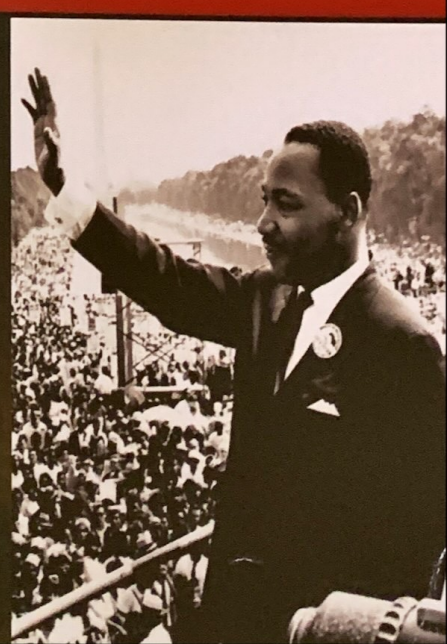


# HISTORY STUDENT TIMES

*Making Old News Big News*

Issue 2: 2015/16

'Assassinations and Conspiracies'





# EDITOR'S LETTER

Hello and welcome to the History Student Times!

The second edition for 2015/16 is based on the theme of 'Assassinations and Conspiracies' and contains articles on topics ranging from the mystery of two missing fifteen century princes to the far-reaching consequences of political assassination within modern day government and society. This edition includes the regular medieval, IHP, joint honours, review and travel features, as well as an interview with our Head of School, Simon Hall, on his new book *1956: The World in Revolt*.

Thank you to all the contributors who have written articles for the second time— I greatly appreciate your continued enthusiasm! I would also like to thank those who have contributed for the first time, I really hope that you have enjoyed getting involved.

A special shout out goes to the Undergraduate Research Experience (UGRE) which is back this year on the 19th February. Showcasing fantastic research projects from within the Faculty of Arts, this is a great opportunity to support your peers and learn more about some amazing topics. Open all day, and with an extended invitation to drop in an out according to your areas of interest, the UGRE event welcomes all. It's a very varied day of presentations, interactive workshops, research stalls and posters, along with an appearance from the Research Scholarship panel and lots of tea, coffee and cakes. Come along and join as the UGRE interns, Tess, Jessica and Joel celebrate your work!

Lastly, I hope you enjoy this edition!

Katie Milne

If you would like to contribute please contact [historystudenttimes@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:historystudenttimes@leeds.ac.uk)

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# Religion, Resistance and Rebellion in the Caribbean

Liz Egan

In August 1791 on the island of Saint Domingue, a group of slaves met one night to perform a voodoo ceremony which would have far reaching consequences. The ritual signified the beginning of the Caribbean's first and only successful slave rebellion, which led to the creation of the island we now know as Haiti. Voodoo is still widely practised in Haiti but it is not the only example of religion being used as a form of resistance among the enslaved of the Caribbean.

For many, "voodoo" triggers images of voodoo dolls and dead roosters, but the religion derives from Catholicism melded with indigenous African beliefs which had survived the torments of the Middle Passage. For some historians, the links to Catholicism are only superficial, designed as 'a white mask put on over black skin' (Roland Pierre, 1977) so as to be acceptable to the white colonial authorities. Others have argued voodoo is an example of a creolised religious practice, combining elements of a diversity of spiritual beliefs and reinterpreting French colonial Catholicism in order to better suit the needs and traditions of the enslaved. Both interpretations however support the argument that religion played an important role in slave resistance. Joan Dayan (1998) in particular has argued that the practice of voodoo was a way of undermining the master narrative through appropriation, resisting the dominance of white society over black lives.

Similarly in Jamaica, historians have highlighted how creolised religious practices such as obeah and myalism undermined the authority of the colonial powers. Colonial records describe obeah as a form of witchcraft, deceitfully twisting Christianity and inciting slaves to rebellion. Such superstition indicates the anxiety of white society towards obeah because creolised religious forms constructed 'an alternative authority and social power' outside the jurisdiction of whites (Vincent Brown, 2003). Obeah upset the master-slave dynamic. O. Nigel Bolland (2002), theorising about the process of creolisation, has argued that this dialectic relationship inherent in slavery was the source of creolisation, thus emphasising once again how creolised religious forms need to be understood

as a resistance to the dislocation and oppression of the slave period.

Creolised religions such as voodoo and obeah, however, were also major influences behind slave rebellions, such as the Haitian Revolution. Practicing religion gave slaves the opportunity to gather and organise themselves – something we can see incited fear in Saint Domingue authorities as they repeatedly passed statutes to curb slave meetings 'which they incorrectly term prayers'. Additionally, it also inspired rebels, to which contemporary accounts from both the Haitian Revolution and the unsuccessful 1760's Tacky's Rebellion in Jamaica attest. Slaves taking part in Tacky's Rebellion were said to have been blessed by an obeah man to make them invulnerable to bullets and similarly those fighting in the Saint Domingue uprising were rumoured to have been accompanied into battle by voodoo priests.

Thus, far from the superstitious spells often depicted in popular culture today, the creolised religions of the Caribbean hold a significant place in the history of the region and the struggle against slavery. They formed part of African cultural retention, a resistance to white authority and finally, they provided the energy and organizational means of mounting rebellion.



Slave rebellion, Saint Domingue, 1791

[http://d39ya49a1fwv14.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Frontispiece\\_from\\_the\\_book\\_Saint-Domingue\\_ou\\_Histoire\\_de\\_Ses\\_R%C3%A9volutions\\_ca\\_1815.jpg](http://d39ya49a1fwv14.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Frontispiece_from_the_book_Saint-Domingue_ou_Histoire_de_Ses_R%C3%A9volutions_ca_1815.jpg)



# The Conspiracy of the Princes in the Tower

Jonathan Wright

Medieval

The outcome of the 'Princes in the Tower' - the finest monarchical murder mystery - is still incomplete. The tale of the fifteenth century princes who disappeared from the Tower of London is a well-known one, but for its secrets, not its facts. The facts we do know are that King Edward IV died in 1483, leaving behind an eleven-year-old son named Edward V and his brother Richard. However, Edward IV's brother was Richard III, who placed the princes in the tower and became King in their absence. His rule may have only lasted two years until the end of the Wars of the Roses, but the non-existence of the princes during this time caused much controversy. What is interesting is that the chatter of mystery all occurred after the confusion of the monarchy died down. Once the Tudor monarchy was firmly established, contemporaries could begin to look back.

More and Shakespeare were key figures in Tudor times who laid a clear charge of conspiracy at Richard's door. But a lack of knowledge and evidence sparked further flames of debate and mystery which continued even into recent centuries. It was not until 1674 that some bones were found under the floor of the main stair in the heart of the Tower. Charles II ordered them to be interred in an urn in Westminster Abbey. While this concluded the tale in many people's eyes, the murderer and reasons are still unknown. Even a 1933 unearthing of the bones could not give any definitive answers. The age could not be determined and even the sex was not identifiable. It is these facts that lead to the inevitable view that this mystery is probably not going to be solved any time soon. However, with advancements in DNA testing and a multitude of new historians each with their eye on discovering the truth, the goal of discovering more was never going to be left alone.

Although there was no charge, arrest or trial at the time of the princes' disappearance, a mystery in itself, the following centuries did not leave the story un-

touched. Thomas More, a famous scholar and Lord Chancellor in early Tudor England, wrote a book called *The History of King Richard III* between 1512 and 1519. In this account, he brands Richard III as the archetypal tyrant who was the murderer of the princes. However, this viewpoint must be digested with the context of Thomas More's royal connections. More was, of course, writing for the Tudor monarchy who had taken the crown from the Richard III in the War of the Roses. Therefore, the cliché could apply that history is only written by the victors. However, More's father was reportedly prosecuted by King Henry VII and so the lack of reference to the current king could also suggest a more balanced collection of events. The reason that some historians have doubted the credentials of this work is because Thomas More was only six-years-old when the Princes reportedly vanished and so was hardly the expert eye-witness. Nonetheless, his account is taken to reflect the public opinion in the generations that followed the princes' disappearance.



The Princes in the Tower

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c0/Princes.jpg/369px-Princes.jpg>



Shakespeare was the next influential author on this mystery with his play *Richard III* written around the year 1592. It is in scene four where the Tower of London is described as a 'slaughter-house' and Richard himself is portrayed throughout as the villainous anti-hero. He is the only character to be killed on-stage. Although fiction, Shakespeare's popular depiction clearly ties into the growing view, both popular and within historical study, which has remained until this century: Richard was responsible for the death of the Princes.



Richard III

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/09/Richard\\_III\\_earliest\\_surviving\\_portrait.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/09/Richard_III_earliest_surviving_portrait.jpg)

Richard\_III\_earliest\_surviving\_portrait.jpg

However, new evidence, brought up primarily by Jack Leslau, leads the observer of this mystery to doubt the sureness of the loathing felt towards Richard III. He believes the princes were smuggled out of the Tower and given new identities: Dr John Clement and Sir Edward Guildford. A portrait hangs in Nostell Priory, West Yorkshire that depicts the family of Thomas More accompanied by Dr Clement. Leslau uses this portrait - attributed to the Tudor painter Hans Holbein - for evidence of something mysterious about Dr Clement. His position in the picture is higher than the others, with the royal fleur-de-lis above his head, and words above him in Latin, reading: "John, the rightful heir". This possibly indicates this character's direct link to the throne - no historians have been able to connect the statement with a position that anyone known by that name as 'John Clement' could have achieved at that time. In addition, evidence from the mother of the Princes does point towards an alterna-

tive to murder. From the death of her husband, King Edward IV, in 1483 until her own death in 1492 there is no record of a statement by Elizabeth Woodville that her children were either dead or missing. She can be seen as the one undoubtable source in this mystery as she lived through it with direct links to all involved. Yet her silence perhaps indicates that the Princes were in fact smuggled away as Leslau claims. Key evidence also exists for how the children disappeared rather than were murdered. Further evidence can be seen in the shape of the accommodation in the Tower of London. They actually lived in the royal apartments of the Tower of London - not the prison cells people tend to expect. This luxury could indicate a positive future intended for the children rather than the gruesome murder that has previously been depicted.

This event has inspired the Channel Four documentary 'The Greatest Murder Mystery in British History' and a film in 2005. While both were brushed under the carpet, their content mirrored that of renewed confusion following this discovery. The whole conspiracy itself has been given an edge by the recent discovery of Richard III in a Leicester car park. He exhumed in 2012 and the evidence found challenged the idea of a hunch-backed, crooked uncle as seen by the lack of deformities on the discovered skeleton. If this much is true, how far can we also challenge his legacy as a murderer? These new factors certainly do seem to lend weight towards a reimagining of the British monarch, yet still more tests are needed to be certain of any answers to this longest of unsolved debates.

Six hundred years may have passed, but the mystery still continues...



The Tower of London

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/44/Tower\\_of\\_London,\\_April\\_2006.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/44/Tower_of_London,_April_2006.jpg)

Tower\_of\_London,\_April\_2006.jpg



# The Disappearance of the Mary Celeste

Brogan Coulson-Haggins

The Mary Celeste, a ship carrying barrels of alcohol, set off on 7<sup>th</sup> November 1872 under the command of Captain Briggs, his seven crewmen, wife and two-year-old daughter. On 4<sup>th</sup> December it was found by the Dei Gratia, between the Azores and the Portuguese coast. After receiving no reply to his signals and observing strange movements, the ship's captain, Morehouse, sent two crewmates to investigate. They found the ship to be deserted.

Where were the crew? Why had they left? Were the lifeboat's ropes deliberately cut from the ship? The fate of the Mary Celeste and its passengers has been subject to speculation since its disappearance, with even Arthur Conan-Doyle fictionalising the tale, adding to its publicity. Two films, thirty books, several documentaries and numerous conspiracy theories later, here are the most popular theories, from 1872 and the present day.



The Mary Celeste

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/92/Mary\\_Celeste\\_as\\_Amazon\\_in\\_1861.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/92/Mary_Celeste_as_Amazon_in_1861.jpg)

After discovering both ships were sailed to Gibraltar, arriving there on 12<sup>th</sup> December, the salvage hearing began on 17<sup>th</sup> December in order to decide whether the rescuers, the Dei Gratia crewmen, were entitled to claim the insurance payment. The Queen's Proctor, Frederick Solly-Flood did not believe the story of the crew, and launched an investigation into foul play. Whilst no concrete evidence was found, they only received twenty per cent of the \$46,000 insurance money, which Jess Blumberg believes suggests there was still notable suspicion surrounding the crew.

The US Secretary of the Treasury, William Richard,

believed that it may have been a mutiny with the crew murdering Captain Briggs after drinking the alcohol on board; encouraged by the fact the nine barrels were empty when the cargo was unloaded at Genoa. There were also allegations of insurance fraud with the close friendship of Captain Briggs and Captain Morehouse being used as evidence, although this theory has since been disputed as Briggs' son had been left behind to continue with his schooling, making it doubtful that the family had intended to disappear.

In recent years, there have been alternate theories as to why the ship was left abandoned. The crew of the Dei Gratia stated that the weather conditions had been deteriorating with strong winds and heavy rain. Therefore, there is a strong case to suggest that the crew had thought the ship to be sinking, perhaps through having heard an explosion in the cargo, so decided to abandon the main vessel in favour of the smaller dinghy attached to the ship. Whilst waiting, still attached, to see whether the ship was safe or not, the strong winds and poor weather snapped the rope, explaining why it was found broken and dangling over the side of the ship, sealing the fate of those inside the dinghy.

In 2006, Dr Andrea Sella of UCL conducted an experiment on a replica ship in which he created an explosion with butane gas and alcohol which was found to have leaked on the original ship. The experiment resulted in a massive 'pressure-wave type of explosion' that left no soot or burn marks. On board in 1872, this explosion, according to Dr Sella, may have been caused by a spark or piece of pipe ash falling into the leaking alcohol on board. Therefore, he believes this to be "the most compelling explanation".

So was it insurance fraud or mutiny? Poor weather or an explosion? Or even sea monsters and the Bermuda triangle? In truth, it is doubtful historians will ever know the fate of the crew of the Mary Celeste and the reasons for their disappearance but the conspiracy theories will continue to evolve.



# The Babington Plot

James Felton

Elizabeth I is a monarch best known for defeating the Spanish Armada in 1588, establishing the Protestant faith in England, the longevity of her forty-five year-long reign and for being the daughter of Henry VIII. She also famously stated that despite having 'the body of a weak woman', she had the 'heart and stomach of a king'. Yet, whilst she was a popular queen, her reign was not free of threats and assassination attempts. Elizabeth inherited the throne after the reign of her half-sister, Mary I, who had attempted to reintroduce Catholicism as the sole religion of England. Elizabeth however became determined to restore the Protestant faith, and due to the complicated European context of the time, this resulted in compromising with and appeasing many Catholics in order to avoid plots against her.

In 1569 Mary Stuart, a figurehead for opposition to Elizabethan religious reform, fled to England. As former Queen of France and a native Scottish Queen she was influential, and as a Catholic, could prove detrimental to the survival of English Protestantism if she was ever to be crowned Queen. The future Babington Plot was not the only assassination plot against the Queen of England during Mary Stuart's time in England. Controversy surrounding whether Mary herself played a part in the conspiracies arose, with the Privy Council and William Cecil especially proclaiming that she had to be executed for threats to Elizabeth's power to subside.

Whilst Elizabeth decided against executing Mary Stuart as a result of the Ridolfi and Throckmorton plots in 1571 and 1583 respectively, these plots possessed other important consequences as well. Elizabeth revealed her ruthless manner by executing the Duke of Norfolk after the former and establishing the 'Bond of Association' after the latter. This bond was aimed, albeit indirectly, at Mary Stuart in stating that if an assassination of the Queen were to materialise then those who were involved in such a plot would be executed themselves. Therefore, for Mary to be executed, a further conspiracy threat against the Queen was all that was needed. The Babington Plot fitted

this mould.

Named after Anthony Babington, and potentially aided by the Spanish, this plot was aimed at removing the supposedly illegitimate Queen Elizabeth I and placing her Catholic cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots on the throne. Thankfully for Elizabeth, Sir Francis Walsingham, known as the 'spymaster', was able to work with the Catholic Gilbert Gifford to unearth the plot before it could be acted upon. The chief conspirators were executed and Mary was imprisoned in Chartley Castle.

In 1587, at Fotheringhay, Mary Stuart was duly executed. There was an increase in fears over an assassination after another influential Protestant leader, William, Duke of Orange, was killed in 1584. The Babington plot was the last straw for Elizabeth I. Just a year after Mary Stuart was executed, the Spanish Armada set sail. This would turn out to be a catastrophic failure on the part of Philip II and his men, but a huge victory for Elizabeth I. The event became a symbol of national pride and the start of England growing into a maritime power. Thus, as with many historical events, the Babington Plot is yet another with which you have to consider what could have been. British history certainly would have looked completely different had the Plot succeeded and removed Elizabeth from power.



Elizabeth I

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/eb/Elizabeth\\_I\\_in\\_coronation\\_robos.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/eb/Elizabeth_I_in_coronation_robos.jpg)



# Literary Conspiracies: Mysterious Writers Throughout History

Francesca Bibby

Joint Honours

Conspiracy theories have perpetuated literature throughout history as far back as the Roman writings of Cicero. In fact, our fascination with conspiracies even led to the creation of conspiracy literature in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, with John Buchan's 1915 novel *The Thirty-Nine Steps* believed to be one of the first to incorporate the typical elements of conspiracy thrillers. However the mystery of conspiracies has not remained solely on the page, and there is a long line of writers through the centuries who have attracted various theories about themselves.

Due to the huge success of his work and heavy influence on literature and language even today, William Shakespeare has been the object for a number of theories ranging from the slightly implausible to completely ridiculous. The son of a borough council member, Shakespeare was likely to have attended a petty school (from the French 'petits' meaning 'little ones') where he will have learnt how to read and write but he did not attend university or come from a line of intellectuals. For this reason, some argue that it was highly unlikely that someone from such a background would have the literary knowledge and life experience deemed necessary in order to write Shakespeare's plays, and consequently they must have been written by someone else. The most popular theory, first proposed in 1856, is that the plays were actually written by essayist, scientist and writer Sir Francis Bacon. Though there is little evidence to suggest this, critics have argued that there are some similarities between Shakespeare's plays and Bacon's, as well as the circumstantial 'fact' that Bacon's Grand Tour happened to take him to the location of several of Shakespeare's plays. It is also claimed that Shakespeare's works contain detailed scientific knowledge which only Sir Francis Bacon would have possessed.

Another theory often referred to is that Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, was in fact the author of Shakespeare's plays. Some people believe there are references to de Vere's life in both the plays and the sonnets, as well as a series of codes in the works that would implicate him as the author to those in the know. However, along with little proof of this there is the ultimate evidential objection that is de Vere's death in 1604, after which a number of Shakespeare's plays were written. Finally, the playwright Christopher Marlowe has been debated as a potential author of Shakespeare's work since 1896. Wilbur Ziegler stated that reports of Marlowe's death in a drunken brawl on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1593 were falsified in order to help him avoid being sent to prison for being an atheist. Though there were some unexplained anomalies surrounding Marlowe's death and his work undoubtedly influence Shakespeare's writing, sixteen jurors accepted the death as genuine after an inquest following the incident. Moreover there is a complete lack of evidence to suggest that Marlowe survived beyond 1593 and his writing style is considered to be too different to that of Shakespeare. The fact that he had a simple upbringing does not provide evidence that Shakespeare's work was not his own. Furthermore many of his contemporaries were from humble backgrounds, most notably Ben Jonson who prided himself on his lack of formal education.

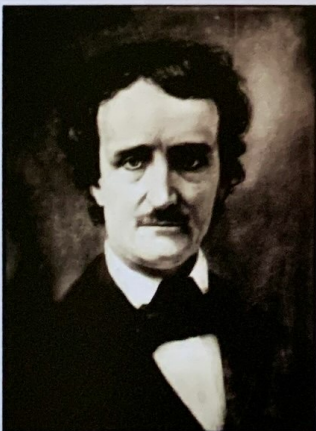


William Shakespeare

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/12/Shakespeare\\_Cobbe\\_portrait\\_detail.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/12/Shakespeare_Cobbe_portrait_detail.jpg)



Edgar Allan Poe is another writer who attracted numerous conspiracy theories, though not about his work but rather the mysterious circumstances of his death in 1849. On September 27<sup>th</sup> of that year Poe left Richmond, Virginia heading to Philadelphia in order to edit a collection of poems for Mrs St. Leon Loud, a minor American poet at the time. A week later he was found in a delirious state roaming the streets of Baltimore by Joseph W. Walker, a compositor for the *Baltimore Sun*. Poe was semi-conscious and was wearing soiled clothes that did not belong to him. He wavered between fits of delirium and visual hallucinations for the next four days occasionally calling out for someone named Reynolds, who remains unidentified to this day, before dying in hospital. Though his death certificate listed phrenitis (swelling of the brain) as the cause, the mystery surrounding his death has led many to speculate about the true cause. One theory is that Poe met some friends while in Baltimore and, after becoming extremely drunk, left them to roam the streets when he was robbed and beaten. Another possibility is that Poe was a victim of 'cooping', a method of voter fraud practised by gangs in the 1800s where an unsuspecting victim would be kidnapped, beaten and forced to vote for a specific candidate wearing different disguises. This would account for the fact that Poe was found in clothes that were not his own and is made more plausible because he was found on the day of the Baltimore Election outside Gunner's Hall, a public house which served as a pop-up polling station. Poe's hurried burial by his cousins adds even more mystery to his death, but unfortunately it is probable that we will never know what really happened to the writer.



Edgar Allan Poe

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b1/Edgar\\_Allan\\_Poe\\_portrait.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b1/Edgar_Allan_Poe_portrait.jpg)



Agatha Christie

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/be/Agatha3.jpg>

Lastly Agatha Christie, famous for her ability to produce fictional mysteries, eventually created one in reality when she disappeared for eleven days in 1926. On 3<sup>rd</sup> December Christie argued with her husband after he asked her for a divorce, ending with him leaving the house to spend the weekend with his mistress. Later that evening Christie disappeared from her home, leaving a letter for her secretary which said she was going to Yorkshire. Her car was later found at Newlands Corner in Surrey, perched above a chalk quarry with an expired driving licence and clothes inside the vehicle. Her disappearance caused an outcry from the public and a huge search was initiated, and she was discovered after eleven days at the Swan Hydrophatic Hotel in Harrogate, registered as Mrs Teresa Neele (the surname of her husband's mistress). Two doctors diagnosed her as suffering from amnesia and Christie herself never told anyone the truth of what happened. There are a few theories surrounding the disappearance; that Christie was suffering from what is now known as a 'fugue state' brought on by stress and has no recollection of what took place or, more outrageously, that she was planning to commit suicide and frame her husband's mistress. Unfortunately this is another mystery which will likely never be solved, but one thing is for sure – readers will always be fascinated by conspiracies found both in books and reality.



# A Murder in Sarajevo

Eilleashagh Cowley-Smith

In August 2014 the world fell silent in remembrance of a catastrophic war that started a century ago. Throughout the twentieth century revised and developed understandings of World-War catalysts appeared on the historiographical scene; one of which being the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife Sophie in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 28th June 1914. Much credit has been awarded to this momentous murder for its detrimental consequences within Eastern Europe, as well as it being argued for as the 'trigger' that sparked the First World War. In 2013, historian Christopher Clark published *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914* which shook the ground of historical debate. In his work Clark offered a fresh perspective on the origins of the Great War by laying strong emphasis on the events in the streets Bosnia's capital. But who were the conspiring masterminds behind this assassination?



The Archduke and his wife emerging from the Sarajevo Town Hall to board their car, a few minutes before the assassination in June 1914

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b7/](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b7/Post-)  
Post-

[card\\_for\\_the\\_assassination\\_of\\_Archduke\\_Franz\\_Ferdinand\\_in\\_Sarajevo.jpg](#)

'Greater Serbia' was indeed a great nationalistic vision, one that was compromised and suppressed by the expansion of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Thus, threat to nationalistic prosperity was met by vengeful political assassination. Young Bosnia was a revolutionary movement among the Pan-Slavist youth of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Within the net-

work of conspirators was the radical Gavrilo Princip, assassin of the Archduke and Sophie. Princip certainly remained to be the face of conspiracy for the Serbs of Bosnia, portraying both the hero of Serbian pride and the villain that started a European war. Supplied with weapons the conspirators of the organisation, including Princip and Nedeljko Cabrinovic (who also attempted to assassinate the couple), were placed in Sarajevo on that day in June all seeking the moment to target the vehicle carrying the Archduke and Sophie.

Revolutionary ideas within the Slavic region were not new; in 1903 Serbia's Black Hand, headed by Dragutin Dimitrijević ('Apis') along with troops of the Serbian army, assassinated King Alexander of Serbia and Queen Draga in the royal palace at Belgrade, Serbia. Ties between the two conspiring organisation have been made, as it is strongly believed that Young Bosnia received assistance from the Black Hand in the form of weaponry crossing the border, failing to be subject to border checks. Not only were Princip and Cabrinovic eagerly recruited by the radical group, they also shared the common view that the Slavs should not continue to be suppressed by the Austro-Hungarian expansion and injustice. This was certainly a failure on the part of Bosnian security and the security surrounding the Archduke and his wife on their visit to Sarajevo.

The Black Hand undeniably played their part in encouraging the Slavic youths to assassinate the man who would attempt to bring Serbia into the Austro-Hungarian sphere, and subsequently to its knees. The blame for the war has been shifted from country to country since its conclusion in 1918, and the calculated efforts of Princip and Young Bosnia still remains a much discussed and disputed subject. As Otto Von Bismarck had predicted in 1888, 'one day the great European War will come out of some damned foolish thing in the Balkans'.



# The Missing Princess

Lindsay Hill

The exhumation of the final two members of the Romanov family in 2007 – believed to be Alexi and either Maria or Anastasia, children of Tsar Nicholas II – seemingly puts to rest one of the most famous conspiracy theories of the 20<sup>th</sup> century after years of digging and DNA testing. However, with over two hundred people claiming to be the ‘missing’ princess Anastasia over the years, even seeping into popular culture (*Disney*), it’s time to take a look back at how the conspiracy began and thrived.

Tsar Nicholas II and his family were put under house arrest by Russia’s provisional government in July 1917. This only grew stricter once the Bolsheviks came to power, eventually having them moved to Yekaterinburg. The White Army – royalists and anti-communists – threatened to capture this city, leading to the murder of Nicholas, his wife, five children and the doctor and servants in the basement by gunfire and bayoneting, rendering the ‘whites’ powerless with nothing to rally together for. Keeping the Romanovs alive would have also left Russia with a rightful heir who, if rescued, Europe would have pressured be reinstated.

As if not brutal enough, what came next would shock and puzzle the world for years as rumours sparked that Anastasia had somehow survived and escaped the massacre. Some eyewitnesses claimed to have seen her with her sisters and mothers board a train in Perm shortly after the killing, saved from the bullets by their diamond encrusted corsets; others claimed to be her over the years. Most notably was Anna Anderson, but after her death her DNA was tested with that of Prince Philip’s confirming that the title and the Romanov fortune were not hers to claim. Anderson was not the only one to make this claim however and over the decades a plethora of fake princesses seeking the family fortune made it even more difficult for historians to find the truth.

It appears to be the fact that the bodies were missing for so long that has allowed these rumours to develop

and become so widely accepted for so long; creations like *Disney’s* ‘Anastasia’ and the 1956 film of the same name perhaps only serve to further speculate what many now believe to be the impossible.

Bodies exhumed from a mass grave in 1991 identified most of the family but a missing Grand Duchess fuelled previous rumours that Anastasia had escaped the massacre and started a new life. However, despite the more recent recovery of all the Romanov remains, some historians like Veniamin Alekseyev believe Anastasia did escape still. In his 2014 book he claims that academics dismissed the imposters too easily and that Bolshevik testimony of the murders is unreliable in attempt to make them look more ruthless and capable of wiping out ‘old world’ Russia, contradicting Leon Trotsky’s diary entry in which he admits that all of the family were murdered at the hand of Lenin.

It is further hoped that confidential documents, due for release in 2018, will shed more light on the situation, hinting at an exchange between the Germans (the nationality of the Tsarina and thus her children) and the Soviet Union, saving Anastasia’s life.



Grand Duchess Anastasia Nikolaevna

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/25/Grand\\_Duchess\\_Anastasia\\_Nikolaevna\\_Crisco\\_edit\\_letters\\_removed.jpg/220px-Grand\\_Duchess\\_Anastasia\\_Nikolaevna\\_Crisco\\_edit\\_letters\\_removed.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/25/Grand_Duchess_Anastasia_Nikolaevna_Crisco_edit_letters_removed.jpg/220px-Grand_Duchess_Anastasia_Nikolaevna_Crisco_edit_letters_removed.jpg)



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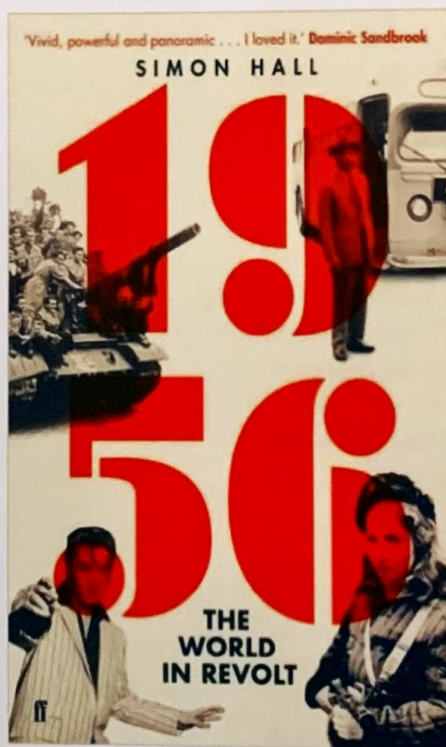
# *1956: The World in Revolt*

## An Interview with Dr Simon Hall

Katie Milne

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*1956: The World in Revolt*, published in January 2016 by Faber & Faber, is the most recent book by our new Head of School, Simon Hall. As a panoramic view of the year 1956, the book investigates that year's turbulent events by maintaining a focus on three key themes. The narrative follows the struggle against white supremacy in the United States and South Africa, the struggle against European colonialism in Africa and the Middle East and the uprisings against Communist rule in Poland and Hungary. In this interview, Hall discusses his long-standing research interests and the unique character and importance of the revolutionary events of 1956.



*1956: The World in Revolt*

by Simon Hall

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**KM:** Thank you for talking to the History Student Times! Please could you start off by talking about how you became interested in the history of social protests and movements?

**SH:** I studied American history as an undergrad at Sheffield and I did my final year special subject on the American Civil Rights Movement. I guess that's when I first became interested in social protests and social movements, and I quite quickly became interested in the links between the Civil Rights Movement and the anti-Vietnam War protests. From there I built up to political protests more generally so that interest has been going for quite a while now.

**KM:** Did you do your MA in social protests and movements?

**SH:** I did my MA in American History, also at Sheffield, and I focussed there on African-American opposition to the war in Vietnam. Then I developed that into my PhD thesis at Cambridge which was on the links between the Civil Rights Movement and the anti-war movement. With my second book project the thing I was most interested in, particularly about American history, was how America sets itself up as a country that's all about freedom, equality and liberty—it has a very clear sense of itself as a beacon of freedom. However, when you start studying African-American history, it's very clear that there's a contradiction. On the one hand you have a country that claims to be all about freedom and democracy yet on the other African-Americans seem to be a particularly striking example of how the promise of what America is about didn't work out in reality in large parts of American history. I was also always interested in the 60s and how this gap played out in the Cold War. I eventually became interested in looking at how other social movements, particularly second wave feminism and the gay rights movement, had used the language of American freedom to try to achieve progress for their own agendas. Studying social movements is great because you get to see how regular people make history by coming together, by doing things, by organising and cooperating and by taking a stand.

**KM:** Your new book is a panoramic view of protests within the year 1956. Why were you drawn towards studying this specific year?

**SH:** A lot of my work had focussed on the 1960s and 1970s. The 60s get a lot of attention as they are seen as a glamorous and exciting period. The 50s have always traditionally suffered in comparison in how they come in between the excitement of a world war on the one hand and the 60s on the other, meaning they are often marginalised or seen as a bit drab and a bit dreary. When I was teaching my second year course on American history I always enjoyed the lecture on the 50s because of the idea of political consensus and a kind of stability in America in the 50s which then changed in the 60s, and the origins of civil rights protest, rock and roll and cultural revolt. I

remember noticing that around 1956 a lot started to happen. 1968 gets a lot of attention as a year of revolution, and there was a moment when I thought 1956 is a year of revolution as well but no one seemed to have written about it. The more I looked at 1956 the more I found out about what was happening—and not just in America. There were protests within colonial rules across Africa and the Middle East, protests against communism and communist rule across eastern Europe, the start of the Cuban revolution and big protests in South Africa. I found that 1956 is a really fantastic year, so I hope it is a great book!

**KM:** Do you see the role of de-Stalinisation as central to the events of 1956?

**SH:** I would say that there are three big themes within the book, stemming from a general frustration that the promises made about the post-war world in the Atlantic Charter, about greater freedom, equality, security and international cooperation, didn't work out. One of the three threads is Khrushchev's secret speech in which he denounces Stalin at the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Soviet Communist Party and attacks Stalin. He sought to create and enact a series of liberal reforms in the Soviet Union itself and this had a ripple effect out across the Eastern Bloc. The speech raised hopes among people, particularly in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, that they might be able to enjoy greater freedoms and so Khrushchev let the genie out of the bottle. Forces became very difficult to control, particularly in the Hungarian Revolution which ended up being controlled by the Red Army. The second big strand is the revolt against colonialism, particularly in the British and the French Empires. 1956 sees independence for Tunisia and Morocco but sees a major intensification of the war in Algeria. It also sees Britain agreeing to give independence to the Gold Coast which becomes Ghana. The anti-colonial story culminates with the Suez Crisis with the Anglo-French attempt to retake the Suez Canal and to overthrow Nasser. The third is a revolt against white supremacy in the United States. The Montgomery bus boycott lasted throughout almost the entire year, and there was a whole series of other desegregation crises, particularly during February on the campus of the University of Alabama and towards the end of the year there were attempts to desegregate high schools in the south that turned very violent. In South Africa there was a massive protest against the extension of the Pass Laws to African women. A march took place in Pretoria involving 20,000 women demanding that the proposed extension be stopped and protesting for equality and freedom. At the end of the year all the leadership of the freedom movements in South Africa, including the leadership of the ANC, were all arrested and put on trial for treason. So those are the three big strands: revolt against colonialism, revolt against Stalinism and communism and revolt against white supremacy.



There's also a cultural revolt as well, 1956 is a really exciting year as Elvis becomes a major star and rock and roll gets really big. Often there were a lot of fears about rock and roll, particularly in America, but also in Britain—fears that it fuelled teenage delinquency. There were a lot of scare stories about rock and roll riots taking place and in America there were fears about race mixing as they put it, or mongrelisation—that rock and roll is designed to encourage teenagers of both races to socialise together and ultimately to develop sexual relationships which will threaten white supremacy. It's also the year in which Allen Ginsberg's *Howl* is published and it's the year of the so-called 'angry young men' in Britain with John Osborne's landmark play *Look Back in Anger*. So you can see in 1956 the beginnings of what I think to be a counter-culture.

**KM: Why is your book different to other research in the field?**

**SH:** I think that people have written about various aspects of 1956 before, there's a lot of great work on Suez, a lot on the intensification of the Algerian war, and people have written great books on Hungary, but no one has really looked at the year as a whole from a kind of global perspective. No one has really made the case in the way that I have that 1956 is a genuine year of revolution, that it compares to 1789, 1848 or 1968, and that it's not just a year in which just lots of events happen by coincidence. There are interconnections: people take inspiration from neighbouring countries, they draw on examples from other places, they start to develop a shared sense that the actions they're taking in their particular local context have broader, global significance. The year itself is a watershed year that has a major transformative effect on the second half of the twentieth century—it's a hinge year. So that's one of the things that I hope will make the book stand out.

**KM: How much of your previous research played a major role in the foundations of your new book?**

**SH:** Research on civil rights and segregationists in the American south, which is a big chunk of the book, that drew quite heavily on the research I'd done before. It was great to be able to write about civil rights again which I hadn't done for a few years. But a lot of the book is based on areas where I have no previous expertise. I'm not a historian of eastern Europe or of British or French Empires and so when I started the project that was kind of intimidating. I had to read a lot of the leading scholarship in all of those different fields, but that was actually one of the most pleasurable parts of doing the book as there's so much great stuff that's been written and I got to appreciate the good work that has been done. It was quite intimidating because I was always conscious that, in a sense, I was encroaching onto other people's specialisms. However, there is a tendency amongst historians to become ever more specialised in a particular field and it's quite exciting to break free of that and to be able to talk about all these other aspects of literatures and historiographies. Once I got into that I found that quite exciting, but it

was definitely daunting to begin with.

**KM: What did you learn from the writing and research processes of your previous work that could be applied to your new book?**

**SH:** The research training and expertise I'd developed could all be applied well, so I benefitted from that, but writing this book was so different. Partly because it's a broader topic, but also because it was written for a trade press. A trade book is aimed at the general public rather than academics and students, so that took a bit of getting used to—to write in a way that I hope will be more accessible and more engaging. It's a book that also has a strong narrative drive, it tells the story of the year as it is organised by season—we begin in January and then we end in December. I hadn't really written a strong narrative history before so that was very different but I enjoyed doing it.

**KM: Do you have any more research projects planned for the future?**

**SH:** Well I just started being Head of School so that's made things a bit tricky in terms of time but I've got a few smaller things going on at the moment. I'm just writing an essay for a book on another year, 1968, on the gay liberation movement and the spirit of that year. I'm also writing an essay on Leonard Matlovich who was an air force sergeant who came out publicly as gay in order to challenge the ban on the military in the mid-1970s. He was a Vietnam veteran, so I'm writing about him as both a military hero—he won quite a few medals for his service in Vietnam—and then also as an icon of the gay rights movement. It's quite interesting because a lot of the early gay rights movement came out of the anti-Vietnam war protest, so he's a complicated figure. Beyond that, I'm not quite sure what the next book will be on! Possibly on revolutions or revolutionaries, but I haven't got a very clear idea about that just yet.

**KM: How are you finding being the new Head of School?**

**SH:** I'm enjoying it, I'm finding it really interesting. Every day is different, it's quite a steep learning curve and my day has to be a lot more organised than it used to be so that takes a bit of getting used to it, but so far so good. It's probably for others to judge though!

**KM: Lastly, if you could have dinner with one historical figure who would it be?**

**SH:** Martin Luther King. He was a huge fan of soul food and I quite like soul food so I reckon we'd have quite a good dinner!

*1956: The World in Revolt* is published by Faber & Faber and available to buy now. In autumn 2016 the book will appear in the US with Pegasus Books.



# Who Killed Martin Luther King?

Katherine Neill

Martin Luther King was arguably one of the most influential figures in history. He was a Baptist minister, a humanitarian and the leading figure in the African-American Civil Rights movement in America. Unsurprisingly, then, when he was assassinated in 1968, the public outcry was overwhelming and many thought that this was the end of non-violence in America. Indeed, riots broke out across the nation despite the call for peace by US President John F. Kennedy and other leaders. Some, however, felt the need to continue King's peaceful legacy. Either way, the consequences of King's death were staggering. The question then arises of who assassinated King, and the answer is not simple.

One answer, the most widely accepted one, is James Earl Ray. The FBI investigated King's death, and found Ray's fingerprints in a motel bathroom, from which at least one shot was fired at King. Various objects showed Ray's fingerprints, one of which was a rifle. Ray was captured two months after the assassination at London Heathrow airport, where he was attempting to travel to white-dominated Rhodesia on a fake Canadian passport. Ray was immediately returned to Tennessee, where he was charged with the murder of Martin Luther King. After initially confessing to the assassination, he revoked his statement three days later. Then, in 1977, Ray escaped from prison, only to be recaptured three days later and returned to prison—adding a further year to his sentence, making it one hundred years. For the remainder of his life behind bars Ray tried and failed to withdraw his guilty plea. However, in 1997, Dexter King, son of Martin Luther King, met with Ray in prison. Dexter publicly supported Ray's attempts to retrial, lending credibility to the conspiracy theories that were soon to emerge.

A different argument is Lloyd Jowers. Mr. Jowers owned a café on the ground floor of the building opposite the hotel where King was shot. In 1993, in a televised interview, Jowers claimed that he had been paid \$100,000 to organise the murder of Dr. King, and that the assassin was not Ray. Consequently, Jowers and other 'unknown conspirators' were subject to liability in a wrongful-death lawsuit, filed by King's widow and their four children, who were then awarded \$100. This theory, however, is criticised, for Jowers' own sister confessed that he had merely told the story to sell it, suggesting that the assassination claim was no more than a plot for fame.

Friend of King and Southern Christian Leadership Conference member, James Lawson, took a more extreme approach. He argued that the Poor People's Campaign, King's latest ordeal, could've been a reasonable motive for federal involvement in King's assassination. Moreover, Lawson observed that King had humiliated President Johnson exactly one year before, to the day, when he had rejected and openly opposed Johnson's involvement in Vietnam. For Lawson, this was reason to believe that there had been governmental intervention in the assassination.

Evidently then, there are various different conspiracies about King's assassination. Theories have emerged and

been put down, been considered and re-considered and been publically asserted and then withdrawn, but to this day it is still not truly clear who assassinated Martin Luther King. At the time, King's friend James Bevel asserted that 'there is no way a ten-cent white boy could develop a plan to kill a million-dollar black man', and indeed King's family and many other influential figures were public supporters of James Earl Ray's innocence. As with many deaths of historical figures, it is remarkable to note just how far influential assassinations can affect one's perception. Indeed, many white Americans mourned King, and in a significant amount of cases the shock and conspiracy surrounding King's death changed opinions. A survey taken by a college group revealed that opinions of King had risen after his assassination, and the *New York Times* only sang King's praise, stating that his murder was a 'national disaster'. King's relationship with the President, Lyndon B. Johnson, had been infamously challenging but on learning of King's assassination, Johnson cancelled a forthcoming meeting with Vietnam War military commanders and declared April 7<sup>th</sup>, three days after the assassination, a national day of mourning.

Conclusively, it is interesting to see how opinions can be adjusted after an influential assassination and the consequential conspiracy theories. Indeed, we still cannot be sure who assassinated Dr. King on that day, and many of the official documents will remain classified until 2027, despite the uncertainty and inevitable conspiracy surrounding the assassination.



Martin Luther King

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/ba/USMC-09611.jpg>



# The Mystery of Malcolm X

Lydia Williamson

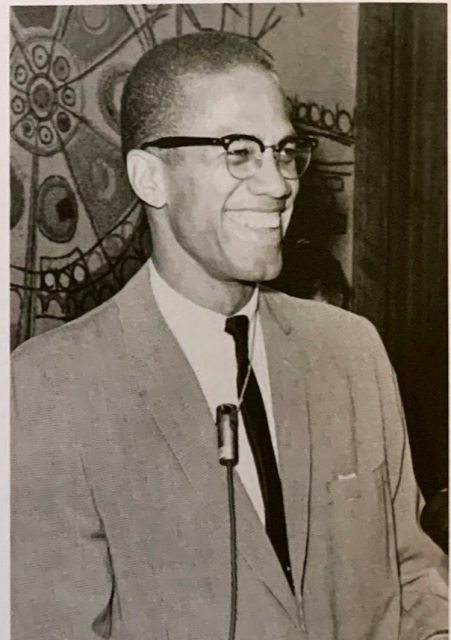
'I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare,' declared controversial human rights activist Malcolm X, in his 1964 speech 'Ballot or the Bullet'. X's statement epitomised his stance regarding the struggle for racial equality in 1960s America. Whilst his contemporary and rival Martin Luther King sought integration into American society, Malcolm X was the antithesis of King's teachings. Instead he promoted racial pride through the means of a Black Nationalist and separatist agenda, as opposed to partaking in the 'American nightmare' of American white society. Whilst peaceful methods were central to King's philosophy, Malcolm X advocated using 'any means necessary' to gain equality, justifying the use of violence.

Malcolm X's prominence was due to his position in the Nation of Islam, an organisation that combined race and religion. It adhered to Islam's religious teachings and a strict moral code, whilst also preaching black pride, Black Nationalism and racial separatism. Although Elijah Muhammed was the movement's leader, Malcolm X's renowned oratory skills led to his position as the Nation's leading spokesperson and as its public face. However, his separation from the movement in 1964 and his subsequent assassination in 1965 led to conspiracy theories surrounding the organisation's role in X's death.

Multiple reasons contributed to X's departure from the Nation of Islam. His once close relationship with Elijah Muhammed was becoming increasingly fractured. X's level of public popularity and position as media favourite meant that he was perceived to be a threat to the leadership of Muhammed, with the Nation's leader allegedly being envious of X's influence. Meanwhile, married Muhammed confirmed that he was engaging in affairs with Nations secretaries, therefore breaking the strict moral code of the organisation. Thus, the rift between the men grew deeper. In 1963, upon the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, X issued a statement which read that the President's murder signalled that 'the chickens have come home to roost' and therefore it appeared that X supported the assassination. The statement led to a public outcry and Muhammed suspending X from public speaking for ninety days. The events described all contributed to the growing rift between the two, and Malcolm's disillusionment with the movement, culminating in his subsequent parting and the for-

mation of his own organisation, Muslim Mosque Inc.

However, this was not the end of their quarrel, which continued until Malcolm X's assassination. In fact the hostility grew only more pronounced, with the Nation repeatedly threatening X until his death and attempting to take his life upon numerous occasions, which included the firebombing of his home. Upon leaving the organisation, in an interview with *Ebony* magazine, X had claimed the organisation 'have got to kill me. They can't afford to let me live...I know where the bodies are buried'. Unfortunately his words materialised and on 21<sup>st</sup> February 1965. Less than a year after leaving the Nation, he was assassinated at a public rally by members of the Nation of Islam. Although Elijah Muhammed denied any involvement, the question of the organisation's role in X's death and whether the orders for assassination were issued from the top ranks remain to be answered. However, upon evaluation of the evidence, it can be said that suspicions are firmly justified.



Malcolm X

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cb/Malcolm\\_X\\_NYWTS\\_2a.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cb/Malcolm_X_NYWTS_2a.jpg)



# St Bartholomew's Day Massacre: Whodunit?

Lucy Hu

The 23rd August 1572 marked a distinct turning point in the French Wars of Religion. King Charles IX of France ordered the assassination of Huguenot Protestant leaders in Paris, setting off a wave of Catholic mob violence resulting in the massacre of tens of thousands of Huguenots all across France. Massacres such as these have occurred throughout history all over the world, but what makes the story of St Bartholomew's Day interesting is the long-standing question of who was really behind the massacre. To this day, modern historians are still divided over whether the royal family was responsible. Was it Charles' mother? Maybe it was Charles himself? Or was it actually the actions of the people?

The first suspect to investigate is Catherine de Médici. Traditional protestant interpretations often portray the leaders who died as victims of a premeditated plot to destroy the Huguenot movement, masterminded by Catherine de Médici, Charles' 'wicked' queen mother who forced the hand of a hesitant and weak-willed king. This interpretation stems from the belief that two days prior to the massacre, Catherine ordered the murder of Admiral Gaspard de Coligny, a Huguenot leader, whom she felt was leading her son into war with Spain. However Coligny was only wounded, leading Catherine to convince the young king that the Huguenots were on the brink of rebellion and thus causing Charles to authorise the murder of their leaders.



*One morning at the gates of the Louvre*, 19th-century painting by Édouard Debat-Ponsan. Catherine de' Medici is in black.

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/ce/Debat-Ponsan-matin-Louvre.jpg>

The second suspect is Charles IX himself. Catholic historians believed that the king ordered the violence as a justified pre-emptive strike to protect the Catholic crown from a Protestant revolt. Charles IX appeared to genuinely fear a Protestant uprising, and therefore chose to strangle it in an act of self-preservation. Therefore, contrary to Protestant belief, the execution decision was his own and not Catherine de' Medici's.

The third suspect is the violently anti-Huguenot city of Paris which was on the verge of revolt. Arlette Jouanna dismisses all other suspects in claiming that both Catherine de Médici and Charles were too heavily committed to maintaining peace to abruptly instigate massacre. Jouanna also states that the Guises, though leaders of the ultra-Catholic faction opposed to Coligny, were in too 'fragile' a position in court to risk angering the king by pressuring him to act. Therefore, it was the grievances of Parisian Catholics that culminated into a determination to exterminate not only the admiral but also every hope of the 'peace' the royal family supposedly sought. Extinguishing the possibility of peace seems to be a paramount explanation for the actions of the Catholics, as the attack on Coligny appeared to be less an attempt to deprive the Huguenots of their leader and more a deliberate intent to plunge France back into a war that would result in the final extermination of heresy. This alternative interpretation therefore presents the view that the king was provoked to act by the radical public instead of his own accord or pressures from his mother.

Despite speculation over the causal factors behind the mystery of St Bartholomew's Day, what is fundamental is how we can remain in general agreement that the massacres can only be understood in light of the dangerous political developments and seething religious resentments of the time. Essentially, the event epitomised one of the most horrifying episodes in the Reformation era.



# The Possible Impacts of Political Assassination

Lizzie Parr

IHP

Political assassination refers to the targeted killing of an individual due to their political beliefs, power or influence they hold. Although an extreme form of political violence, assassination remains a persistent feature of world politics with a national leader being assassinated almost twice in every three years since 1950.

When used by states, political assassinations can be used as a tool to bring about peace and topple regimes at odds with the Western ideal of democracy. However, when used by individuals who hold legitimate grievances against a regime, the significance of an assassination can be lost unless supported by the international community or at least a single powerful state. Assassination removes a single individual but not the cultural norms or ideals which they represent or challenge.



JFK on the day of his assassination, Dallas, Texas 1963

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5c/JFK\\_limousine.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5c/JFK_limousine.png)

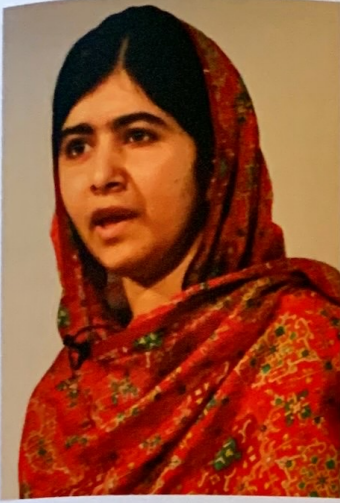
Possibly the greatest single factor to affect the impact of political assassination is the stability of the regime in which the assassination occurs. The practical impact ranges from personal change through to systemic collapse. Although the assassination of JFK has

consistently been voted one of the most important events of the twentieth century (in a 1999 Gallup survey his assassination was viewed as more important than the Depression and the Vietnam War), in reality its political impact was minimal and only brought about personal change. Stable states have a protocol in place for the death of a leader or person of influence, it took just 2 hours for Vice-President Johnson to be sworn into office following the death of Kennedy. In contrast, in unstable regimes and authoritarian states political assassination can have a much more significant impact. The assassination of leaders in unstable regimes is more likely to cause instability within, and in extreme cases, the collapse of the state.

While the social and cultural significance of assassination in the West may be huge, the political significance is often limited. The US is significantly more prone to have assassination used as a means to seek to bring about political change. The most famous assassination attempt in modern British politics was made against Thatcher at the Conservative Party Conference in 1984, where five were killed and over thirty injured. In contrast, the US has seen close to one hundred attempts made on the lives of US public officials in the twentieth century. The deaths of Evers, X and King within a five year period between 1963 and 1968 had a significant impact on the Civil Rights Movement. The riots which followed King's assassination in 1968 may have shown the support for the Civil Rights Movement, but as the majority of rioters were African-American, it only further intensified support for racial segregation. It was also exploited by the Republican Party to discredit both the Civil Rights Movement and the Democrat policy which supported it, particularly that of Johnson.



A clear exemption from the judgement that social impacts are greater than political impacts when looking at assassinations in the West is the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in 1914. Before the assassination a war was highly likely, but it was the death of a future leader at the hands of an extremist organization which set off a chain of events concluding in the world's first global war. Although an obvious anomaly, it is still important to highlight that an assassination which may have gone relatively unnoticed at other periods in history lead to both international instability and in some cases systemic collapse.



Malala Yousafzai at Girl Summit in 2014

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/89/Malala\\_Yousafzai\\_at\\_Girl\\_Summit\\_2014.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/89/Malala_Yousafzai_at_Girl_Summit_2014.jpg)

Assassinations which take place in the East are sometimes used by the West as justification for seeking to spread their liberal agenda. As seen with the case of the attempted assassination of Malala Yousafzai, the West often fails to take into account the culture in which they exist. Despite being presented in the media as a girl seeking to just go to school, in reality Yousafzai fitted with Ball's argument that political assassination 'is the murder of a significant individual by an organized conspiracy in pursuit of political ends'. Yousafzai was a significant individual; her blog highlighted the human rights abuses which existed in Pakistan and particularly against women. This example was seen as having greater significance as it was a political assassination attempt but not made on a political target. However, this was not the case. Although she was not a public official she was still a symbol of change within a culture which is desperately being held back by its political system.

As a form of political violence, political assassination, especially of a state leader, is often met with hostility. The systemic instability, rioting and violence which often follows the assassination of a political leader is often counterproductive, and without the support of a strong state it is unlikely an assassination will have a significant and lasting impact. In contrast, political assassination can also be used as a tool of a state that is seeking to bring about significant change.

Fundamentally, assassinations have the most significant impact when they take place in an unstable regime. State support helps legitimize assassinations which is necessary in order for their impact to be recognized and taken seriously. The impact of the majority of assassinations does not stretch beyond personal change and short lived unrest, in order for true change to be brought about an assassination must take place within a greater context of social unrest and be internationally supported. Assassinations ultimately tend to be most significant when they seek to bring about the ideals associated with democracy. Conversely, assassinations are disregarded as mindless political violence when they seek to keep in place norms at odds with those held by the international community.



# Pistols, Poisoned Letters and an Elvis Impersonator: Failed Attempts to Assassinate US Presidents

Natascha Allen-Smith

We're all familiar with the assassinations of Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy. These attacks were dramatic, public and successful, providing endless hours of debate and speculation for conspiracy theorists. It is well known that four presidents (Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley and Kennedy) have been assassinated during the United States' 240-year history, but what is often forgotten is the multitude of attempted attacks which failed to kill their illustrious targets. Several would-be assassins have been captured by security forces before putting their plans into action, but others have come terrifyingly close to success. This article will look at some of the stranger and more dangerous endeavours of the last two centuries.

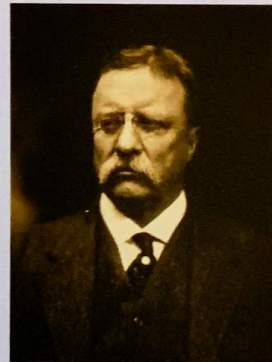
For those wondering what possible use their dissertation could have in the real world, bear in mind that the printed version could literally save your life. In 1912, Theodore Roosevelt was campaigning for a third term as President, running as a representative of the Progressive Party. En route to a campaign speech in Wisconsin, Roosevelt stood up in his car to wave to supporters and was shot in the chest by a Colt revolver. His metal glasses case and 50-page speech, folded twice over in his breast pocket, slowed the bullet enough to prevent it from inflicting a serious injury. After briefly confirming that he was not mortally wounded, Roosevelt went on to deliver a 90-minute oration, proudly showing the audience the bloodstain on his vest and the bullet-riddled speech that had saved his life. He even rescued his would-be assassin from being mauled to death by the crowd, shouting for him to remain unhurt.

Not all Presidents were so lenient with those who attempted to kill them. In 1835, Andrew Jackson was fired upon by Richard Lawrence, an unemployed house painter, while leaving a funeral in the Capitol Building. When Lawrence's pistol misfired, the enraged 67-year-old President thwacked him several times with his walking cane. Despite this onslaught, Lawrence managed to draw a second gun and pull

the trigger, but it also misfired. An investigation later determined that the odds of both pistols failing to work were approximately 25,000 to 1.

The vast majority of attempted presidential assassinations were carried out in typical American fashion, with firearms. However, one of the most bizarre, creative and recent endeavours involved a different kind of weapon: poison. Just after the Boston Marathon bombings of April 2013, President Obama received a letter containing ricin, a powerful toxin. Two identical packages were sent to the US Capitol mail offices and to a Mississippi judge. All the letters ended with the phrase: 'I am KC and I approve this message', which was quickly identified as a catchphrase used by an Elvis impersonator called Kevin Curtis. The saga soon became even weirder: Curtis, it transpired, had been framed by his long-term cyber-enemy, James Everett Dutschke. Not only did the poison fail to kill Obama, but the 80-year-old Mississippi judge also survived.

These are just three of more than twenty failed presidential assassinations which have occurred throughout the US's short history. Who knows how many other attempts have gone undiscovered, averted by sheer luck or by last-minute loss of nerve on the part of the attacker? With gun crime on the rise in several U.S. cities, we can only hope that future attacks on President Obama and his successors will be equally unsuccessful.



Theodore Roosevelt

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/eb/T\\_Roosevelt.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/eb/T_Roosevelt.jpg)



# An American Conspiracy Story: 9/11

Beth Brady

The tragedy of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 is a key event that changed the history of the twenty-first century. Now, almost fifteen years on, we are all familiar with the horrifying facts. Four aircrafts were hijacked; two flew into the World Trade Centre; one into the Pentagon; and one into a rural area of Pennsylvania after its passengers attempted to take back control. Al-Qaeda was blamed for the attacks and thus began the War on Terror as US and British armies were deployed to Afghanistan. We are all acquainted with such facts, but there are some who have come to question their validity as a number of discrepancies have come to light.

One of the most contested areas of 9/11 is why both the North and South Tower of the Twin Towers collapsed. Nobel Prize Winner, Dario Fo, has explained that both towers were in fact designed to withstand a plane crash. Fo even uses the example of a skyscraper in Madrid, which in 2005 burned for a whole 20 hours and did not collapse. Interestingly, the smoke given off by this skyscraper was white, different to that of the World Trade Centre which was black. This implies an oxygen deprived fire.

Another area heavily debated is the rate of speed at which the towers fell. Some have described their fall as if there was nothing below them, no resistance, similar to that of a building being demolished. In fact, many of the characteristics of the collapse of the towers are extremely consistent with those of a demolition. But what could have caused this? Analysts have found molten metal present in the debris of the buildings, however this is confusing. In order for the metal in the World Trade Centre to be molten, temperatures would have had to be above 1000 degrees, which they were not.

Later that day, at 9:37am, the Pentagon was hit. It is reported to have been impacted by one of the four planes that had been hijacked. Nevertheless, conspiracy theories surround this also. Immediately, the crime scene of the Pentagon crash did not resemble that of a typical plane crash scene. There was no evi-

dence of passenger suitcases or pieces of the plane on site. Additionally, the hole at which the passenger aircraft is said to have entered the building was only measured to be 5 meters wide. This is perplexing, as the plane had a wingspan of approximately 38 meters. The explanation has been given that the wings were closed before impact but this is not widely well received. When you consider this issue alongside the fact that no footage of a plane hitting the Pentagon has been released, more doubt arises.

The disaster of September 11<sup>th</sup> is not one that will soon be forgotten. Questions about who may have been responsible and if the attacks really occurred how we are told they did surround the memory of the event. While many conspiracies arise whatever stance you take, one should not lose sight of the sorrow it caused and the tragic events that followed. In New York, Ground Zero memorialises the victims and each year a minutes silence is held to remember them.



The World Trade Centre

<https://>

[farm9.staticflickr.com/8442/7835973648\\_2d94a00148\\_o\\_d.jpg](https://farm9.staticflickr.com/8442/7835973648_2d94a00148_o_d.jpg)



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# Stonehenge: Myth or Fact?

Claire McArdle

Travel

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The prehistoric monument of Stonehenge is universally known and has continued to mystify just about everyone since its estimated construction in around 3000 BC. Located in Wiltshire, England, it is managed by English Heritage and to this day there remain many conspiracies surrounding the intent and purpose behind its creation which have puzzled many generations, both past and present.

The most common, and arguably the most plausible, case is that Stonehenge was intended to be a place of burial. Bone fragments were unearthed by archaeologists more than a century ago but were reburied as the archaeologists believed them to be inconsequential. Presently, more than 50,000 bones have been re-exhumed, including the bones of men, women and children. To further back up this theory, the Stonehenge Riverside Project discovered archaeological evidence that helps support that Stonehenge was used as a burial ground. The evidence consisted of human bones from as early as 3000 BC, Stonehenge's predicated creation, and continuing deposits have been dated for at least another 500 years. The discovery of a mace head and bowl suggests that incense was burned; potentially meaning that Stonehenge was intended as a burial ground for the elite only.

However, bearing in the mind the immense size of Stonehenge, perhaps a less conceivable theory may be considered. The first record of the monument in writing came from Henry of Huntingdon circa 1130, closely followed by Geoffrey of Monmouth, the latter of which associated Stonehenge with the legend of Merlin in *Historia Regum Britanniae* whom took magical stones from Ireland and constructed them into the monument. Mythical explanations for Stonehenge are still proving popular today.

One interesting theory comes from old drawings of the monument, which depict the site in ruins. This

then suggests that the monument was never intended to be successfully accomplished by the Neolithic people and that it was inevitably abandoned. Further evidence that supports this theory is that the blue stones used to construct Stonehenge are imperfect compared to the other type of stone used; therefore, the blue-stones were not transported long distances as first assumed, but could potentially be glacial remains of the previous Ice Age, reinforced by the indentation and malformation of the stones. Perhaps Stonehenge was never intended to be a magnificent structure and was simply just a historic project.

With direct train links to Salisbury and even day bus trips that begin in both Bath and London, Stonehenge is easily accessible. The English Heritage managed sight includes an environmentally conscious visitor centre where you can warm up or cool down, and after visiting the monument itself you can explore the Neolithic replica houses to discover how our ancestors lived and worked.

It is unlikely that the true reason behind the construction of Stonehenge will ever be discovered. However, arguably the main attraction of the monument to tourists and scientists alike is the great mystery and uncertainty that surround the prehistoric stones, something which will continue for many generations to marvel and enjoy.



Stonehenge

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a0/Stonehenge\\_\(sun\).jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a0/Stonehenge_(sun).jpg)



# The Danish Girl

Sam Lloyd

Review

*The Danish Girl* is a well intentioned, if flawed, telling of the story of Lili Elbe (Eddie Redmayne), an early recipient of gender confirmation surgery in 1930. Transgender visibility has reached new heights in recent years, most notably in the high profile transition of media personality Caitlyn Jenner and the increasing prominence of transgender characters in television shows such as *Orange Is the New Black*. *The Danish Girl* is a continuation of this trend, contributing towards enhanced visibility, though not necessarily understanding, of transgender issues.

Based on a fictionalised novelisation of Lili Elbe's life, the historical accuracy of *The Danish Girl* is dubious. The narrative primarily focuses on the titular character's relationship with Gerda Wegener (Alicia Vikander), who begins the film as the wife of Einar Wegener and stimulates the latter's transition to life as Lili. The depth of Gerda's support is embellished; in reality she had remarried and lost contact with Lili prior to the film's conclusion. A liberal use of source material is not necessarily damaging, yet *The Danish Girl* would have benefited from a more thorough exploration of the isolation felt by many trans individuals. Also overlooked is Gerda's longstanding engagement with lesbian erotic art, eschewing the opportunity to educate mainstream audiences on the fluidity of gender and sexuality within many.

As part of her journey, Lili studies the women of Copenhagen streets and Parisian peep shows, coming tantalising close to the acknowledgement of all gender as performance. Yet too often *The Danish Girl* treats gender as essential, with Lili's post-surgery life bordering on the stereotypical. She finds work in retail, surrounds herself with a group of female friends, and expresses a desire to bear children. There is value in the fact that the longstanding trope of men in feminine clothing as a source of humour in Western cinema is subverted by the tenderness of Hooper's direction. Yet the polish of this production and the ease at which Lili presents such a traditional interpretation of her own femininity is sometimes nauseating. In contrast, many critics have identified a more realistic depiction of transgender life in Amazon Studios' television series *Transparent*.

Before release, the film attracted attention for the

casting of cisgender actor Eddie Redmayne as Elbe. Redmayne delivers a compelling performance and the depth of preparatory research into the transgender community undertaken by the actor is impressive, yet ultimately this was a missed opportunity for director Tom Hooper. In addressing such criticism, Hooper has bemoaned a lack of access to transgender performers. *The Danish Girl* is the perfect film to redress this imbalance, yet instead it falls prey to the conservative and risk-averse nature of profit-seeking major studios. Comparisons can be drawn with Sean S. Baker's low-budget feature *Tangerine*, also released in 2015 but starring transgender actresses Kiki Rodriguez and Mya Taylor, which only achieved limited release in the UK.

The struggle for transgender rights remains in its infancy, and *The Danish Girl* is an honest attempt to advance this cause. Indicative of the arrival of such issues in the mainstream is the involvement of artists of the stature of Redmayne, Vikander, and Hooper. Yet despite their good intentions, the optimism surrounding *The Danish Girl* should be cautious.



Lili Elbe

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7d/Lili\\_Elbe\\_1926.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7d/Lili_Elbe_1926.jpg)





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