery gravity, after the grave. He scientifically proved what everyone already knew: that everything and everyone goes down, eventually. Not the most uplifting news, I grant it, but I have sources for that also.

So I readily admit I am guilty of this inclination toward low-level "crime," as Douglas and her colleagues explicate so brilliantly. No doubt, it is connected to my conspiratorial mindset. I hope that much is clear. Sometimes I just can't resist the forbidden fruit. Although not an apple, it seems to give me insight into the knowledge of good and evil.

For some reason, I suspect Douglas will not be studying the elite criminals who conspire to invade countries, kill millions, and blame it on others. Those are crimes against humanity, and are beyond the purview of research aimed at showing how sick everyday people are who suspect that their leaders are big-time criminals.

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