

American Terrorism
1637 to 2010
a counterbalance to history

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**What is recorded is seldom what actually happened,
so the truth is what we make ourselves believe it to be.**

Robert Ben Mitchell

December 22, 2006

American

(adjective - defined on 12/22/06)

Of or relating to the United States of America or its people, language, or culture. Of or relating to North or South America, the West Indies, or the Western Hemisphere. Of or relating to any of the Native American peoples. Indigenous to North or South America. Used of plants and animals.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/american>

A person of or coming from the United States, or of or coming from North America or South America.

Cambridge Dictionary of American English, Cambridge University Press 2006

http://dictionary.cambridge.org/define.asp?key=american*1+0&dict=A

Of or relating to America. Of or relating to the United States or its possessions or original territory.

Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary 2006

<http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary>

Of or pertaining to the United States of America, or American culture. Of or pertaining to the Americas. More often this is specified as either "North American" or "South American."

Wiktionary 2006

<http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/american>

Of or relating to the United States of America or its people or language or culture; "American citizens"; "American English"; "the American dream." Of or relating to or characteristic of the continents and islands of the Americas; "the American hemisphere"; "American flora and fauna."

WordNet 2.1. Princeton University 2005

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/american>

Terrorism

(noun - defined on 12/22/06)

The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence by a person or an organized group against people or property with the intention of intimidating or coercing societies or governments, often for ideological or political reasons.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004
<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/terrorism>

Violent action for political purposes.

Cambridge Dictionary of American English, Cambridge University Press 2006
http://dictionary.cambridge.org/define.asp?key=terrorism*1+0&dict=A

The systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion.

Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary 2006
<http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary>

The deliberate commission of an act of violence to create an emotional response from the victim in the furtherance of a political or social agenda. Violence against civilians to achieve military or political objectives. A psychological strategy of war for gaining political or religious ends by deliberately creating a climate of fear among the population of a state.

Wiktionary 2006
<http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/terrorism>

The calculated use of violence (or threat of violence) against civilians in order to attain goals that are political or religious or ideological in nature; this is done through intimidation or coercion or instilling fear.

WordNet 2.1. Princeton University 2005
<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/terrorism>

Preface

How we see ourselves in the present is usually determined by how we remember ourselves in the past. What we claim to be doing now is most often based upon what we believe we have already done. When we can draw congruent lines between these things -our prior acts and our current behaviors - we find the greatest peace and absolution. Yet, this harmony often comes at the price of forgetfulness: forgetting the incongruent events which do not fit our preferred self-image; forgetting the acts which are discordant with our desired self-esteem; forgetting the individuals and nations whom we have wronged, harmed, or in some way done an injustice to in our search for self-righteousness.

History has yet to present a perfect society which has done no wrong. It is, perhaps, beyond the limits of human nature to always be right. Therefore, each society can not help but to reflect the frailties, fallibility, and fallacies of its constituents. In the end analysis, there has been no perfectly good or wholly bad civilization on planet Earth. Even the worst empires such as Adolf Hitler's Third Reich had their admirers and beneficiaries, or they would not have been able to attain their dizzying heights of power. By the same stroke, those most admired in their own time and beyond often derived their benevolent status at a great and horrible expense to others: second class citizenry within their own ranks, or undesirable populations beyond their borders.

If to err is human, then to ignore is inhumane. It is one thing to do bad or cause harm. It is entirely another to deny responsibility for one's actions and to disclaim participation in one's own deeds. While it may be expedient for governments and rulers to extol their virtues and accomplishments while disowning their misdeeds and failures, it is this tendency to propagandize one dimensional portrayals of three dimensional circumstances that most often breeds discontent, distress, and rebellion. Thus, it should be of little surprise that before succumbing to overwhelming external forces, most great historical dynasties had already begun to collapse from within due to internal unrest and dissent.

American history for the United States of American is yet to be fully written, for it is not yet fully complete. No matter how great or how small, a society can only have its final proclamation after it has been put to rest. Therefore, there is still time to levy cases and causes on both sides of the judgement scale, and there is still time to acknowledge that both sides of that scale exist. We can never hope to be perfect, as imperfection is an undeniable facet of the human experience. At best, we can only hope to be balanced, to both recognize our successes and concede our mistakes. To omit either side of this societal equation is to

evoke one's own downfall and disgrace. There is no dishonor in fighting honorably, but there is no honor in fighting for deceit.

This book is not a balanced presentation of American history. It does not show the good and great things this country and its individuals have done over the past centuries, things which they continually do to this day. These benevolent deeds are relatively easy to find and learn about through such commonly available resources as books, movies and the internet. It is the other side of American history - that of misdeeds, injustices, and terror - that is often harder to find. So this book is not meant to be a balanced presentation. Instead, it is a counterbalance to what might otherwise go down in history as a failure to fully represent the whole truth about American history. Ultimately, it is an attempt to accurately re-balance the scales: to render a truthful account of our imperfections.

It would be a mistake to be remembered as the America of 'my country, right or wrong.' Rather, we honor both ourselves, those we have helped, and those we have hurt if we can acknowledge 'my country is right and wrong.' A dynasty gathers its strength by nurturing those who support it, and it foments its own defeat by continually repressing those it might otherwise nurture. The quicker we are to admit our mistakes, the sooner we may realize our limitations and avoid propagating further dissatisfaction and dissent. Otherwise, we will continue to delude ourselves that people who fly planes into buildings are mad-crazy, when in fact they are mad-angry.

Robert Ben Mitchell - 04/20/10

North Miami Beach, Florida

Author's Note

This book is a chronological listing from 1637 through 2010 of some of the terrorist activities perpetrated by both the citizenry and government of the United States of America. It is not an exhaustive work on this subject as many events, in addition to those that are listed, could have been included in this text. Neither is it an authoritative dissertation about this topic as each event is only outlined on a single page. Nevertheless, it is a good introduction to the topic of American Terrorism - political, racial, economic, religious, sexual, etc. - and the fact that such behavior by the U.S.A. and its citizens is not limited to one part or period of our history, but is a continual and ongoing aspect of who and what we are.* Through such recognition we may yet achieve reparation with those we have wronged both inside and outside of our country, and with ourselves.

Many important terrorist activities have not yet found their way into this book. It is not a matter of them being unworthy of recognition, as it is a matter of my personal inability to compile a truly exhaustive compendium on this subject. However, a future edition of this book will be more inclusive, so I welcome suggestions for additions (send your ideas to me at: DrRBMitchell@yahoo.com).

Instead of an in-depth analysis, each event in this book is presented as a one page outline that was drawn and edited from internet sources, mostly *Wikipedia*. As such, this text is a compilation of work from over 100 different authors which represents both their different perspectives and different writing styles. Though not in-depth analysis, this brief one-page format summarizes their works so as to provides you, the reader, with an outline of some key elements from each event. The focus here, however, is not to see any one event as more or less important than another, but rather to see the big picture of continual terror that has been woven into the fabric of our history from its very beginning to the present. For those interested in learning more details about specific events, internet searches are a good place to start for further information.

* - This continuum is easily demonstrated with just two events - the American Indian Wars (1637 to 1890) and the Ku Klux Klan (1865 to Present) - which overlap and provide a continuity of terror spanning the entire 374 year period in this text from 1637 to 2010.

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101	EC - The 2007 Financial Crisis, 2007 to Present

* - The above list has been divided into 12 categories which seem to best represent the main area affected by each event's terrorism. Though individual events may be argued as fitting into more than one category, their assignments here were chosen as primary categories for cataloguing purposes only. These categories are:

- AA - African American
- AI - American Indian
- AS - Asian
- EC - Economics
- GL - Gay and Lesbian
- LAT - Latin
- ME - Middle East
- MED - Medical
- MIL - Military
- POL - Politics
- RE - Religion
- SOC - Societal

American Indian Wars, 1637 to 1890

category: American Indian (AI)

source: Wikipedia

American Indian Wars is the name used in the United States to describe a series of conflicts between the colonial or federal government and the native people of North America.

The earliest English settlers in what would become the United States often enjoyed peaceful relations with nearby tribes. However, as early as the Pequot War of 1637, the colonists were taking sides in military rivalries between native nations in order to assure colonial security and open further land for settlement. The wars, which ranged from the seventeenth-century (King Philip's War, King William's War, and Queen Anne's War at the opening of the eighteenth century) to the Wounded Knee massacre and "closing" of the American frontier in 1890, generally resulted in the opening of Native American lands to further colonization, the conquest of Native Americans and their assimilation, or forced relocation to Indian reservations. Modern scholars take different positions in the ongoing genocide debate. Various statistics have been developed concerning the devastations of these wars on both the settler and Native peoples. The most reliable figures are derived from collated records of strictly military engagements such as by Gregory Michno which reveal 21,586 dead, wounded, and captured civilians and soldiers for the period of 1850-90 alone. Other figures are derived from extrapolations of rather cursory and unrelated government accounts such as that by Russell Thornton who calculated that some 45,000 Indians and 19,000 whites were killed. This later rough estimate includes women and children on both sides, since noncombatants were often killed in frontier massacres.

What is not disputed is that the savagery from both sides was such as to be noted in newspapers, historical archives, diplomatic reports and the United States Declaration of Independence. ("...[He] has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.")

The American Indian Wars comprised a series of smaller wars. Native Americans, diverse peoples with their own distinct tribal histories, were no more a single people than the Europeans. Living in societies organized in a variety of ways, Native Americans usually made decisions about war and peace at the local level, though they sometimes fought as part of formal alliances, such as the Iroquois Confederation, or in temporary confederacies inspired by leaders such as Tecumseh.

Slavery, 1654 to 1865

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

Slavery in the United States lasted as a legal institution until the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1865. It had its origins with the first English colonization of North America in Virginia in 1607, although African slaves were brought to Spanish Florida as early as the 1560's. Most slaves were black and were held by whites, although some Native Americans and free blacks also held slaves; there was a small number of white slaves as well. Slaves were spread to the areas where there was good quality soil for large plantations of high value cash crops, such as cotton, sugar, and coffee. The majority of slaveholders were in the southern United States, where most slaves were engaged in an efficient machine-like gang system of agriculture, with farms of fifteen or more slaves proving to be far more productive than farms without slaves. Also, these large groups of slaves were thought to work more efficiently if guarded by a managerial class called overseers to ensure that the slaves did not waste a second of movement.

From 1654 until 1865, slavery for life was legal within the boundaries of much of the present United States. Before the widespread establishment of chattel slavery (outright ownership of the slave), much labor was organized under a system of bonded labor known as indentured servitude. This typically lasted for several years for white and black alike, and it was a means of using labor to pay the costs of transporting people to the colonies. By the 18th century, court rulings established the racial basis of the American incarnation of slavery to apply chiefly to Black Africans and people of African descent, and occasionally to Native Americans. In part because of the success of tobacco as a cash crop in the Southern colonies, its labor-intensive character caused planters to import more slaves for labor by the end of the 17th century than did the northern colonies. The South had a significantly high number and proportion of slaves in the population. Twelve million Africans were shipped to the Americas from the 16th to the 19th centuries. Of these, an estimated 645,000 were brought to what is now the United States. The largest number were shipped to Brazil. The slave population in the United States had grown to four million by the 1860 Census. Slavery was one of the principal issues leading to the American Civil War. After the Union prevailed in the war, slavery was abolished throughout the United States with the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Salem Witch Trials, 1692

category: Religion (RE)

source: Wikipedia

The Puritan based Salem Witch Trials were a series of hearings before local magistrates followed by county court of trials to prosecute people accused of witchcraft in Essex, Suffolk, and Middlesex counties of colonial Massachusetts, between February 1692 and May 1693. The episode has been used in political rhetoric and popular literature as a vivid cautionary tale about the dangers of religious extremism, false accusations, lapses in due process, and governmental intrusion on individual liberties.

Despite being generally known as the “Salem” witch trials, the preliminary hearings in 1692 were conducted in a variety of towns across the province: Salem Village, Ipswich, Andover and Salem Town. The best-known trials were conducted by the Court of Oyer and Terminer in 1692 in Salem Town. Over 150 people were arrested and imprisoned, with even more accused but not formally pursued by the authorities. At least five more of the accused died in prison. All twenty-six who went to trial before this court were convicted. The four sessions of the Superior Court of Judicature in 1693, held in Salem Village, but also in Ipswich, Boston and Charlestown, produced only three convictions in the thirty-one witchcraft trials it conducted. The two courts convicted twenty-nine people of the capital felony of witchcraft. Nineteen of the accused, fourteen women and five men, were hanged. One man (Giles Corey) who refused to enter a plea was crushed to death under heavy stones in an attempt to force him to do so.

The Puritans were a number of religious groups that sprang up during the 17th century as opposition to the Church of England. Puritans opposed many of the traditions of the Church of England, notably the Book of Common Prayer, but also ceremonial rituals such as the use of priestly vestments (cap and gown) during services, the use of the Holy Cross during baptism and kneeling during the sacrament. The colony of Massachusetts at the time was heavily influenced by Puritan thought, but was not a theocracy. A few Protestants (such as Roger Williams) prior to this period had contended that this level of religious involvement in the State was contrary to the pure teachings of the New Testament, in which the church was separate from the state (Mt. 22:21; 1 Cor. 5:12, 13; 1 Pet. 2:13, 14), and unrepentant sinful behavior that merited serious spiritual discipline was administered by supernatural means (Acts 5:1-10; 1 Cor. 5:1-4; 1 Tim. 1:20). The Puritans believed in the existence of an invisible world inhabited by God and the angels including the Devil (who was seen as a fallen angel) and his fellow demons. To Puritans, this invisible world was as real as the visible one around them.

Gnadenhutzen American Indian Massacre, 1782

category: American Indian (AI)

source: Wikipedia

The Gnadenhutzen Massacre, also known as the Moravian massacre, was the killing on March 8, 1782, of ninety-six Christian American Indians by American militia from Pennsylvania during the American Revolutionary War. The incident took place at the Moravian missionary village of Gnadenhütten, Ohio, located near what is now Gnadenhutzen, Ohio. Already in 1755, their previous village of Gnadenhütten, Pennsylvania had been subject to a massacre of converted Native Americans by other Native Americans.

In September 1781, British-allied Indians, primarily Wyandots and Delawares, forcibly removed the Christian Indians and the missionaries from the Moravian villages, relocating them to a new village (“Captive Town”) on the Sandusky River. Missionaries David Zeisberger and John Heckewelder were taken to Detroit and tried for treason by the British, who suspected them of providing military intelligence to the American garrison at Fort Pitt. The missionaries were acquitted, although Zeisberger and Heckewelder in fact had kept the Americans informed of the movements of the British and their Indian allies.

Meanwhile, the Indians were going hungry at Captive Town. In February 1782, over 100 of them returned to their old Moravian villages to harvest the crops they had been forced to leave behind. However, the frontier war was still raging, and in early March 1782, a raiding party of 160 Pennsylvania militiamen under Lieutenant Colonel David Williamson rounded up the peaceful Christian Indians and accused them of taking part in raids into Pennsylvania. They truthfully denied the charges, but the Pennsylvanians held a council and voted to kill them anyway. Some militiamen refused to take part and left from the area. The Moravian Indians, informed of their fate, spent the night praying and singing hymns.

The next morning on 8 March, the Indians were tied, stunned with a mallet blow, and killed with a fatal scalping cut. With scalping replacing throat cutting, this was the same process used to slaughter cattle. In all, 28 men, 29 women, and 39 children were murdered and scalped. Their bodies were piled in the mission buildings and the town was burned to the ground. The other abandoned Moravian towns were burned as well. Two boys, one of whom had been scalped, survived to tell of the massacre.

The remains of the Indian martyrs were collected and buried in a mound on the southern side of the village. The wrecking expedition gathered 80 horseback loads of plunder: furs, pewter, tea sets, clothes and everything a farming community held.

Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1824to Present

category: American Indian (AI)

source: Wikipedia

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is an agency of the federal government of the United States within the U.S. Department of the Interior charged with the administration and management of 55.7 million acres (87,000 sq. miles or 225,000 km²) of land held in trust by the United States for Native Americans in the United States, Native American Tribes and Alaska Natives. The Bureau of Indian Affairs is one of two Bureaus under the jurisdiction of the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs: the Bureau of Indian Affairs and The Bureau of Indian Education which provides education services to some 48,000 Native Americans.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs has been involved in many controversial policies, including sending native children in the 40's to boarding schools, to removing them from their native language and traditions in order to acculturate the native people. Some were even beaten for praying to their Native creator.

The 1970's were a particularly turbulent period of BIA history. During this time, the rise of vocal activist groups such as American Indian Movement (AIM) worried the U.S. Government, who reacted both overtly and covertly through COINTELPRO [see page 35] and other programs to suppress possible uprisings among native peoples. As a branch of the U.S. government, BIA police were involved in political actions such as: the occupation of Wounded Knee; the Pine Ridge shootout (in which Leonard Peltier of AIM was accused of killing two FBI agents); and the occupation of BIA headquarters in Washington, D.C. in 1972. The BIA also assisted intensively in the establishment of infamous tribal authorities such as Dick Wilson, who was seen as a neo-dictator for his unabashed use of violent "GOON" (Guardians Of the Oglala Nation) squads, open misappropriation of funds, and other controversial actions. For such issues, particularly the imprisonment of Peltier, many still unresolved today, the BIA remains a controversial agency among native peoples.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs building takeover occurred from November 3 to November 9, 1972. On November 3, a group of around 500 American Indians from AIM took over the BIA building in Washington, D.C., the culmination of their participation in the Trail of Broken Treaties that was intended to bring attention to American Indian issues including living standards and treaty rights. They had arrived at the BIA to negotiate for better housing and other issues; the siege began when a government snafu was interpreted as a doublecross. The incensed protesters then began to vandalize the building in protest. After a week, the protesters left behind \$700,000 in damages, including the destruction, and theft of many records some Indian officials said could set them back 50 to 100 years.

Missouri Mormon Extermination Order, 1838

category: Religion (RE)

source: Wikipedia

Missouri Executive Order 44, also known as the “extermination order” in Latter Day Saint history, was an executive order issued on October 27, 1838 by Missouri governor Lilburn Boggs. The order was in response to what Boggs termed “open and avowed defiance of the laws, and of having made war upon the people of this State ...the Mormons must be treated as enemies, and must be exterminated or driven from the State if necessary for the public peace - their outrages are beyond all description.”

Although the Extermination Order technically became inoperative with an end to the state of war and the surrender of Mormon leaders on November 1, 1838, it continued to dignify forced removal of the Mormons by unauthorized citizens. The legislature deferred discussion of an appeal by Mormon leaders to rescind it, and nearly all Latter Day Saints, more than 10,000, were driven from the state by the spring of 1839. The extermination order was formally rescinded by Governor Christopher S. Bond on June 25, 1976, 137 years after being signed. In late 1975, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS) Far West, Missouri stake President Lyman F. Edwards (a stake is a RLDS administrative unit) invited Governor Bond to participate in the RLDS annual stake conference in 1976 as a good-will gesture for the bicentennial celebration of the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

The Mormon War is a name sometimes given to the 1838 conflict which occurred between Latter Day Saints (Mormons) and their neighbors in the northwestern region of the U.S. state of Missouri. This conflict is also sometimes referred to as the Missouri Mormon War to differentiate it from the Utah Mormon War (also known as the “Utah War”) and the lesser known Illinois Mormon War. The specific dates of the war are from August 6, 1838 (the Gallatin election battle) to November 1, 1838 when Joseph Smith surrendered at Far West. During the conflict 22 people were killed (3 Mormons and 1 non-Mormon at Crooked River and 18 Mormons at Haun’s Mill). The conflict was preceded by the eviction of the Mormons from Jackson County, Missouri in 1833. In 1831, Smith had proclaimed that the county was the Biblical Garden of Eden and that Mormons should establish the City of Zion there. However, the “old settlers” objected to the rapidly expanding population of Mormons and their growing political power. Most Mormons in Missouri did not hold slaves, while many were abolitionists and also believed in a divine destiny for the Native Americans. As a result of the war, nearly all Mormons in Missouri, more than ten thousand, were forced to leave the state. Most of these refugees settled in or near what would become the city of Nauvoo, Illinois.

Bridge Gulch American Indian Massacre, 1852

category: American Indian (AI)

source: <http://www.trinitycounty.com/stnf-nb.htm>

Ancient stories of the Wintu Indians which inhabited much of Trinity County, California, before the Gold Rush, say that Natural Bridge was formed when a mystical man, bearing a huge bundle of hides, came down Bridge Gulch. Tired and hungry, he slipped the bundle from his back and it rolled into the creek. The Indians called the bridge “Kok-Chee-Shup-Chee,” or “Bundle of Hides,” because of the texture and color of the walls. The early pioneers of the Hayfork Valley frequently used Natural Bridge as a picnic site. This is borne out by the names and dates engraved in the limestone rock.

In 1852, a well-known citizen of Weaverville, J.R. Anderson, was killed and a small herd of his cattle were driven off by a band of Wintu Indians. A few hours later, Sheriff Dixon and a number of men were in pursuit. After several days of tracking through the rugged mountains, Dixon’s party set up camp on Hayfork Creek while scouts were sent out to locate the Indians.

Late that afternoon, a scout reported sighting an Indian Rancheria a few miles from Dixon’s camp. From a vantage point on Natural Bridge, the scout could see smoke from their campfires a short distance upstream, and even described children playing.

Under cover of darkness, the party quietly made their way up the narrow draw known as Bridge Gulch and surrounded the encampment. When the morning sun broke through the trees, the camp began to stir. As men, women and children of the tribe gathered to hear their leader speak, a shot rang out and he dropped to the ground. Chaos broke out as Sheriff Dixon’s men began firing at anyone they could line up in their gun sights.

Soon, however, the shooting ended as Dixon’s men ran out of targets. When all was quiet, the party cautiously made their way down the mountainside and into the Wintu camp where smoke from burning tepees curled toward the sky and the smell of gunpowder hung in the morning air. All that remained of the 150 Wintus were three children (accounts vary).

The band that had killed Mr. Anderson and driven off his cattle were not among those who had died in the camp.

Black Ship Gunboat Diplomacy, 1853 to ?

category: Asian (AS)

source: Wikipedia

In international politics, gunboat diplomacy refers to the pursuit of foreign policy objectives with the aid of conspicuous displays of military power - implying or constituting a direct threat of warfare, should terms not be agreeable to the superior force. The Black Ships (in Japanese, kurofune) was the name given to Western vessels arriving in Japan between the 15th and 19th centuries. In particular, it refers to the warships *Mississippi*, *Plymouth*, *Saratoga*, and *Susquehanna*, that arrived on July 14, 1853 at Uraga Harbor (part of present-day Yokosuka) in Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan. They were under the command of United States Commodore Matthew Perry. The word “black” refers to the black color of the older sailing vessels, and the black smoke from the coal-fired power plants of the American ships. Commodore Perry’s superior military force was a factor in negotiating a treaty allowing American trade with Japan, thus effectively ending the Sakoku period of more than 200 years in which trading with Japan had been permitted to the Dutch and Chinese exclusively.

The following year, at the Convention of Kanagawa, Perry returned with eight ships and presented the shogun’s officials with the “Treaty of Peace and Amity,” establishing formal diplomatic relations between Japan and the United States. Within five years, Japan had signed similar treaties with other western countries. The Harris Treaty was signed with the United States on July 29, 1858.

Gunboat diplomacy is considered a form of hegemony. As the United States became a military power in the first decade of the 20th century, the Rooseveltian version of gunboat diplomacy, big stick diplomacy, was partially superseded by dollar diplomacy: replacing the big stick with the “juicy carrot” of American private investment. However, during Woodrow Wilson’s presidency, conventional gunboat diplomacy did occur, most notably in the case of the U.S. Army’s occupation of Veracruz in 1914, during the Mexican Revolution. Gunboat diplomacy in the post-Cold War world is still based mostly on naval forces, owing to the United States Navy’s overwhelming seapower. U.S. administrations have frequently changed the disposition of their major naval fleets to influence opinion in foreign capitals. More urgent diplomatic points were made by the Clinton administration in the Yugoslav wars of the 1990's (in alliance with the United Kingdom’s Blair government) and elsewhere, using sea-launched Tomahawk missiles and E-3 AWACS airborne surveillance aircraft in a more passive display of military presence. The term “gunboat diplomacy” has been superseded in many circles by the more euphemistic “power projection.”

Tammany Hall, 1854 to 1934

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

Tammany Hall (founded May 12, 1789 as the Tammany Society, and also known as the Society of St. Tammany, the Sons of St. Tammany, or the Columbian Order), was the Democratic Party political machine that played a major role in controlling New York City politics and helping immigrants (most notably the Irish) rise up in American politics from the 1790's to the 1960's. It usually controlled Democratic Party nominations and patronage in Manhattan from the mayoral victory of Fernando Wood in 1854 through the election of John P. O'Brien in 1932. Tammany Hall was permanently weakened by the election of Fiorello La Guardia on a "fusion" ticket of Republicans, reform-minded Democrats, and independents in 1934, and despite a brief resurgence in the 1950's, it ceased to exist in the 1960's.

The Tammany Society was named for Tamanend, a Native American leader of the Lenape, and became the center for Democratic-Republican Party politics in the City in the early 19th Century. The "Hall" serving as the Society's headquarters was built in 1830 on East 14th Street, marking an era when Tammany Hall was the city affiliate of the Democratic Party, controlling most of New York City's elections afterwards.

The Society expanded its political control even further by earning the loyalty of the city's ever-expanding immigrant community, which functioned as a base of political capital. The Tammany Hall "ward boss" (wards were the city's smallest political units from 1686-1938) served as the local vote gatherer and provider of patronage. Beginning in late 1845, Tammany power surged with the influx of millions of Irish immigrants to New York. From 1872, Tammany had an Irish "boss," and in 1928 a Tammany hero, New York Governor Al Smith won the Democratic presidential nomination. However, Tammany Hall also served as an engine for graft and political corruption, perhaps most infamously under William M. "Boss" Tweed in the mid-1800's. The term "Tammany Hall" is now used to refer to a corrupt system of buying or controlling votes. Tammany Hall's influence waned in the 20th Century; in 1932, Mayor Jimmy Walker was forced from office, and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt stripped Tammany of federal patronage. Republican Fiorello La Guardia was elected Mayor on a Fusion ticket and became the first anti-Tammany Mayor to be re-elected. A brief resurgence in Tammany power in the 1950's was met with Democratic Party opposition led by Eleanor Roosevelt, Herbert Lehman, and the New York Committee for Democratic Voters. By the mid-1960's Tammany Hall ceased to exist. The last building to serve as the physical Tammany Hall, on Union Square, is now home to the New York Film Academy.

New York Draft Riots, 1863

category: Military (MIL)

source: Wikipedia

The New York Draft Riots (July 13 to July 16, 1863; known at the time as Draft Week) were violent disturbances in New York City that were the culmination of discontent with new laws passed by Congress to draft men to fight in the ongoing American Civil War. The riots were the largest civil insurrection in American history apart from the Civil War itself. President Abraham Lincoln sent several regiments of militia and volunteer troops to control the city. Although not the majority, many of those arrested had Irish names, according to the lists compiled by Adrian Cook in his *Armies of the Streets*. The protesters were mostly working class men, resentful because they believed the draft unfairly affected them while sparing wealthier men who could afford to pay a \$300.00 Commutation Fee to exclude themselves from its reach.

Initially intended to express anger at the draft, the protests degraded into a virtual racial pogrom, with uncounted numbers of blacks murdered on the streets. The conditions in the city were such that Major General John E. Wool stated on July 16, "Martial law ought to be proclaimed, but I have not a sufficient force to enforce it." The military suppressed the mob using artillery and fixed bayonets, but not before numerous buildings were ransacked or destroyed, including many homes and an orphanage for black children.

The exact death toll during the New York Draft Riots is unknown, but according to historian James M. McPherson (2001), at least 120 civilians were killed. Estimates are that at least 2,000 more were injured. Herbert Asbury, the author of the 1928 book *Gangs of New York* upon which the 2002 film was based, puts the figure much higher, at 2,000 killed and 8,000 wounded. Total property damage was about \$1-5 million. Historian Samuel Eliot Morison wrote that the riots were "equivalent to a Confederate victory." The city treasury later indemnified one-quarter of the amount. Fifty buildings, including two Protestant churches, burned to the ground. On August 19, the draft was resumed. It was completed within 10 days without further incident, although far fewer men were actually drafted than had been feared: of the 750,000 selected for conscription nationwide, only about 45,000 actually went into service.

While the rioting mainly involved the working class, the middle and upper-class New Yorkers had split sentiments on the draft and use of federal power or martial law to enforce the draft. Many wealthy Democratic businessmen sought to have the draft declared unconstitutional. Tammany Democrats did not seek to have the draft declared unconstitutional, but would help pay commutation fees on behalf of poor people who were drafted.

Abraham Lincoln Assassination, 1865

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

The assassination of Abraham Lincoln, one of the last major events in the American Civil War, took place on Good Friday, April 14, 1865, when President Abraham Lincoln was shot while attending a performance of *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theater with his wife and two guests. Lincoln's assassin, actor and Confederate sympathizer John Wilkes Booth, had also plotted with fellow conspirators, Lewis Powell and George Atzerodt, to kill William H. Seward (then Secretary of State) and Vice President Andrew Johnson respectively. Although Booth succeeded in killing Lincoln, the larger plot failed. Seward was attacked, but recovered from his wounds, and Johnson's would-be assassin fled Washington, D.C. upon losing his nerve. Abraham Lincoln was the first American President to be assassinated. His assassination had a long-lasting impact upon the United States, and he was mourned around the country. As a result of his assassination, there were attacks in many cities against those who expressed support for Booth. On the Easter Sunday after Lincoln's death, clergymen around the country praised Lincoln in their sermons. Millions of people came to Lincoln's funeral procession in Washington, D.C. on April 19, 1865, and as his body was transported 1,700 miles (2,700 km) through New York to Springfield, Illinois. His body and funeral train were viewed by millions along the route, including the future president Theodore Roosevelt.

After Lincoln's death, Ulysses S. Grant called him, "Incontestably the greatest man I ever knew." Southern-born Elizabeth Blair said that, "Those of southern born sympathies know now they have lost a friend willing and more powerful to protect and serve them than they can now ever hope to find again." Andrew Johnson was sworn in as President following Lincoln's death. Johnson became one of the least popular presidents in American history. He was impeached by the House of Representatives in 1868 but the Senate failed to convict him by one vote. William Seward recovered from his wounds and continued to serve as Secretary of State throughout Johnson's presidency. He later negotiated the Alaska Purchase, then known as Seward's Folly, by which the United States purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867. The town of Seward, Alaska and Alaska's Seward Peninsula are named after him.

Henry Rathbone and Clara Harris who were seated in the theater box with the Lincoln's at the time of the shooting married two years after the assassination, and Rathbone went on to become the U.S. consul to Hanover, Germany. However, Rathbone later went mad and, in 1883, shot Clara and then stabbed her to death. He spent the rest of his life in a German asylum for the criminally insane.

Ku Klux Klan, 1865to Present

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

Ku Klux Klan, often abbreviated KKK and informally known as The Klan, is the name of several past and present far right hate groups in the United States whose avowed purpose is to protect the rights and further the interests of white Americans by violence and intimidation. The first such organizations originated in the Southern states and eventually grew to national scope. They developed iconic white costumes consisting of robes, masks, and conical hats. The KKK has a record of using terrorism, violence, and lynching to murder and oppress African Americans, Jews and other minorities and to intimidate and oppose Roman Catholics and labor unions. Today, a large majority of sources consider the Klan to be a subversive or terrorist organization. In 1999, the city council of Charleston, South Carolina passed a resolution declaring the Klan to be a terrorist organization. A similar effort was made in 2004 when a professor at the University of Louisville began a campaign to have the Klan declared a terrorist organization so it could be banned from campus. In April 1997, FBI agents arrested four members of the True Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Dallas for conspiracy to commit robbery and to blow up a natural gas processing plant.

The first Klan was founded in 1865 by Tennessee veterans of the Confederate Army. Klan groups spread throughout the South. The Klan's purpose was to restore white supremacy in the aftermath of the American Civil War. The Klan resisted Reconstruction by assaulting, murdering and intimidating freedmen and white progressives within the Republican Party. In 1870 and 1871 the federal government passed the Force Acts, which were used to prosecute Klan crimes and suppress Klan activity. In 1874 and later, however, newly organized and openly active paramilitary organizations such as the White League and the Red Shirts started a fresh round of violence aimed at suppressing Republican voting and running Republicans out of office. These contributed to white conservative Democrats regaining political power in the Southern states in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

In 1915, the second Klan was founded. It grew rapidly in a period of postwar social tensions where industrialization in the North attracted numerous waves of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe and the Great Migration of Southern blacks and whites. The second KKK preached racism, anti-Catholicism, anti-Communism, nativism, and anti-Semitism. Some local groups took part in lynchings, attacks on private houses, and carried out other violent activities. The Klan committed most of its murders and acts of violence in the South, which had a tradition of lawlessness.

American Poll Tax Voting Disfranchisement, 1870 to 1966

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

The Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified in 1870 to protect the suffrage of freedmen after the American Civil War. It prevented any state from denying the right to vote to any male citizen on account of his race. African Americans were an absolute majority of the population in Mississippi, Louisiana and South Carolina, and represented over 40% of the population in four other former Confederate states. White supremacist paramilitary organizations allied with the Democratic Party practiced intimidation, violence and assassinations to repress and prevent blacks' exercising their civil and voting rights in elections from 1868 through the mid-1870's. In most Southern states, black voting decreased markedly.

After the ability to vote was extended to all races by the enactment of the Fifteenth Amendment, many Southern states enacted poll tax laws which often included a grandfather clause that allowed any adult male whose father or grandfather had voted in a specific year prior to the abolition of slavery to vote without paying the tax. These laws achieved the desired effect of disfranchising African-American and Native American voters as well as poor whites who immigrated after the year specified. In Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, North and South Carolina, and in some northern and western states, proof of having paid taxes or poll taxes was made a prerequisite to voting. The poll tax was sometimes used alone or together with a literacy qualification. Such taxes excluded poor whites as well at the turn of the century. Many states required payment of the poll tax at a time separate from the election, and then required voters to bring receipts with them to the polls. If they could not locate such receipts, they could not vote. Many states surrounded registration and voting with complex record-keeping requirements. These were hard on sharecropper and tenant farmers to comply with, as they moved frequently.

The 24th Amendment, ratified in 1964, outlawed the use of the poll tax (or any other tax) as a pre-condition in voting in Federal elections. The 1966 Supreme Court case *Harper v. Virginia Board of Elections* extended this explicit enactment as a matter of judicial interpretation of a more general provision, ruling that the imposition of a poll tax in state elections violated the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution. In a two-month period in the spring of 1966, the last four states to still charge a poll tax had those laws declared unconstitutional by Federal courts, starting with Texas on February 9th. Decisions followed for Alabama (March 3rd) and Virginia (March 25th). Mississippi's \$2.00 poll tax was the last to fall, declared unconstitutional on April 8, 1966, by a Federal panel in Jackson.

Los Angeles Chinese Massacre, 1871

category: Asian (AS)

source: Wikipedia

The Los Angeles Chinese Massacre of 1871 was a racially motivated riot on October 24, 1871, when a mob of over 500 Caucasians entered Los Angeles' Chinatown to attack, rob and brutally murder Chinese residents. The riots took place on Calle de los Negros (Street of the Negroes), also called "Nigger Alley," which later became part of Los Angeles Street. The riot and massacre was triggered by the killing of Robert Thompson, a local rancher. He was caught in the cross-fire during a gun battle between two Chinese factions. This fight was part of a longstanding feud over the abduction of a Chinese woman named Yut Ho.

The dead Chinese in Los Angeles were hanging at three places near the heart of the downtown business section of the city; from the wooden awning over the sidewalk in front of a carriage shop; from the sides of two "prairie schooners" parked on the street around the corner from the carriage shop; and from the cross-beam of a wide gate leading into a lumberyard a few blocks away. One of the victims hung without his trousers and minus a finger on his left hand. Practically every Chinese-occupied building on the block was ransacked and almost every resident was attacked or robbed. The county coroner confirmed 18 Chinese deaths at the hands of the mob, although some estimates ranged as high as 23.

Calle de los Negros was situated immediately northeast of Los Angeles's principal business district. The unpaved street took its name from the dark-complexioned Californios (pre-annexation, Spanish-speaking mixed-race Californians) who had originally lived there. Once home to the town's most prominent families, the neighborhood had deteriorated into a slum by the time Los Angeles's first Chinatown was established there in the 1860's. Los Angeles merchant and memoirist Harris Newmark recalled that Calle de los Negros was "as tough a neighborhood, in fact, as could be found anywhere." Calle de los Negros was incorporated into Los Angeles Street in 1877 and today is part of El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument.

The underlying causes of the massacre are sometimes said to be economic. A growing movement of anti-Chinese discrimination in California climaxed in the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. The root economic causes were the unstable economy after the American Civil War, which led to high unemployment in California and other Western American states. Yet, the anti-Chinese movement had not yet taken in root in Los Angeles at the time of the massacre, so some maintain that the killings were the product of racism and lawlessness. Only ten rioters were ever brought to trial. Eight were convicted, but their convictions were overturned on a legal technicality.

Colfax African American Massacre, 1873

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

The Colfax Massacre or Colfax Riot (as the events are termed on the official state historic marker) occurred on Easter Sunday, April 13, 1873, in Colfax, Louisiana, the seat of Grant Parish. In the wake of a contested election for Governor and local offices, whites armed with rifles and a small cannon overpowered freedmen and state militia (also black) trying to control the parish courthouse. White Republican officeholders were not attacked. Most of the freedmen were killed after they surrendered, and nearly 50 were killed later that night after being held as prisoners for several hours. Estimates of the number of dead varied. A military report to Congress in 1875 identified the deaths of three white men and 105 black men by name, and also noted that 15-20 bodies of unidentified black men were recovered from the Red River. A state historical marker from 1950 noted fatalities as three whites and 150 blacks.

The attack had the most fatalities of violent events following the disputed contest in 1872 between Republicans and Democrats for the Louisiana Governor's office, in which both candidates claimed victory. Although the Fusionist-dominated state "returning board," which ruled on validity of votes, at first declared John McEnery and his Democratic slate the winners, the board split. A pro-Kellogg faction declared Republican William P. Kellogg the victor. Both men held inauguration parties. A Republican federal judge in New Orleans finally ruled that the Republican-majority legislature be seated. The background of the situation was the struggle for power in the postwar environment, with a growing insurgency among former Confederates in the state. In Louisiana every election between 1868 and 1876 was marked by rampant violence and pervasive fraud. White Democrats worked to regain power, officially or unofficially.

Federal prosecution and conviction of a few perpetrators at Colfax under the Enforcement Act led to a key Supreme Court case, *United States v. Cruikshank*. In this 1876 decision, the Supreme Court ruled that protections of the Fourteenth Amendment did not apply to the actions of individuals, but only to the actions of state governments. Thus, the Federal government could no longer use the Enforcement Act of 1870 to prosecute actions by paramilitary groups such as rifle clubs or the White League, which had chapters forming across Louisiana beginning in 1874. In the late 20th and early 21st century, there has been increasing attention given to the events at Colfax and the Supreme Court case, and their meaning in U.S. history.

Jim Crow Segregation Laws, 1876 to 1965

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

The Jim Crow laws were state and local laws in the United States enacted between 1876 and 1965. They mandated racial segregation in all public facilities, with “separate but equal” status for black Americans. In reality, this led to treatment and accommodations that were usually inferior to those provided for white Americans, systematizing a number of economic, educational and social disadvantages. Some examples of Jim Crow laws are the segregation of public schools, public places and public transportation, and the segregation of restrooms and restaurants for whites and blacks. The U.S. military was also segregated. These Jim Crow Laws were separate from the 1800-66 Black Codes, which had also restricted the civil rights and civil liberties of African Americans. State-sponsored school segregation was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States in 1954 in *Brown v. Board of Education*. The remaining Jim Crow laws were overruled by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The origin of the phrase “Jim Crow” has often been attributed to “Jump Jim Crow,” a song-and-dance caricature of African Americans performed by white actor Thomas D. Rice in blackface, which first surfaced in 1832 to satirize Andrew Jackson’s populist policies. The phrase “Jim Crow Law” first appeared in 1904 according to the Dictionary of American English, although there is some evidence of earlier usage.

In January 1964, President Lyndon Johnson met with civil rights leaders. On January 8, during his first State of the Union address, Johnson asked Congress to “let this session of Congress be known as the session which did more for civil rights than the last hundred sessions combined.” On June 21, civil rights workers Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Chaney, disappeared in Neshoba County, Mississippi. The three were volunteers aiding in the registration of African-American voters and forty-four days later, the Federal Bureau of Investigation recovered their bodies from an earthen dam. The Neshoba County deputy sheriff, Cecil Price and 16 others, all Ku Klux Klan members, were indicted for the crimes; seven were convicted. Building a coalition of northern Democrats and Republicans, President Lyndon B. Johnson pushed Congress to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964. On July 2, President Johnson signed the historic legislation. It invoked the commerce clause to outlaw discrimination in public accommodations (privately owned restaurants, hotels, and stores, and in private schools and workplaces).

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 ended legally sanctioned state barriers to voting for all federal, state and local elections.

Robber Barons, 1880 to 1940's

category: Economics (EC)

source: Wikipedia

Robber Baron is a term revived in the 19th century United States for businessmen and bankers who dominated respective industries and amassed huge personal fortunes, typically by anti-competitive or unfair business practices. The term derives from the medieval German lords who illegally charged exorbitant tolls on ships traversing the Rhine. The term was popularized by U.S. political and economic commentator Matthew Josephson during The Great Depression in a book in 1934. He attributed it to an 1880 anti-monopoly pamphlet in which Kansas farmers applied the term to railroad magnates. Appearing in literature during the late 19th century, the Robber Baron thesis was popular until the 1940's. Matthew Josephson's *The Robber Barons* gave the term its most enduring expression. The theme was popular during the Great Depression amid public scorn for big business.

By the end of the Depression, other historians, notably Allan Nevins, began advocating the "Industrial Statesman" thesis. Nevins, in *John D. Rockefeller: The Heroic Age of American Enterprise* (2 vols., 1940), took on Josephson. He argued that while Rockefeller may have engaged in unethical and illegal business practices, this should not overshadow his bringing order to the industrial chaos of the day. Gilded Age capitalists, according to Nevins, sought to impose order and stability on competitive business. Their work made the United States the foremost economy by the 20th century.

The debate was sidestepped by Alfred D. Chandler in *The Visible Hand* (1977). Chandler contended that industrializing America was a historical process and not a play of good versus evil. As he later expressed, "What could be less likely to produce useful generalizations than a debate over vaguely defined moral issues based on unexamined ideological assumptions and presuppositions?"

United States industrialists commonly considered Robber Barons include John Jacob Astor (real estate, fur), Jay Cooke (finance), Charles Crocker (railroads), Daniel Drew (finance), James Buchanan Duke (tobacco), James Fisk (finance), Henry Morrison Flagler (railroads, oil, Standard Oil Company), Henry Clay Frick (steel), John Warne Gates (steel, oil), Jay Gould (finance, railroads), Edward Henry Harriman (railroads), Milton S. Hershey (chocolate), Mark Hopkins (railroads), J. P. Morgan (banking, finance, steel, industrial consolidation), John D. Rockefeller (Standard Oil Company), John D. Spreckels (transportation, water, media), Leland Stanford (railroads), Cornelius Vanderbilt (railroads), and Andrew Carnegie (steel).

The Robber Baron phenomena subsided after World War Two, in large part due to economic reforms.

James A. Garfield Assassination, 1881

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

James A. Garfield was shot in Washington, D.C. on July 2, 1881 by Charles J. Guiteau at 9:30 a.m., less than four months after taking office as the twentieth President of the United States. Garfield died eleven weeks later on September 19, 1881, the second of four Presidents to be assassinated, following Abraham Lincoln and preceding William McKinley and John F. Kennedy. His Vice President, Chester Arthur, succeeded Garfield as President. Garfield was scheduled to leave Washington on July 2 for his summer vacation. On that day, Guiteau lay in wait for the President at the (since demolished) Baltimore and Potomac Railroad station, on the southwest corner of present day Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue, Northwest, Washington, D.C.. President Garfield had come to the Sixth Street Station on his way to his alma mater, Williams College, where he was scheduled to deliver a speech. Garfield was accompanied by two of his sons, James and Harry, and Secretary of State Blaine. Secretary of War Robert Todd Lincoln waited at the station to see the President off. Garfield had no bodyguard or security detail; with the exception of Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War, U.S. presidents had never used any guards.

As President Garfield entered the waiting room of the station Guiteau stepped forward and pulled the trigger from behind at point-blank range. “My God, what is that?” Garfield cried out, flinging up his arms. Guiteau fired again and Garfield collapsed. One bullet grazed Garfield’s shoulder; the other lodged in his spine in the first lumbar vertebra but missing the spinal cord. Guiteau put his pistol back in his pocket and turned to leave the station for the cab he still had waiting outside, but he was apprehended before he could leave by policeman Patrick Kearney, who was so excited at having arrested the man who shot the President that he neglected to take Guiteau’s gun from him until after their arrival at the police station. The rapidly gathering crowd screamed “Lynch him!” but Kearney took Guiteau to the police station a few blocks away. As he surrendered to authorities, Guiteau uttered the exulting words, repeated everywhere: “I am a Stalwart of the Stalwarts! I did it and I want to be arrested! Arthur is President now!” This statement briefly led to unfounded suspicions that Arthur or his supporters had put Guiteau up to the crime. The Stalwarts were a Republican faction loyal to ex-President Grant; they strongly opposed Garfield’s Half-Breeds. Like many Vice Presidents, Arthur was chosen for political advantage, to placate his faction, rather than for skills or loyalty to his running-mate. Guiteau, in his delusion, had convinced himself that he was striking a blow to unite the two factions of the Republican Party.

Lynching, 1882 to 1998

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

Lynching in the United States was the practice of killing people by extrajudicial mob action in the United States of America, chiefly from the late 1700's through the 1960's. This type of murder is most often associated with hanging, although it often included burning and/or various other methods of torture, and only rarely were lynchers punished, or even arrested for their crimes. Lynching is often associated with “Southwhite supremacy” after the victory of the Union in the American Civil War. The granting of civil rights to freedmen in the Reconstruction era after the Civil War (1865-77) aroused anxieties among white citizens, who came to scapegoat African Americans for their own wartime hardship, economic loss, and forfeiture of social privilege. Between 1882 and 1968, the Tuskegee Institute recorded 3,437 lynchings of African Americans and 1,293 lynchings of whites. Southern states created new constitutions between 1890-1908 with provisions that effectively disenfranchised most blacks and many poor whites. People were not permitted to vote or to serve on juries, further excluding these constituents from the political process.

African Americans mounted resistance to lynchings in numerous ways. Intellectuals and journalists encouraged public education, actively protesting and lobbying against lynch mob violence and government connivance in that violence. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), as well as numerous other organizations, organized support from white and black Americans alike.

Although lynchings became rare following the civil rights movement and changing social mores, they have occurred. In 1981, two KKK members in Alabama randomly selected a 19-year-old black man, Michael Donald, and murdered him, to retaliate for a jury’s acquittal of a black man accused of murdering a police officer. The Klansmen were caught, prosecuted, and convicted. A seven million dollar judgment in a civil suit against the Klan bankrupted the local subgroup, the United Klans of America.

In 1998, Shawn Allen Berry, Lawrence Russel Brewer, and ex-convict John William King murdered James Byrd, Jr., in Jasper, Texas. Byrd was a 49-year-old father of three who had accepted an early-morning ride home with the three men. They arbitrarily attacked him and dragged him to his death behind their truck. The three men dumped their victim’s mutilated remains in the town’s segregated African-American cemetery and then went to a barbecue. Local authorities immediately treated the murder as a hate crime and requested FBI assistance. The murderers (two of whom turned out to be members of a white supremacist prison gang) were caught and stood trial. Brewer and King were sentenced to death; Berry received life in prison.

Wounded Knee American Indian Massacre, 1890

category: American Indian (AI)

source: Wikipedia

The Wounded Knee Massacre or the Battle of Wounded Knee was the last armed conflict between the Great Sioux Nation and the United States of America and of the Indian Wars. On December 29, 1890, 365 troops of the U.S. 7th Cavalry, supported by four Hotchkiss guns, surrounded an encampment of Miniconjou (Lakota) and Hunkpapa Sioux (Lakota) near Wounded Knee Creek, South Dakota. The Sioux had been cornered and agreed to turn themselves in at the Pine Ridge Agency in South Dakota. They were the very last of the Sioux to do so. They were met by the 7th Cavalry, who intended to disarm them and ensure their compliance.

During the process of disarming the Sioux, a deaf tribesman named Black Coyote could not hear the order to give up his rifle and was reluctant to do so. A scuffle over Black Coyote's rifle escalated into an all-out battle, with those few Sioux warriors who still had weapons shooting at the 7th Cavalry, and the 7th Cavalry opening fire indiscriminately from all sides, killing men, women, and children, as well as some of their own fellow troopers. The 7th Cavalry quickly suppressed the Sioux fire, and the surviving Sioux fled, but U.S. cavalrymen pursued and killed many who were unarmed. By the time it was over, about 146 men, women, and children of the Lakota Sioux had been killed. Twenty-five troopers also died, some believed to have been the victims of friendly fire as the shooting took place at point blank range in chaotic conditions. Around 150 Lakota are believed to have fled the chaos.

Following the massacre that day, U.S. soldiers left the wounded Native Americans to die in a three-day blizzard. They later hired civilians to remove the bodies and bury them in a mass grave. It was said that some of the Americans stripped the corpses of their clothing and collected some of their personal items as mementos of the occasion. Following the burial, the Americans lined up and took their picture beside the mass grave and 20 medals of honor were later given to honor the U.S. soldiers who participated in the massacre. Despite the brevity and inequality of the fighting, the U.S. Army awarded more Medals of Honor for action at Wounded Knee than for any other engagement in the history of the U.S. Army.

In 1903 a monument was erected at the site of the mass grave by surviving relatives to honor the "many innocent women and children who knew no wrong" and who were killed in the massacre. Some family members are still seeking compensation from the U.S. government as heirs of the victims, but they have been unsuccessful in receiving any monetary settlement. The site is a National Historic Landmark.

Overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, 1893

category: Asian (AS)

source: Wikipedia

The Kingdom of Hawaii was established during the years 1795 to 1810 with the subjugation of the smaller independent chiefdoms of Oahu, Maui, Molokai, Lanai, Kauai and Niihau by the chiefdom of Hawaii (or the “Big Island”) into one unified government. The monarchy was replaced with a provisional government after an armed revolt led by foreign residents in 1893. Local businessmen and politicians, composed primarily of American and European residents, overthrew Queen Liliuokalani, her cabinet and her marshal, and took over the government of the Kingdom of Hawaii. Historians suggest that businessmen were in favor of overthrow and annexation to the U.S. in order to benefit from more favorable trade conditions with its main export market. The McKinley Tariff of 1890 eliminated the previously highly favorable trade terms for Hawaii’s sugar exports, a main component of the economy. The significance of this economic downturn as a motivation for the overthrow has been questioned by some scholars. The proximate cause of the overthrow, however, was in response to Liliuokalani’s attempt to promulgate a new constitution, which she believed were supported by both her cabinet and her Native Hawaiian subjects.

In response to Liliuokalani’s move, a group of European and American residents formed a “Committee of Safety” on January 14, 1893, in opposition to the Queen and her plans. After a mass meeting of supporters, the Committee committed itself to the removal of the Queen and they sought annexation to the United States. United States Government Minister John L. Stevens summoned a company of uniformed U.S. Marines from the USS Boston and two companies of U.S. sailors to land on the Kingdom and take up positions at the U.S. Legation, Consulate on the afternoon of January 16, 1893. This deployment was at the request of the Committee of Safety, which claimed an “imminent threat to American lives and property.” Stevens was accused of ordering the landing himself on his own authority, and inappropriately using his discretion. Historian William Russ concluded that “the injunction to prevent fighting of any kind made it impossible for the monarchy to protect itself.” On July 17, 1893, Sanford B. Dole took control of the government and declared itself the Provisional Government of Hawaii “to rule until annexation by the United States” and then lobbied the United States for it. President Cleveland considered the overthrow to have been an illegal act of war and refused to consider annexation of the islands. After much struggle, Queen Liliuokalani, while under house arrest, dissolved the exiled government to avoid future acts of violence. She did this on January 24, 1895, and the Kingdom of Hawaii was no more.

Lattimer Mine Massacre, 1897

category: Economics (EC)

source: Wikipedia

The Lattimer Mine Massacre refers to the violent death of 19 unarmed striking immigrant anthracite coal miners at the Lattimer mine near Hazleton, Pennsylvania, on September 10, 1897. The miners, mostly of Polish, Slovak, and Lithuanian ethnicity, were shot and killed by a Luzerne County sheriff's posse. Scores more workers were wounded. The Lattimer massacre was a turning point in the history of the United Mine Workers (UMW).

On Friday, September 10, 1897, about 300 to 400 unarmed strikers - nearly all of them Slavs - marched to a coal mine owned by Calvin Pardee at the town of Lattimer to support a newly-formed UMW union at the still-open Lattimer mine. The demonstrators were confronted by law enforcement officials several times on the road and ordered to disperse, but kept marching. The deputies had spent most of the morning joking about how many miners they would kill. While on a streetcar headed for Lattimer with the sheriff and his comrades, one deputy was overheard saying "I bet I drop six of them when I get over there."

When the demonstrators reached Lattimer at 3:45 p.m., they were met again by the sheriff and 150 armed deputies. Sheriff Martin ordered the marchers to disperse, and then attempted to grab an American flag out of the hands of the lead marcher. A scuffle ensued and the police opened fire on the unarmed crowd. Nineteen miners died, and anywhere from 17 to 49 others were wounded. All had been shot in the back, and several had multiple gunshot wounds which indicated that they had been targeted by the deputies.

The strike led to temporary mob rule in the area and, after Sheriff Martin telephoned for help, the Pennsylvania National Guard was dispatched to the county to restore order. Late on the evening of September 10, more than 2,500 troops of the Third Brigade (partly stationed in Luzerne County) had been deployed. Local Slavic community leaders held a rally on September 11 to try to calm the workers, raise money for the provision of the families, and seek the prosecution of Sheriff Martin and his deputies. The Guard's artillery unit was withdrawn on September 24, and the rest of the troops on September 29.

Sheriff Martin and 73 deputies were arrested and put on trial. At trial, the defendants claimed that the marchers had refused to obey an order to disperse and were charging toward the sheriff and his deputies. But medical evidence that nearly all the strikers had been shot in the back proved this to be a lie. Nonetheless, the sheriff and his deputies were acquitted.

California Water Wars, 1898 to 1928

category: Economics (EC)

source: Wikipedia

The California Water Wars describes the disputes between Los Angeles and the Owens Valley in California over water rights. The disputes stem from Los Angeles' location in a semi-arid area and the availability of water from Sierra Nevada runoff in the Owens Valley. The water wars began when Frederick Eaton was elected mayor of Los Angeles in 1898, and appointed his friend, William Mulholland, the superintendent of the newly-created Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP). Eaton and Mulholland had a vision of a Los Angeles that would become far bigger than the Los Angeles of the turn of the century. The limiting factor of Los Angeles' growth was water supply. Eaton and Mulholland realized that the Owens Valley had a large amount of runoff from the Sierra Nevada, and a gravity-fed aqueduct could deliver the Owens water to Los Angeles.

Most of the 200 miles (321.9 km) of canals and ditches that constituted the irrigation system in the Owens Valley in 1901 were in the north, while the southern region of the valley was mostly inhabited by people raising livestock. The northern irrigation systems created by the ditch companies did not have adequate drainage and as a result oversaturated the soil to the point where crops could not be raised. The irrigation systems also significantly lowered the water level in the Owens Lake (a process that was intensified later by the diversion of water through the Los Angeles Aqueduct). In the south the climate was drier, irrigation was less developed and small farms were unable to compete with livestock owners with large land holdings. The failure to create a system of adequate, controlled irrigation resulted in the limited and inefficient settlement in the southern part of the Owens Valley and made this region increasingly vulnerable and attractive to Los Angeles authorities as a source of water.

From 1905 through 1913, Mulholland directed the building of the aqueduct. The 233 mile (375 km) Los Angeles Aqueduct, completed in November 1913, required more than 2,000 workers and the digging of 164 tunnels. After the aqueduct was completed in 1913, the San Fernando investors demanded so much water from the Owens Valley that it started to transform from "The Switzerland of California" into a desert. Inflows to Owens Lake were almost completely diverted, which caused the lake to dry up by 1924. So much water was taken from the valley that the farmers and ranchers rebelled. In 1924, a group of armed ranchers seized the Alabama Gates and dynamited part of the system. This armed rebellion was for naught, and by 1928 Los Angeles owned 90% of the water in Owens Valley. Agriculture in the valley was effectively dead.

William McKinley Assassination, 1901

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

The William McKinley assassination occurred on September 6, 1901, during a public reception at the Temple of Music in Buffalo, New York. U.S. President William McKinley, attending the Pan-American Exposition, was shot twice by Leon Czolgosz, an anarchist, while in the company of exposition president John Milburn. McKinley initially appeared to be recovering from his wounds, but took a turn for the worse six days after the shooting and died on September 14, 1901. Theodore Roosevelt succeeded McKinley as President. McKinley was the third of four U.S. presidents to be assassinated, following Abraham Lincoln in 1865 and James A. Garfield in 1881 and preceding John F. Kennedy in 1963. After McKinley's murder, Congress officially charged the Secret Service to physically protect U.S. presidents.

The President's secretary, George B. Cortelyou, disliked such public receptions, believing them to be security risks. McKinley had been shaking hands for approximately ten minutes when Cortelyou left his side to shut the doors. William J. Gomph, the exposition's official organist, was softly playing Schumann's *Träumerei* on the massive organ that was a special attraction at the Temple of Music. At this moment, 4:07 p.m., Czolgosz advanced to face the President. McKinley reached out to take Czolgosz's "bandaged" hand which concealed a gun under a handkerchief, but before he could shake it Czolgosz pulled the trigger twice. James Parker, a black waiter recently laid-off by the exposition's Plaza Restaurant, was standing next to the assailant and punched Czolgosz in the face and then tackled him, knocking the gun from Czolgosz's hand. Agent George Foster jumped onto Czolgosz and shouted to fellow agent Albert Gallagher, "Al, get the gun! Get the gun! Al, get the gun!" Gallagher instead got Czolgosz's handkerchief, which was on fire from the shots. Private Francis O'Brien, of McKinley's Army detail, picked up the gun.

McKinley remained standing while security dragged Czolgosz away. After someone hit Czolgosz again, McKinley cried out, "Don't let them hurt him!" Eleven minutes after the shooting an ambulance arrived and McKinley was taken to the hospital on the Exposition grounds. He had been shot twice. One bullet deflected off his ribs, making only a superficial wound. However, the second bullet hit McKinley in the abdomen, passed completely through his stomach, hit his kidney, damaged his pancreas, and lodged somewhere in the muscles of his back. The doctors, unable to find the bullet, left it in his body and closed up the wound. McKinley, still unconscious from the ether used to sedate him, was taken to John Milburn's home to recover, but he later died on September 14, 1901.

James Strom Thurmond, 1902 to 2003

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

James Strom Thurmond (December 5, 1902 - June 26, 2003) was an American politician who served as the 103rd Governor of South Carolina and as a United States Senator. He also ran for the Presidency of the United States in 1948 as the segregationist States Rights Democratic Party (Dixiecrat) candidate, receiving 2.4% of the popular vote and 39 electoral votes. Thurmond later represented South Carolina in the United States Senate from 1954 to April 1956 and November 1956 to January 2003, at first as a Democrat and after 1964 as a Republican, switching parties as the conservative base shifted.

He left office as the only senator to reach the age of 100 while still in office and as the oldest-serving and longest-serving senator in U.S. history (although he was later surpassed in the latter by Robert Byrd). Thurmond holds the record as the longest serving Dean of the United States Senate in U.S. history at 14 years. He conducted the longest filibuster ever by a lone senator in opposition to President Dwight Eisenhower's Civil Rights Act of 1957, at 24 hours and 18 minutes in length, nonstop. He later moderated his position on race, but continued to defend his early segregationist campaigns on the basis of states' rights in the context of Southern society at the time, never fully renouncing his earlier viewpoints.

Thurmond's political career began in the days of Jim Crow laws, when South Carolina strongly resisted any integration. In 1948, after President Harry S. Truman desegregated the U.S. Army, proposed the creation of a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission, supported the elimination of Poll Taxes, and wished to draft federal anti-lynching laws, Thurmond became a candidate for President of the United States on the third party ticket of the States' Rights Democratic Party, which split from the national Democrats over the proposed constitutional innovation involved in federal intervention in segregation. One 1948 speech, met with cheers by supporters, included the following: "I wanna tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that there's not enough troops in the army to force the Southern people to break down segregation and admit the nigras into our theaters, into our swimming pools, into our homes, and into our churches."

Shortly after Thurmond's death on June 26, 2003, Essie Mae Washington-Williams publicly revealed that she was Strom Thurmond's daughter. She was born to a black maid, Carrie "Tunch" Butler (1909-1948), on October 12, 1925, when Butler was 16 and Thurmond 22. Many close friends and staff members had suspected this to be true, stating that Washington-Williams was granted a degree of access to Thurmond more appropriate to a family member than to a member of the public.

Roosevelt's Big Stick "Gunboat" Diplomacy, 1903

category: Latin (LAT)

source: Wikipedia

Big Stick ideology, or Big Stick diplomacy, or Big Stick policy, is a form of hegemony and was the slogan describing U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt's corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. The idea of negotiating peacefully while simultaneously threatening with the "big stick," or the military, ties in heavily with the idea of Realpolitik, which implies an amoral pursuit of political power that resembles Machiavellian ideals. The term originated from the phrase, "Speak softly and carry a big stick." Roosevelt first used the phrase in a speech at the Minnesota State Fair on September 2, 1901, twelve days before the assassination of President William McKinley, which subsequently thrust him into the Presidency. Roosevelt referred to the phrase earlier (January 26, 1900) in a letter to Henry W. Sprague of the Union League Club, mentioning his liking of the phrase in a bout of happiness after forcing New York's Republican committee to pull support away from a corrupt financial adviser. The term comes from a West African proverb, and, at the time, was evidence of Roosevelt's "prolific" reading habits. Roosevelt described his style of foreign policy as "the exercise of intelligent forethought and of decisive action sufficiently far in advance of any likely crisis."

The U.S. used the "big stick" during "Canal Diplomacy," the questionable diplomatic actions of the U.S. during the pursuit of a canal across Central America. Both Nicaragua and Panama featured canal related incidents of Big Stick Diplomacy. In 1899, the Isthmian Canal Commission was set up to determine which site would be best for the project (Nicaragua or Panama) and then to oversee production of the canal. In 1901, Secretary of State John Hay pressed the Nicaraguan Government for approval of a canal. The U.S. and Nicaragua both accepted the deal, but after Congress approved the contract a problem of court jurisdiction came up. The U.S. did not have legal jurisdiction in the land of the future canal.

After Nicaragua was ruled out, Panama was the obvious choice. A few problems had arisen, however. With the U.S. solidified interest in Panama (then a small portion of Colombia), both Colombia and the French company that was to provide the construction materials raised their prices. The U.S., refusing to pay the higher-than-expected fees, "engineered a revolution" in Colombia. On November 3, 1903, Panama (with the support of the United States Navy) revolted against Colombia. Panama became a new republic, receiving \$10 million from the U.S. alone. Panama also gained an annual payment of \$250,000, and guarantees of independence. The U.S. gained the rights to the canal strip "in perpetuity." Roosevelt later said that he "took the Canal and let Congress debate."

Sacrifice of Korea (Taft-Katsura Agreement), 1905

category: Asian (AS)

source: Wikipedia

The Taft-Katsura Agreement was a set of notes taken during conversations between then United States Secretary of War William Howard Taft and Prime Minister of Japan Katsura Taro on July 29, 1905. The notes were discovered in 1924; there was never a signed agreement or secret treaty, only a memorandum of a conversation regarding Japanese-American relations. Some Korean historians have assumed that, in the discussions, the United States recognized Japan's sphere of influence in Korea; in exchange, Japan recognized the United States's sphere of influence in the Philippines. However, American historians examining official records report no agreement was ever made. The two men discussed current events but came to no new arrangement, even though the agreement seems to be the basis for a formal treaty signed later that year. They both restated the well-known official policies of their own governments, and Taft was very careful to indicate these were his private opinions and he was not an official representative of the U.S. government.

Three significant issues were discussed during the 1905 meeting. First were Katsura's views on peace in East Asia which according to him formed the fundamental principle of Japan's foreign policy and was best accomplished by a good standing between Japan, the United States and Great Britain. The second issue was the Philippines. On this, Taft observed that it was in Japan's best interests to have the Philippines governed by a strong and friendly nation like the United States; Katsura claimed that Japan had no aggressive designs on the Philippines. Finally, regarding Korea, Katsura observed that to colonize Korea was a matter of absolute importance to Japan, as Korea was the direct cause of the recently concluded Russo-Japanese War.

Some Korean historians (e.g., Ki-baik Lee, author of *A New History of Korea*, translated by Edward J. Schultz and Edward W. Wagner [Harvard Univ. Press, 1984]) believe that the Taft-Katsura Agreement violated the "Korean-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce" signed at Incheon on May 22, 1882. The Joseon (Korean) Government considered that treaty constituted a de facto mutual defense treaty while the Americans did not. As the Taft-Katsura Agreement paved the way for recognition of Japanese interests in Korea as later stated in the Treaty of Portsmouth (September 5, 1905), it can also be considered one of the direct causes of Korean colonization by Japan. As a result, Japan would go on to brutally colonize Korea until the end of World War Two. Even today, while the Taft-Katsura Agreement is all but an obscure footnote in history, it is raised by Korean activists in the media as an example of how the United States cannot be trusted with regards to Korean security and sovereignty issues.

The Los Angeles Times Bombing, 1910

category: Economics (EC)

source: Wikipedia

The Los Angeles Times bombing was the purposeful dynamiting of the Los Angeles Times building in Los Angeles, California, on October 1, 1910 by a union member belonging to the International Association of Bridge and Structural Iron Workers. The explosion started a fire which killed 21 newspaper employees and injured 100 more. Termed the “crime of the century” by the Times, brothers John J. (J.J.) and James B. (J.B.) McNamara were arrested under suspicious circumstances in April, 1911, for the crime. Their trial became a cause célèbre for the American labor movement. J.B. admitted to setting the explosive, was convicted, and sentenced to life in prison.

The San Francisco unions relied heavily on the Iron Workers, which remained one of the few strong unions in Los Angeles. The unionization campaign began in the spring of 1910. On June 1, 1910, 1,500 Iron Workers struck iron manufacturers in the city to win a \$0.50 an hour minimum wage (\$10.52 in 2007 dollars) and overtime pay. The Merchants and Manufacturers’ Association (M&M) raised \$350,000 (\$7.4 million in 2007 dollars) to break the strike. A superior court judge issued a series of injunctions which all but banned picketing. On July 15, the Los Angeles City Council unanimously enacted an ordinance banning picketing and “speaking in public streets in a loud or unusual tone,” with a penalty of 50 days in jail or a \$100 fine or both. Most union members refused to obey the injunctions or ordinance, and 472 strikers were arrested. The strike, however, proved effective: by September, 13 new unions formed increasing union membership by almost 60 percent.

At 1:07 a.m. on October 1, 1910, a bomb went off in an alley outside the three-story Los Angeles Times building located at First Street and Broadway in Los Angeles. The bomb was supposed to go off at 4:00 a.m. when the building would have been empty, but the clock timing mechanism was faulty. The 16 sticks of dynamite in the suitcase bomb were not enough to destroy the whole building, but the bombers were not aware of the presence of natural gas main lines under the building. The bomb collapsed the side of the building, and the ensuing fire destroyed the Times building and a second structure next door that housed the paper’s printing press. Of the 115 people still in the building, 21 died (most of them burned alive in the fire). The next morning, unexploded bombs were discovered at the homes of Otis and F. J. Zeehandelaar, secretary of the M&M; the Hotel Alexandria; and the Los Angeles County Hall of Records (then under construction by the non-union Llewellyn Iron Works).

Ludlow Mine Massacre, 1914

category: Economics (EC)

source: Wikipedia

The Ludlow Mine Massacre refers to the violent deaths of about 20 people, 11 of them children, during an attack by the Colorado National Guard on a tent colony of 1,200 striking coal miners and their families at Ludlow, Colorado on April 20, 1914. These deaths occurred after a day-long fight between strikers and the Guard. Two women, eleven children, six miners and union officials, and one National Guardsman were killed. In response, the miners armed themselves and attacked dozens of mines, destroying property and engaging in several skirmishes with the Colorado National Guard.

This was the bloodiest event in the 14-month 1913-1914 southern Colorado Coal Strike. The strike was organized by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) against coal mining companies in Colorado. The three biggest mining companies were the Rockefeller family-owned Colorado Fuel & Iron Company, the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company, and the Victor-American Fuel Company. Ludlow, located 12 miles northwest of Trinidad, Colorado, is now a ghost town. The massacre site is owned by the UMWA, which erected a granite monument in memory of the miners and their families who died that day.

On the morning of April 20, as the day after Easter was celebrated by the many Greek immigrants at Ludlow, three Guardsmen appeared at the camp ordering the release of a man they claimed was being held against his will. This request prompted the camp leader, Louis Tikas, to meet with a local militia commander at the train station in Ludlow village, a half mile from the colony. While this meeting was progressing, two companies of militia installed a machine gun on a ridge near the camp and took a position along a rail route about half a mile south of Ludlow. Anticipating trouble, Tikas ran back to the camp. The miners, fearing for the safety of their families, set out to flank the militia positions. A firefight soon broke out.

The fighting raged for the entire day. The militia was reinforced by non-uniformed mine guards later in the afternoon. At dusk, a passing freight train stopped on the tracks in front of the Guards' machine gun placements, allowing many of the miners and their families to escape to an outcrop of hills to the east called the "Black Hills." By 7:00 p.m., the camp was in flames, and the militia descended on it and began to search and loot the camp. During the battle, four women and eleven children had been hiding in a pit beneath one tent, where they were trapped when the tent above them was set on fire. Two of the women and all of the children suffocated. In addition to the fire victims, Louis Tikas, three company guards and one militiaman were also killed in the day's fighting.

Chicago Race Riot, 1919

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

The Chicago Race Riot of 1919 was a major racial conflict that began in Chicago, Illinois on July 27, 1919 and ended on August 3. During the riot, dozens died and hundreds were injured. It is considered the worst of the approximately 25 riots during the Red Summer of 1919, so named because of the violence and fatalities across the nation. The combination of prolonged arson, looting and murder was the worst race rioting in the history of Illinois.

The Cook County Coroner's Office report stated the finding that on July 27, 1919, Eugene Williams, an African American youth, drowned after being hit by a stone as whites threw rocks at African Americans to drive them away from their part of the water at the 29th Street beach in the city's Douglas community on the South Side. A witness recalled seeing a single white male standing on a breakwater 75 feet from the raft of the African Americans and throwing rocks at them. Williams was struck in the forehead; he panicked and drowned. The assailant ran toward 29th Street, where a different fight had already started when African Americans tried to use the beach there, in defiance of its tacit segregation.

The rioting escalated when a white police officer refused to arrest the white man who threw the stone at Williams. He instead arrested an African American. Anger over the arrest, coupled with Williams' death, as well as rumors among both communities, escalated into five days of rioting. Most of the casualties were African American and most of the property damage was inflicted in African American neighborhoods. The city quickly closed down the street cars to try to contain the violence. Inflammatory newspaper coverage worked to the opposite effect. Historians have noted that South Side youth gangs, including the all-white Hamburg Athletic Club, were later found to have been amongst the primary instigators of the racial violence. For weeks, in the early parts of 1919, they had been anticipating, even eagerly awaiting, a race riot.

The conduct of the white police force was criticized during and after the riot. State's Attorney Maclay Hoyne openly charged the police with arresting African American rioters but refusing to arrest white rioters. While local newspapers carried accounts of African Americans setting fires, later the office of State Fire Marshal proved conclusively that the fires were by whites, not blacks. The New York Times coverage during the riot, however, clearly conveyed that whites were responsible for planned large-scale arson against black areas and for numerous mob attacks. Because of early police failures to arrest whites, no white Chicagoans were convicted of any of the murders, and most of the deaths were not prosecuted.

Elaine Race Riots, 1919

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

The Elaine Race Riot, also called the Elaine Massacre, occurred September 30, 1919 in the town of Elaine in Phillips County, Arkansas, in the Mississippi Delta, where sharecropping by African American farmers was prevalent on plantations of white landowners. Approximately 100 African American farmers met for a meeting of the Progressive Farmers and Household Union of America at a church in Hoop Spur in Phillips County, nearby Elaine. The purpose was to obtain better payments for their cotton crops from the white plantation owners who dominated the area during the Jim Crow era.

When a white deputy sheriff and a railroad detective, arrived at the church, a fight broke out between them and guards at the church. In the ensuing gunfire, the railroad detective was killed and the deputy sheriff was wounded. The parish sheriff called for a posse to investigate and capture those who were responsible for the killing. Violence expanded beyond the meeting place. Additional armed white men came into the county from outside to support the white citizens until a mob of 500 to 1,000 armed men had formed. Fighting in the area lasted for three days. Sensational newspaper articles reported that an ‘insurrection’ was occurring. Area whites also requested help from Arkansas Governor Charles Hillman Brough, citing a “Negro uprising.” As the mob was gathering, Brough contacted the War Department and requested Federal troops. After considerable delay, approximately 500 U.S. troops arrived and found the area in chaos. The troops made their way to the area of the Hoop Spur Church, where they exchanged gunfire with black farmers in the woods. Over the next few days, the troops disarmed both parties and arrested 285 black residents, putting them in stockades for investigation and protection. The exact number of blacks killed is unknown because of the wide area of attacks, but estimates ranged from 100 to 200. Five whites died.

In October and November 1919, an Arkansas grand jury returned indictments against 122 blacks. The jury members were all white. According to the affidavits later supplied by the defendants, many of the prisoners had been beaten, whipped or tortured by electric shocks to extract confessions. The lawyers for the defense did not subpoena witnesses for the defense and did not allow their clients to testify. Twelve of the defendants were convicted of murder and sentenced to death in the electric chair. Their trials lasted less than an hour in many cases; the juries took less than ten minutes to deliberate before pronouncing them guilty and sentencing them to death. Thirty-six defendants chose to plead guilty to second-degree murder rather than face trial. Sixty-seven other defendants were convicted and sentenced to various terms up to 21 years.

The Wall Street Bombing, 1920

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

The Wall Street Bombing of September 16, 1920, occurred in the Financial District of New York City. The blast killed 38 and seriously injured 143. It was more deadly than the bombing of the Los Angeles Times building in 1910 and remained the deadliest bomb attack on U.S. soil until the Bath School bombings in Bath Township, Michigan seven years later. At noon, a wagon passed by lunchtime crowds on Wall Street in New York City and stopped across the street from the headquarters of the J.P. Morgan bank at 23 Wall Street, on the Financial District's busiest corner. Inside, 100 pounds of dynamite with 500 pounds of heavy, cast-iron sash weights exploded in a timer-set detonation, sending the slugs tearing through the air. The horse and wagon were blasted into small fragments. The 38 victims, most of whom died within moments of the blast, were mostly young and worked as messengers, stenographers, clerks and brokers. It caused over \$2 million in property damage and wrecked most of the interior spaces of the Morgan building.

The investigation had quickly stalled when none of the victims turned out to be the driver of the wagon. Though the horse was newly shod, investigators could not locate the stable responsible for the work. When the blacksmith was located in October, he could offer the police little information. The Bureau of Investigation (BOI) and local police investigated the case for over three years without success. Occasional arrests garnered headlines but each time false hopes evaporated within days. Most of the investigative effort focused on the same network of Galleanist anarchists law enforcement tied to other bombings and to Sacco and Vanzetti. In the Harding administration, new attention was paid to the Soviets as possible masterminds of the Wall Street bombing and then to the renascent Communist Party USA. In 1944, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, successor to the BOI, performed a final investigation and concluded by saying its agents had explored the involvement of many radical groups, "such as the Union of Russian Workers, the I.W.W., Communist, etc....and from the result of the investigations to date it would appear that none of the aforementioned organizations had any hand in the matter and that the explosion was the work of either Italian anarchists or Italian terrorists." In 1991, historian Paul Avrich argued that Mario Buda (1884-1963), a follower of Italian anarchist Luigi Galleani, planted the bomb to avenge the indictment of his fellow Galleanists Sacco and Vanzetti. Buda was in New York City at the time of the bombing, was experienced in the use of explosives, and is believed to have constructed several of the largest package bombs for Galleanists. Yet, after Buda returned to his native Italy, similar bomb attacks occurred as late as 1932.

Tulsa Race Riot, 1921

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

The Tulsa Race Riot, also known as the 1921 race riot, the night that Tulsa died, the Tulsa Race War, or the Greenwood riot, was a massacre during a large-scale civil disorder confined mainly to the racially segregated Greenwood neighborhood of Tulsa, Oklahoma on May 31, 1921. During the 16 hours of rioting, over 800 people were admitted to local hospitals with injuries, an estimated 10,000 were left homeless, 35 city blocks composed of 1,256 residences were destroyed by fire, and \$1.8 million (about \$21.7 million in 2009 dollars) in property damage was caused. Officially, thirty-nine people were reported killed in the riot, of whom ten were white. The actual number of black citizens killed by local white militiamen and others as a result of the riot was estimated in the Red Cross report at around 300, making the Tulsa race riot the worst in U.S. history. Other estimates range as high as 3,000, based on the number of grave diggers and other circumstances, but the forensic work needed to confirm the number of dead has not been performed.

The Tulsa race riot occurred in the racially and politically tense atmosphere of northeastern Oklahoma, some of which was a growing hotbed of anti-black sentiment at that time. The Ku Klux Klan made its first major appearance in Oklahoma on August 12, 1921, less than three months after the riot. As in several other states and territories during the early years of the twentieth century, lynchings were not uncommon in Oklahoma. Between the declaration of statehood on November 16, 1907, and the Tulsa race riot some thirteen years later, thirty-one individuals - twenty-six of them black - were lynched in Oklahoma. During the twenty years following the riot, the number of lynchings statewide fell to two.

The Greenwood section of Tulsa was home to a commercial district so prosperous it was known as “the Negro Wall Street” (now commonly referred to as “the Black Wall Street”). Ironically, the economic enclaves here and elsewhere - bounded and confined by racial discrimination - supported prosperity and capital formation within the community. In the surrounding areas of northeastern Oklahoma, blacks also enjoyed relative prosperity and participated in the oil boom.

Of the more than 800 people admitted to local hospitals for injuries during the riot, a vast majority are believed to have been white, as both black hospitals had been burned in the rioting. Several among the black dead were known to have died while in the internment centers. While most of these deaths are thought to be accurately recorded, there are no records to be found as to how many detainees were treated for injuries and survived. These numbers could very reasonably be over a thousand, perhaps several thousand.

Rosewood Massacre, 1923

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

The Rosewood Massacre was a violent, racially motivated conflict that took place during the first week of January 1923 in rural Levy County, Florida, United States. At least six blacks and two whites were killed, and the town of Rosewood was abandoned and destroyed during what was characterized as a race riot. Rosewood was a quiet, primarily black, self-sufficient whistle stop on the Seaboard Air Line Railway. It began with accusations that Frances Taylor, a married white woman in nearby Sumner had been beaten and possibly raped by a black drifter. In fact, she had likely been beaten by her white, extra-marital lover. Regardless, white men from nearby towns lynched a Rosewood resident. When black citizens defended themselves against further attack, several hundred whites burned almost every structure in Rosewood. Survivors hid for several days in nearby swamps and were evacuated by train and car to larger towns. Although state and local authorities were aware of the violence, they made no arrests for the activities in Rosewood. The town was abandoned by black residents during the attacks. None ever returned.

Many people were alarmed by the violence, and state leaders feared negative effects on the state's tourist industry. Governor Cary Hardee appointed a special grand jury and special prosecuting attorney to investigate the outbreak in Rosewood and other incidents in Levy County. In February 1923, the all-white grand jury convened in Bronson. Over several days, they heard 25 witnesses, eight of whom were black, but found insufficient evidence to prosecute any perpetrators.

Newspapers started moving information about Rosewood off their front pages by the end of the week. The Chicago Defender, the most influential black newspaper in the U.S., reported that 19 people in Rosewood's "race war" had died. The Gainesville Daily Sun justified the actions of whites involved by writing, "Let it be understood now and forever that he, whether white or black, who brutally assaults an innocent and helpless woman, shall die the death of a dog."

Although the rioting was widely reported around the country, few official records documented the event. Survivors and their descendants organized to sue the state for having failed to protect them, but it was not until 1993 that the Florida Legislature commissioned a report on what had happened. As a result of the findings, Florida became the first U.S. state to compensate survivors and their descendants for damages incurred because of racial violence. The massacre was the subject of a 1997 film directed by John Singleton. In 2004, the state designated the site of Rosewood as a Florida Heritage Landmark.

Hooverism and COINTELPRO, 1924 to 1972

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

John Edgar Hoover (January 1, 1895 - May 2, 1972) was the first Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of the United States. Appointed director of the Bureau of Investigation - predecessor to the FBI - in 1924, he was instrumental in founding the FBI in 1935, where he remained director until his death in 1972. Hoover became an increasingly controversial figure. His critics have accused him of exceeding the jurisdiction of the FBI. He used the FBI to harass political dissenters and activists, to amass secret files on political leaders, and to collect evidence using illegal methods. It is because of Hoover's long and controversial reign that FBI directors are now limited to 10-year terms.

In 1956, Hoover was becoming increasingly frustrated by Supreme Court decisions that limited the Justice Department's ability to prosecute people for their political opinions, most notably, communists. At this time he formalized a covert "dirty tricks" program under the name COINTELPRO. This program remained in place until it was revealed to the public in 1971, and was the cause of some of the harshest criticism of Hoover and the FBI. COINTELPRO was first used to disrupt the Communist Party, and later organizations such as the Black Panther Party, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s SCLC, the Ku Klux Klan, the American Nazi Party and others. Its methods included infiltration, burglaries, illegal wiretaps, planting forged documents and spreading false rumors about key members of target organizations. Some authors have charged that COINTELPRO methods also included inciting violence and arranging murders.

In 1975, the activities of COINTELPRO were investigated by the "United States Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities" called the Church Committee after its chairman, Senator Frank Church (D-Idaho) and these activities were declared illegal and contrary to the Constitution. Hoover amassed significant power by collecting files containing large amounts of compromising and potentially embarrassing information on many powerful people, especially politicians. According to Laurence Silberman, appointed Deputy Attorney General in early 1974, FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley thought such files either did not exist or had been destroyed. After The Washington Post broke a story in January 1975, Kelley searched and found them in his outer office. The House Judiciary Committee then demanded that Silberman testify about them. An extensive investigation of Hoover's files by David Garrow showed that Hoover and next-in-command William Sullivan, as well as the FBI itself as an agency, were responsible.

The Bath School Disaster, 1927

category: Economics (EC)

source: Wikipedia

The Bath School Disaster is the name given to three bombings in Bath Township, Michigan, USA, on May 18, 1927, which killed 45 people (38 grade-schoolers and 7 adults) and injured 58. Most of the victims were children in the second to sixth grades (7-12 years of age) attending the Bath Consolidated School. Their deaths constitute the deadliest act of mass murder in a school in U.S. history. The perpetrator was school board member Andrew Kehoe, who was upset by a property tax that had been levied to fund the construction of the school building. He blamed the additional tax for financial hardships which led to foreclosure proceedings against his farm. These events apparently provoked Kehoe to plan his attack.

On the morning of May 18, Kehoe first killed his wife, then set his farm buildings afire. As fire fighters arrived at the farm, an explosion devastated the north wing of the school building, killing many of the people inside. Kehoe used a detonator to ignite dynamite and hundreds of pounds of pyrotol which he had secretly planted inside the school over the course of many months. As rescuers started gathering at the school, Kehoe drove up, stopped, and detonated a bomb inside his shrapnel-filled vehicle, killing himself and the school superintendent, as well as killing and injuring several others. During the rescue efforts, searchers discovered an additional 500 pounds of unexploded dynamite and pyrotol planted throughout the basement of the school's south wing.

The inquest determined that Kehoe murdered Superintendent Emory Huyck on the morning of May 18. It was also the jury's verdict that the school was blown up as part of a plan and that Kehoe alone, without the aid of conspirators, murdered 43 people in total, including his wife Nellie. Suicide was determined to be the manner of Andrew Kehoe's death, which brought the total to 44 dead at the time of the inquest. Kehoe's body was eventually claimed by his sister. Without ceremony, he was buried in an unmarked grave in an initially unnamed cemetery. Later, it was revealed that Kehoe was buried in the paupers' section of Mt. Rest Cemetery, St. Johns, in Clinton County. Nellie Kehoe was buried in Mount Hope Cemetery in Lansing by her family under her maiden name of Price. On August 22, some three months after the bombing, fourth-grader Beatrice Gibbs died following hip surgery. Hers was accounted the forty-fifth and final death directly attributable to the Bath School disaster.

In 1975 the site was made into a small park dedicated to the victims of the bombings.

Columbine Mine Massacre, 1927

category: Economics (EC)

source: Wikipedia

The first Columbine Massacre, sometimes called the Columbine Mine Massacre to distinguish it from the Columbine High School Massacre, occurred on November 21, 1927, in the town of Serene, Colorado. A fight broke out between state police and a group of striking coal miners, during which the coal miners were attacked with machine guns. It is unclear whether the machine guns were used by the police or by guards working for the mine. Six strikers were killed, and dozens were injured. Firing began when strikers forced their way through a wooden gate. The police retreated, forming two lines at a water tank 120 yards inside the fence. Louis Scherf, head of the Colorado State Police fired two rounds over the heads of the strikers. His men responded with deadly fire directly into the crowd. In the early dawn light the miners scattered under a hail of lead. Twelve remained on the ground, some writhing in agony while others lay still.

At least two, and possibly three machine guns were available at the mine and miners later claimed their ranks were decimated by a withering crossfire from the mine tibble - a structure where coal was loaded onto railroad cars - and from a gun on a truck near the water tank. John Eastenes, 34, of Lafayette, married and father of six children, died instantly. Nick Spanudakhis, 34, Lafayette, lived only a few minutes. Frank Kovich of Erie, Rene Jacques, 26, of Louisville and 21 year old Jerry Davis died hours later in the hospital. The American flag carried by miners was riddled with seventeen bullet holes and stained with blood. Mike Vidovich of Erie, 35, died a week later of his injuries. The state police later testified that they had not used machine guns in the fight. The miners and some witnesses testified that machine guns were used. Some witnesses identified a mine guard who had climbed the tibble and may have operated the machine gun mounted there, providing one possible explanation for the discrepancy in testimony. However, the machine gun near the water tank was reportedly manned by one of Scherf's men.

Amelia Milka Sablich, 19, received national media attention during the strike. She wore a bright red dress and led the marches of strikers in the southern coal field after her older sister, Santa Benash, had been arrested for doing the same. Amelia came to be called Flaming Milka.

After Colorado Fuel and Iron (CF&I) went bankrupt in 1990, and business records were donated to the Steelworks Museum of Industry and Culture, it became apparent that the company had systematically spied upon, disrupted, and sought to discredit the union during the 1927 strike.

General Motors Streetcar Conspiracy, 1932

category: Economics (EC)

source: Wikipedia

The Great American Streetcar Scandal (also known as the General Motors Streetcar Conspiracy and the National City Lines Conspiracy) is a conspiracy theory in which streetcar systems throughout the United States were dismantled and replaced with buses in the mid-20th century as a result of alleged illegal actions by a number of prominent companies. National City Lines (NCL), which had been in operation since 1920, was organized into a holding company, and General Motors, Firestone Tire, Standard Oil of California, Phillips Petroleum, Mack, and the Federal Engineering Corporation made investments in NCL companies in return for exclusive supply contracts. On June 29, 1932, GM quietly created United Cities Motor Transit, a special holding company to finance small-city conversion from electric streetcars to gas powered automobiles. Between 1936 and 1950, National City Lines bought out more than 100 electric surface-traction systems in 45 cities, including Detroit, Cleveland, New York City, Oakland, Philadelphia, Phoenix, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, Tulsa, Baltimore, and Los Angeles, and replaced them with GM buses. Other companies were also involved, such as American City Lines which merged with National in 1946.

In the 19th century, city transit systems were rail-based, first with horse-drawn cars and later with cable cars. Around 1890, streetcars began to be powered by electricity. Because streetcar companies were often the biggest single customers of electric utilities, they were usually owned partially or wholly by the utilities themselves, which then supplied them with electricity at substantially discounted rates. In some cases, the origin of the situation was reversed; the streetcar company began providing its own electricity, and then later branched out into supplying electricity for other businesses and homes. The Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935, an antitrust law, prohibited regulated electric utilities from operating unregulated businesses, which included most streetcar lines, and also restricted the ability of companies to operate across state lines. Many holding companies operated both streetcars and electric utilities across several states; those that owned both types of businesses were forced to sell one, usually the less profitable streetcar business.

In 1970, Robert Eldridge Hicks, a Harvard Law student working on the Ralph Nader Study Group Report on Land Use in California, compiled and correlated these earlier events to expose the conspiracy. In 1974, Bradford Snell, a U.S. government attorney, gave testimony before a United States Senate inquiry into the causes of the decline of the transit car systems in the U.S. that pointed to the effect of the NCL acquisitions as the primary cause.

Bonus March Rout, 1932

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

The self-named Bonus Expeditionary Force was an assemblage of some 43,000 marchers - 17,000 World War I veterans, their families, and affiliated groups who protested in Washington, D.C., in spring and summer of 1932. Called the Bonus March by the news media, the Bonus Marchers were more popularly known as the Bonus Army. The war veterans, many of whom had been out of work since the beginning of the Great Depression, sought immediate cash payment of Service Certificates granted to them eight years earlier via the Adjusted Service Certificate Law of 1924. Each Service Certificate, issued to a qualified veteran soldier, bore a face value equal to the soldier's promised payment, plus compound interest. The problem was that the certificates (like bonds) matured twenty years from the date of original issuance, thus, under extant law, the Service Certificates could not be redeemed until 1945.

On July 28, 1932, U.S. Attorney General Mitchell ordered the veterans removed from all government property. Washington police met with resistance, shots were fired and two veterans were killed. President Hoover then ordered the army to clear out the veterans. The infantry and cavalry were supported by six tanks and commanded by Army Chief of Staff General Douglas MacArthur. General Dwight D. Eisenhower, later President, was his liaison with Washington police, and Major George Patton led the cavalry. The Bonus Army, their wives and children were driven out with fixed bayonets and adamsite gas, an arsenical vomiting agent, and their shelters and belongings burned. Two more of the veterans, and an unknown number of babies and children, died (accounts range from one to "a number" of casualties).

After his election, President Franklin D. Roosevelt did not want to pay the bonus early either. In March 1933, Roosevelt issued an executive order allowing the enrollment of 25,000 veterans in the Civilian Conservation Corps for work in forests. When they marched on Washington again in May 1933, he sent his wife Eleanor to chat with the vets and pour coffee with them, and she persuaded many of them to sign up for jobs making a roadway to the Florida Keys, which was to become the Overseas Highway, the southernmost portion of U.S. Route 1. The third-strongest hurricane ever measured, the September 2, 1935 Labor Day hurricane, killed 258 veterans working on the Highway. Most were killed by storm surge flooding. After seeing more newsreels of veterans giving their lives for a government that had taken them for granted, public sentiment built up so much that Congress could no longer afford to ignore it in an election year. In 1936, Roosevelt's prior veto of early payment was overridden, making the bonus a reality.

Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment, 1932 to 1972

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment (also known as the Tuskegee Syphilis Study or Public Health Service Syphilis Study) was a clinical study conducted between 1932 and 1972 in Tuskegee, Alabama, by the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS). Investigators recruited 399 impoverished African American sharecroppers with syphilis for research related to the natural progression of the untreated disease, in hopes of justifying treatment programs for blacks. Participants were never told that they had syphilis, and the 40-year study was controversial for this and many other ethical reasons. Revelation of the study led to major changes in U.S. law regarding the protection of participants in clinical studies. Now studies require informed consent, communication of diagnosis, and accurate reporting of test results.

By 1947 penicillin had become the standard treatment for syphilis. Choices might have included treating all syphilitic subjects and closing the study, or splitting off a control group for testing with penicillin. Instead, the Tuskegee scientists continued the study, withholding penicillin and information about it from the patients. In addition, scientists prevented participants from accessing syphilis treatment programs available to others in the area. The study continued, under numerous supervisors, until 1972, when a leak to the press resulted in its termination. Victims included numerous men who died of syphilis, wives who contracted the disease, and children born with congenital syphilis.

In 1966 Peter Buxtun, a PHS venereal-disease investigator in San Francisco, sent a letter to the national director of the Division of Venereal Diseases to express his concerns about the ethics and morality of the extended Tuskegee Study. The Center for Disease Control (CDC), which controlled the study, reaffirmed the need to continue it until completion (until all subjects had died and been autopsied) with support from local chapters of the National Medical Association (representing African American physicians) and the American Medical Association (AMA). Buxtun finally went to the press in the early 1970's. The story broke first in the Washington Star on July 25, 1972. It became front-page news in the New York Times the following day. Senator Edward Kennedy called Congressional hearings at which Buxtun testified. As part of the settlement of a class action lawsuit subsequently filed by the NAACP, the U.S. government paid \$9 million and agreed to provide free medical treatment to surviving participants, as well as to surviving family members infected as a consequence of the study.

Huey Pierce Long, Jr., Assassination, 1935

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

Huey Pierce Long, Jr., (August 30, 1893 - September 10, 1935), nicknamed The Kingfish, served as the 40th Governor of Louisiana from 1928 to 1932 and as a U.S. senator from 1932 to 1935. A Democrat, he was noted for his radical populist policies. Though a backer of Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1932 presidential election, Long split with Roosevelt in June 1933 and allegedly planned to mount his own presidential bid. Long created the Share Our Wealth program in 1934, with the motto "Every Man a King," proposing new wealth redistribution measures in the form of a net asset tax on corporations and individuals to curb the poverty and crime resulting from the Great Depression. To stimulate the economy, Long advocated federal spending on public works, public education, old age pensions and other social programs. He was an ardent critic of the Federal Reserve System's policies to reduce lending. Charismatic and immensely popular for his social reform programs and willingness to take forceful action, Long was accused by his opponents of dictatorial tendencies for his near-total control of the state government.

In July 1935, two months prior to his death, Long claimed that he had uncovered a plot to assassinate him, which had been discussed in a meeting at New Orleans's DeSoto Hotel. According to Long, four U.S. representatives, Mayor Walmsley, and former governors Parker and Sanders had been present. Long read what he claimed was a transcript of a recording of this meeting on the floor of the Senate. Long called for a special session of the Louisiana Legislature to begin in September 1935, and he traveled from Washington to Baton Rouge to oversee its progress. The accounts of the September 8, 1935 murder differ, with many believing that Long was shot once or twice by medical doctor Carl Austin Weiss in the Capitol building at Baton Rouge. Weiss was immediately shot sixty-one times by Long's bodyguards and police on the scene. The 28-year-old Dr. Weiss was the son-in-law of Judge Benjamin Henry Pavy. According to Mrs. Ida Catherine Pavy Boudreaux of Opelousas, Pavy's only surviving child, her father had been gerrymandered out of his Sixteenth Judicial District because of his opposition to Long.

Shortly after being shot, the expiring Long reportedly said, "I wonder why he shot me." Long died two days later of internal bleeding, following Dr. Arthur Vidrine's attempt to close the wounds. Many believe that Weiss was unarmed and had punched Long in the mouth (he had a swollen lip at the hospital), not shot him. Instead, Senator Long was struck by a stray bullet from his bodyguards, who shot Weiss because they mistakenly believed that Weiss was going to shoot Long.

The Biscari and Canicatti Massacres, 1943

category: Military (MIL)

source: <http://www.statemaster.com/encyclopedia>

The Biscari Massacre was a war crime committed by U.S. troops during World War II, where unarmed German and Italian prisoners of war were supposedly killed at Biscari in 1943. Following the capture of Biscari Airfield in Sicily on July 14, 1943, seventy-six German and Italian POWs were shot by American troops of the 180th Regimental Combat Team, 45th Division during the Allied invasion Operation Husky. These killings occurred in two separate incidents between July and August 1943. The first incident involved 34 Italians and 2 Germans, while the second involved 40 Italians. The shootings violated Article 13 of the Third Geneva Convention on the treatment of POWs.

Sergeant Horace T. West was charged in the first incident with killing the 36 POWs under his charge. General George Patton upon hearing of the charge directed the corps commander General Omar Bradley to order West to tell the court that the prisoners were “snipers or attempting to escape or something.” Bradley refused. West admitted that he had participated in the shootings, was found guilty, stripped of rank and sentenced to life in prison, though he was later released as a private. In the second incident, Captain John T. Compton was court-martialled for killing 40 POWs in his charge. He claimed to be following orders. The investigating officer and the Judge Advocate declared that Compton’s actions were unlawful, but he was acquitted. Compton was merely transferred to another regiment and died a year later fighting in Italy.

After the massacre Patton was said to have stated that the prisoners having been shot in ordered rows was “an even greater error.” This it has been claimed was because Patton realized that leaving such evidence clearly indicated the POWs were obviously shot in cold blood and not in battle, which would obviously have allowed the killings to escape detection. Neither Patton nor the unit commanding officer, Colonel E. Cookson, was held officially responsible in any way.

The Canicatti Massacre was a war crime committed by Allied forces during the invasion of Sicily in July 1943, in which at least a dozen unarmed Italian civilians, including six children, were killed by U.S. troops also under the command of General George Patton. The town of Canicatti had already surrendered when U.S. troops entered, following heavy German bombardment during their withdrawal. Civilians had been rounded up and herded into a bombed soap factory where they were shot by U.S. soldiers. The incident was covered up fearing that it may lead to reprisals from the civilian population.

Zoot Suit Mexican-American Riot, 1943

category: Latin (LAT)

source: Wikipedia

The Zoot Suit Riots were a series of riots that erupted in Los Angeles, California during World War II, between white sailors and Marines stationed throughout the city and Latino youths, who were recognizable by the zoot suits they favored. These Riots were in part the effect of the infamous Sleepy Lagoon murder which involved the death of a young Latino man in a barrio near Los Angeles. The incident triggered similar attacks in Beaumont, Chicago, San Diego, Detroit, Evansville, Philadelphia, and New York.

Two conflicts between Mexicans and military personnel had a great effect on the start of the riots. The first occurred on May 30, 1943 four days before the start of the riots. The altercation involved a dozen sailors and soldiers including Seaman Second Class Joe Dacy Coleman. The group was walking down Main Street when, with the exception of Coleman and another soldier, the group crossed the street to approach some women. Coleman, walking past a small group of young men in zoot suits, saw one of them raise his arm in a “threatening” manner, so he turned and grabbed it. It was then that something or someone struck the sailor in the back of the head and he fell to the ground unconscious, breaking his jaw in two places. On the opposite side of the street, young men attacked the other servicemen out of nowhere. In the midst of this battle, the service men managed to fight their way to Coleman and drag him to safety.

The second incident took place four days later on the night of June 3, 1943, when about eleven sailors walking along Main Street in East Los Angeles ran into a group of young Mexicans dressed in zoot suits and got in a verbal argument. The sailors claimed that they were jumped and beaten by this gang of zoot suiters. Although they only suffered minor injuries, the LAPD responded to the incident, many of them off duty officers who called themselves the Vengeance Squad seeking to clean up the loathsome gangs. The next day, 200 members of the U.S. Navy got a convoy of about 20 taxi cabs and headed for East Los Angeles. When the sailors spotted their first victims, most of them 12-13 year old boys, they clubbed the boys and adults that were trying to stop them. They also stripped the boys of their zoot suits and burned the tattered clothes in a pile. It was with this attack that the Zoot Suit Riots started. As the violence escalated over the ensuing days, thousands of servicemen joined the attacks, marching abreast down streets, entering bars and movie houses and assaulting any young Latino males they encountered. Although police accompanied the rioting servicemen they had orders not to arrest any of them. After several days more than 150 people had been injured and police had arrested more than 500 “Latinos” on charges from “rioting” to “vagrancy.”

Tokyo Fire Bombing Conflagration, 1945

category: Asian (AS)

source: <http://japanfocus.org/-David-McNeill/1581>

The Conflagration of 1945 is one of the great forgotten atrocities of World War 2: the fire-bombing of Tokyo which killed over 100,000 people. Saotome Katsumoto, 12 years old when he heard the familiar rumble of bombers overhead, remembered “it was a midnight air raid, but unlike anything we had experienced before. The planes flew in very low, so low you could see the fires reflected in their undercarriages, and they dropped mostly incendiaries. The fires started everywhere and we tried to fight them, but there was a strong, northerly wind fanning the flames. All around me people were on fire, writhing in agony.”

On March 9th and 10th, 1945, the U.S. abandoned the last rules of warfare against civilians when 334 B-29's dropped close to half a million incendiary bombs on sleeping Tokyo civilians. The aim was to cause maximum carnage in an overcrowded city of flimsy wooden buildings; an estimated 100,000 people were “scorched, boiled and baked to death,” in the words of the attack’s architect, General Curtis LeMay. It was then the single largest mass killing of World War II, dwarfing even the pending atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the prior destruction of the German city of Dresden in February of 1945. B-29 pilot Chester Marshall flew above the destruction, but not far enough: “At 5,000 feet you could smell the flesh burning,” he later told Australian broadcaster ABC. “I couldn’t eat anything for two or three days. You know it was nauseating, really. We just said ‘What is that I smell?’ And it’s a kind of a sweet smell, and somebody said, ‘Well that’s flesh burning, had to be.’”

Even the city’s rivers were no escape from the firestorm: the jellied petroleum that filled the bombs, a prototype of the napalm that laid waste to much of Vietnam two decades later, stuck to everything and turned water into fire. “Canals boiled, metal melted, and buildings and human beings burst spontaneously into flames,” wrote John Dower in *War Without Mercy*. People who dived into rivers and canals for relief were boiled to death in the intense heat.

The bombing incinerated over 15 kilometers of central Tokyo, left over a million homeless and opened the curtain on an orgy of destruction in the final months of the Pacific War that included dozens of similar raids on Japanese cities and culminated in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August. When the droning of bombers finally stopped on August 15, 1945, nearly 70 cities had been reduced to rubble and well over half a million people, mostly civilians, were dead. LeMay reportedly said: “If we had lost the war, we would have been tried as war criminals.”

Hollywood Blacklist, 1947 to 1960

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

The Hollywood Blacklist - or entertainment industry blacklist, into which it expanded - was the mid-twentieth-century list of screen writers, actors, directors, musicians, and other U.S. entertainment professionals who were denied employment in the field because of their political beliefs or associations, real or suspected. Artists were barred from work on the basis of their alleged membership in, or sympathy toward the American Communist Party, involvement in liberal or humanitarian political causes that enforcers of the blacklist associated with communism, and/or refusal to assist investigations into Communist Party activities; some were blacklisted merely because their names came up at the wrong place and time. Even during the period of its strictest enforcement, the late 1940's through the late 1950's, the blacklist was rarely made explicit and verifiable, but it caused direct damage to the careers of scores of American artists, often made betrayal of friendship (not to mention principle) the price for a livelihood, and promoted ideological censorship across the entire industry.

The first systematic Hollywood blacklist was instituted on November 25, 1947, the day after ten writers and directors were cited for contempt of Congress for refusing to give testimony to the House Committee on Un-American Activities. A group of studio executives, acting under the aegis of the Motion Picture Association of America, announced the firing of the artists - the so-called Hollywood Ten - in what has become known as the Waldorf Statement. On June 22, 1950, a pamphlet called Red Channels appeared, naming 151 entertainment industry professionals in the context of "Red Fascists and their sympathizers"; soon most of those named, along with a host of other artists, were barred from employment in much of the entertainment field. The blacklist was effectively broken in 1960 when Dalton Trumbo, an unrepentant member of the Hollywood Ten, was publicly acknowledged as the screenwriter of the films Spartacus and Exodus. A number of those blacklisted, however, were still barred from work in their professions for years.

A key figure in bringing an end to blacklisting was John Henry Faulk. Host of an afternoon comedy radio show, Faulk was a leftist active in his union, the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. He was scrutinized by AWARE, one of the private firms that examined individuals for signs of Communist sympathies and disloyalty. Marked by the group as unfit, he was fired by CBS Radio. Almost alone among the many victims of blacklisting, Faulk decided to sue AWARE in 1957. Though the case would drag through the courts for years, the suit itself was an important symbol of the building resistance to the blacklist.

League of Nations Palestine Mandate Invalidation, 1948

category: Middle East (ME)

source: Wikipedia

The Palestine Mandate, also known as the British Mandate of Palestine, was approved by the League of Nations in June 1922, based on a draft by the Allied powers after the First World War. The mandate formalized British rule in Palestine from 1917-1948. The boundaries of two new states were laid down within the territory of the Mandate: Transjordan and Palestine. Transjordan later became the Arab nation of Jordan, while the mandate's proposed Palestinian homeland nation of Palestine never materialized.

The formal objective of the League of Nations Mandate system was to administer parts of the defunct Ottoman Empire, which had been in control of the Middle East since the 16th century, "until such time as they are able to stand alone." However, on November 29, 1947, the United Nations (UN) Partition Plan for Palestine called *United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181 (II) Future Government of Palestine* was adopted by the General Assembly by a vote of 33 to 13, with 10 abstentions. The United States voted in favor of this resolution which recommended the division of the British Mandate of Palestine into two provisional states, one Jewish and one Arab, with a separate status for the Jerusalem-Bethlehem area (which would be under special international protection, belonging to neither of the two states), and an accompanying framework for overall economic union. The resolution sought to give partial satisfaction to two competing nationalisms - Zionism (Jewish nationalism) and local Arab Palestinian nationalism - both of which had been accepted as legitimate a quarter century earlier by the UN precursor agency, the League of Nations. The resolution was passed to help resolve both the recent Holocaust which had befallen the European Jews as well as the long-running conflict between Zionist aspirations to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine and the Arab majority there. A transitional period under UN auspices was to begin with the adoption of the resolution, and was scheduled to last until the two states were established.

The proposed plan was accepted by the Jewish community (represented by the Jewish Agency), but was rejected by the Arab community (represented by the Palestine Arab Higher Committee). The states of the Arab League also supported the rejection. Therefore, the partition plan was never implemented, and the gradual withdrawal of British forces and termination of the Mandate by August 1, 1948, contemplated by the resolution did not happen. Instead, there was a civil war in Palestine, and the British ultimately withdrew without handing over territory or authority to any successor in May 1948, leading to Israel's Declaration of Independence and the invasion of Palestine by five Arab armies (the first Arab-Israeli war).

McCarthyism, 1948 to 1954

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

McCarthyism is the politically motivated practice of making accusations of disloyalty, subversion, or treason without proper regard for evidence. The term specifically describes activities associated with the period in the United States known as the Second Red Scare, lasting roughly from the late 1940's to the late 1950's and characterized by heightened fears of communist influence on American institutions and espionage by Soviet agents. The Department of Justice started keeping a list of organizations that it deemed subversive beginning in 1942. This list was first made public in 1948, when it included 78 items. At its longest, it comprised 154 organizations, 110 of them identified as Communist. In the context of a loyalty review, membership in a listed organization was meant to raise a question, but not to be considered proof of disloyalty. One of the most common causes of suspicion was membership in the Washington Bookshop Association, a left-leaning organization that offered lectures on literature, and classical music concerts.

Originally coined to criticize the anti-communist pursuits of U.S. Senator Joseph McCarthy, “McCarthyism” soon took on a broader meaning, describing the excesses of similar efforts. The term is also now used more generally to describe reckless, unsubstantiated accusations, as well as demagogic attacks on the character or patriotism of political adversaries. During the post-World War II era of McCarthyism, many thousands of Americans were accused of being Communists or communist sympathizers and became the subject of aggressive investigations and questioning before government or private-industry panels, committees and agencies. The primary targets of such suspicions were government employees, those in the entertainment industry, educators and union activists. Suspicions were often given credence despite inconclusive or questionable evidence, and the level of threat posed by a person’s real or supposed leftist associations or beliefs was often greatly exaggerated. Many people suffered loss of employment, destruction of their careers, and even imprisonment. Most of these punishments came about through trial verdicts later overturned and laws that would be declared unconstitutional.

The most famous examples of McCarthyism include the speeches, investigations, and hearings of Senator McCarthy himself; the Hollywood blacklist, associated with hearings conducted by the House Committee on Un-American Activities; and the various anti-communist activities of the Federal Bureau of Investigation under Director J. Edgar Hoover. However, in the mid- and late 1950's, the attitudes and institutions of McCarthyism slowly weakened. Changing public sentiments had a lot to do with this.

Operation Gladio, 1948 to 1990

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

Gladio (Italian for Gladius, a type of Roman short sword) is a code name denoting the clandestine NATO “stay-behind” operation in Italy after World War II. The United Kingdom and the United States decided to create stay-behind paramilitary organizations, with the official aim of countering a possible Soviet invasion through sabotage and guerrilla warfare behind enemy lines. Arms caches were hidden, escape routes prepared, and loyal members recruited: i.e., mainly hardline anticommunists, including many ex-Nazis or former fascists, whether in Italy or in other European countries. Although Gladio specifically refers to the Italian branch of the NATO stay-behind organizations, “Operation Gladio” is used as an informal name for all stay-behind organizations, sometimes called “Super NATO.”

Operating in many NATO and even some neutral countries, Gladio was first coordinated by the Clandestine Committee of the Western Union (CCWU), founded in 1948. After the creation of NATO in 1949, the CCWU was integrated into the Clandestine Planning Committee (CPC), founded in 1951 and overseen by the SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe), transferred to Belgium after France’s official withdrawal from NATO’s Military Committee in 1966 - which was not followed by the dissolution of the French stay-behind paramilitary movements. The role of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in sponsoring Gladio and the extent of its activities during the Cold War era, and its relationship to right-wing terrorist attacks perpetrated in Italy is the subject of ongoing debate and investigation.

Italian Prime minister Giulio Andreotti (member of the Christian Democracy, DC) publicly recognized the existence of Gladio on October 24, 1990. Andreotti spoke of a “structure of information, response and safeguard,” with arms caches and reserve officers. He gave to the Commissione Stragi, the parliamentary commission led by senator Giovanni Pellegrino in charge of investigations on bombings committed during the Years Of Lead in Italy, a list of 622 civilians who according to him were part of Gladio. Andreotti also assured that 127 weapons caches had been dismantled, and pretended that Gladio had not been involved in any of the bombings committed from the 1960's to the 1980's. However, the list of events believed to involve Gladio include the 1964 Piano Solo coup, the 1969 Piazza Fontana bombing, the 1970 Golpe Borghese failed coup, the 1972 Peteano massacre, the 1973 Bombing of the plane Argo 16, the 1974 Piazza della Loggia bombing, the 1974 Italicus Express massacre, the 1978 Murder of Aldo Moro, the 1980 Oktoberfest bomb blast, the 1980 Bologna massacre, and the 1982 murder of General Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa.

U.S. Biological Warfare Tests On American Citizens, 1949 to 1969

category: Military (MIL)

source: <http://www.apfn.org/APFN/germs.htm>

Much of what the Pentagon knows about the effects of bacterial attacks on cities came from secret tests conducted on San Francisco and other American cities from the 1940's through the 1960's. "We learned a lot about how vulnerable we are to biological attack from those tests," says Leonard Cole, adjunct professor of political science at Rutgers University in New Jersey and author of several books on bio-terrorism. "I'm sure that's one reason crop dusters were grounded after September 11: The military knows how easy it is to disperse organisms that can affect people over huge areas."

In numerous tests, Army researchers dispersed bacteria such as *Serratia* on Panama City, Fla., and Key West, Fla., with no known illnesses resulting. They also released fluorescent compounds over Minnesota and other Midwestern states to see how far they would spread in the atmosphere. The particles of zinc-cadmium-sulfide - now a known cancer-causing agent - were detected more than 1,000 miles away in New York state, the Army told the Senate hearings, though no illnesses were ever attributed to them as a result. Another bacterium, *Bacillus globigii*, never shown to be harmful to people, was released in San Francisco, while still others were tested on unwitting residents in New York, Washington, D.C., and along the Pennsylvania Turnpike, among other places, according to Army reports released during 1977 hearings.

In New York, military researchers in 1966 spread *Bacillus subtilis* variant Niger, also believed to be harmless, in the subway system by dropping light bulbs filled with the bacteria onto tracks in stations in midtown Manhattan. The bacteria were carried for miles throughout the subway system, leading Army officials to conclude in a January 1968 report that "similar covert attacks with a pathogenic [disease-causing] agent during peak traffic periods could be expected to expose large numbers of people to infection and subsequent illness or death." Army officials also found widespread dispersal of bacteria in a May 1965 secret release of *Bacillus globigii* at Washington's National Airport and its Greyhound bus terminal, according to military reports released a few years after the Senate hearings. More than 130 passengers who had been exposed to the bacteria traveled to 39 cities in seven states in the two weeks following the mock attack.

The Army kept the biological warfare tests secret until word of them was leaked to the press in the 1970's. Between 1949 and 1969, open-air tests of biological agents were conducted 239 times, according to the Army's testimony in 1977 before the Senate's subcommittee on health. Several medical experts have since claimed that an untold number of people may have gotten sick as a result of the germ tests.

Lavender Scare, 1950's

category: Gay and Lesbian (GL)

source: Wikipedia

The Lavender Scare refers to the fear and persecution of homosexuals in the 1950's that paralleled the anti-communist Red Scare. Because the psychiatric community regarded homosexuality as a mental illness, gay men and lesbians were considered susceptible to blackmail, thus constituting a “security risk.” In 1950, the same year that Senator Joseph McCarthy claimed 205 communists were hiding in the State Department, John Puerifory, the Undersecretary of state claimed that there was a “homosexual underground” in the State Department, so the government fired 91 homosexual employees for security reasons. Because most homosexuals in the 1950's were not “out” and some were married, McCarthy assumed that communists would blackmail homosexuals in the federal government and force them into giving secret information.

McCarthy hired as chief counsel of his congressional subcommittee a closeted homosexual, Roy Cohn. Roy Cohn spent several decades living a discreet life as a gay man. When Cohn brought on Gerard David Schine as chief consultant, speculation arose that Schine and Cohn had a sexual relationship, although some historians have more recently concluded the friendship was platonic. During the Army-McCarthy hearings, Cohn denied having any “special interest” in Schine or being bound to him “closer than to the ordinary friend.” Together, Cohn and McCarthy targeted many government officials and cultural figures not only for suspected Communist sympathies, but also for alleged homosexuality. They were responsible for the firing of scores of gay men from government employment, some of whom lost their homes and their families; some even committed suicide. In 1984, Cohn was diagnosed with AIDS and attempted to keep his condition secret while receiving experimental drug treatment. He participated in clinical trials of AZT, a drug initially synthesized to treat cancer, but later developed as the first anti-HIV agent for AIDS patients. He insisted to his dying day that his disease was liver cancer.

Several causes for the Lavender Scare have been suggested, including the growing visibility of homosexuality, shifts in conspiracy thinking, a perceived crisis in American masculinity, and political efforts to root out New Deal conservatives. They also considered homosexuality as immoral as communism. Because homosexuals were so secretive and would hang out in closed groups they were tagged as being equal and as shameful as communist partisans. The term for this persecution was popularized by David K. Johnson based on the association of the color lavender with homosexuality, and is used in his book *The Lavender Scare: the Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government*.

Operation MKULTRA , 1950's to 1960's

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

Project MKULTRA, or MK-ULTRA, was the code name for a covert, illegal CIA human research program, run by the Office of Scientific Intelligence. This official U.S. government program began in the early 1950's, continuing at least through the late 1960's, and it used United States and Canadian citizens as its test subjects. The published evidence indicates that Project MKULTRA involved the surreptitious use of many types of drugs, and other methods to manipulate individual mental states and to alter brain function.

Project MKULTRA was first brought to wide public attention in 1975 by the U.S. Congress, through investigations by the Church Committee, and by a presidential commission known as the Rockefeller Commission. Investigative efforts were hampered by the fact that CIA Director Richard Helms ordered all MKULTRA files destroyed in 1973; the Church Committee and Rockefeller Commission investigations relied on the sworn testimony of direct participants and on the relatively small number of documents that survived Helms' destruction order.

Although the CIA insists that MKULTRA-type experiments have been abandoned, 14-year CIA veteran Victor Marchetti has stated in various interviews that the CIA routinely conducts disinformation campaigns and that CIA mind control research continued. In a 1977 interview, Marchetti specifically called the CIA claim that MKULTRA was abandoned a "cover story." On the Senate floor in 1977, the late Senator Ted Kennedy said:

The Deputy Director of the CIA revealed that over thirty universities and institutions were involved in an "extensive testing and experimentation" program which included covert drug tests on unwitting citizens "at all social levels, high and low, native Americans and foreign." Several of these tests involved the administration of LSD to "unwitting subjects in social situations." At least one death, that of Dr. Olson, resulted from these activities. The Agency itself acknowledged that these tests made little scientific sense. The agents doing the monitoring were not qualified scientific observers.

To this day most specific information regarding Project MKULTRA remains highly classified.

Operation Condor, 1950's to 1980's

category: Latin (LAT)

source: Wikipedia

Operation Condor (Spanish: Operación Cóndor, Portuguese: Operação Condor), was a campaign of political repression involving assassination and intelligence operations officially implemented in 1975 by the right-wing governments of the Southern Cone of South America. The program aimed to eradicate alleged socialist and communist influence and ideas and to control active or potential opposition movements against the participating governments. Due to its clandestine nature, the precise number of deaths directly attributable to Operation Condor is highly disputed. The death toll is set at least over sixty thousand, possibly more.

Condor's key members were the governments in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia and Brazil. The United States participated in a supervisory capacity, with Ecuador and Peru joining later in more peripheral roles. CIA documents show that the CIA had close contact with members of the Chilean secret police, DINA, and its chief Manuel Contreras. The CIA's official documents state that at one time some members of the intelligence community recommended making Contreras into a paid contact because of his closeness to Augusto Pinochet who became Chile's 30th President; the plan was rejected based on Contreras' poor human rights record, but a single payment was made due to miscommunication.

A 1978 cable from the U.S. ambassador to Paraguay, Robert White, to the Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, was published on March 6, 2001 by the New York Times. The document was released in November 2000 by the Clinton administration under the Chile Declassification Project. In the cable Ambassador White reported a conversation with General Alejandro Fretes Davalos, chief of staff of Paraguay's armed forces, who informed him that the South American intelligence chiefs involved in Condor "[kept] in touch with one another through a U.S. communications installation in the Panama Canal Zone which cover[ed] all of Latin America." According to Davalos, this installation was "employed to co-ordinate intelligence information among the southern cone countries." Robert White feared that the U.S. connection to Condor might be publicly revealed at a time when the assassination in the U.S. A. of Chilean former minister Orlando Letelier and his American assistant Ronni Moffitt was being investigated. White cabled that "it would seem advisable to review this arrangement to insure that its continuation is in U.S. interest."

Augusto Pinochet, never paid for his crimes and died without ever answering charges about the 'disappeared' - who continue to haunt the memory of people who had been crushed by fascist brutality.

Catholic Sex Abuse Cases, 1950's to ?

category: Religion (RE)

source: Wikipedia

Catholic Sexual Abuse Cases scandal in the United States refers to a series of lawsuits, criminal prosecutions, and scandals related to sexual abuse committed by Catholic priests and members of religious orders that first rose to widespread public attention in the last two decades of the 20th century. The issue of sexual abuse of youths and children in the U.S. by Roman Catholic priests first rose to national attention in 1985 when Louisiana priest Gilbert Gauthe pleaded guilty to 11 counts of molestation of boys. It was again brought to national attention when a number of books on the topic were published in the 1990's. It was not until early 2002 that the Boston Globe coverage of a series of criminal prosecutions of five Roman Catholic priests thrust the issue of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests into the national spotlight. The coverage of these cases encouraged other victims to come forward with their allegations of abuse resulting in more lawsuits and criminal cases.

As it became clear that there was truth to many of the allegations and that there was a pattern of cover-up in a number of large dioceses across the United States, the issue exploded into a nationwide scandal, creating a crisis for the Catholic Church in the United States. Allegations in the United States also encouraged victims in other nations to come forward, rapidly creating a global crisis for the Church. Ultimately, it became clear that, over several decades in the 20th century, priests and lay members of religious orders in the Catholic Church had sexually abused minors on a scale such that the accusations reached into the thousands. A major aggravating factor was the actions of Catholic bishops to keep these crimes secret and to reassign the accused to other parishes in positions where they had continued unsupervised contact with youth. Many of the accused priests were forced to resign or were defrocked. In addition, several bishops who had participated in the cover-up were also forced to resign or retire. The dioceses in which the crimes were committed found it necessary to make financial settlements with the victims. While the Church in the United States claims to have addressed the issue, others maintain the only change is the Church has hardened its defenses while allowing abuse to continue. In 2005, Dr. Kathleen McChesney of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said the crisis was not over yet as thousands of victims in the U.S. were still reporting abuse. In 2010, the Associated Press reported that the number of allegations, victims, and offending clergy dropped in 2009 to the lowest point since data collection began in 2004. The Dioceses and its insurers paid \$104 million in settlements, attorney fees and other costs in 2009, down from \$376 million in 2008.

Operation TPAJAX , 1953

category: Middle East (ME)

source: Wikipedia

The 1953 Iranian coup d'état, on August 19, 1953 (also called the 28 Mordad coup d'état in Iran), was the overthrow of the democratically-elected government of Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh. It was carried out by the United States Central Intelligence Agency under the code names Operation AJAX. One version of CIA history written by Donald Wilber referred to the operation as TPAJAX. This crushing of Iran's first democratic government launched 25 years of dictatorship under Mohammad-Reza Shah Pahlavi, who relied heavily on U.S. weapons to hold on to power until he was overthrown in February 1979. "For many Iranians, the coup demonstrated duplicity by the United States, which presented itself as a defender of freedom, but did not hesitate to use underhanded methods to overthrow a democratically elected government to suit its own economic and strategic interests," the Agence France-Presse reported.

In 1951 with near unanimous support of Iran's parliament, Mosaddegh nationalized the British-owned Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC). Moreover, the AIOC had consistently violated the terms of its 1933 agreement with Iran, and it was reluctant to renegotiate, even as Iran's movement for nationalization grew in the late 1940's. Even though AIOC was "highly profitable," historian Mark Gasiorowski wrote that "its Iranian workers were poorly paid and lived in squalid conditions." With a change to more conservative governments in both Britain and the U. S., Churchill and the U.S. administration of Dwight D. Eisenhower decided to overthrow Iran's government though the prior U.S. Truman administration had opposed a coup.

The U.S. spy agency tried to persuade Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi to dismiss Mosaddegh, and at first he refused. The Central Intelligence Agency pressured the weak monarch while bribing street thugs, clergy, politicians and Iranian army officers to take part in a propaganda campaign against Mosaddegh and his government. At first, the coup appeared to be a failure when on the night of August 15-16, Imperial Guard Colonel Nematollah Nassiri was arrested while attempting to arrest Mosaddegh. The Shah fled the country the next day. On August 19, a pro-Shah mob, paid by the CIA, marched on Mosaddegh's residence. Mosaddegh was arrested, tried and convicted of treason by the Shah's military court. On December 21, 1953, he was sentenced to solitary confinement in a jail cell in Central Teheran for three years, then placed under house arrest for the remainder of his life. Mosaddegh's supporters were rounded up, imprisoned, tortured or executed. For overthrowing Iran's government, the U.S. reaped a share of Iran's oil wealth.

Operation PBSUCCESS, 1953 to 1954

category: Latin (LAT)

source: Wikipedia

The 1954 Guatemalan coup d'état was a covert operation organized by the United States Central Intelligence Agency to overthrow Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, the democratically-elected President of Guatemala. Following closely on the heels of the successful CIA-orchestrated coup which overthrew the democratically elected government of Iran to allow the Shah to rule autocratically in 1953 (see Operation TPAJAX), some argue that it employed ideas and methods that were relatively new at the time and, due to the ostensible success of the operation, led to Operation PBSUCCESS becoming the de facto model for the overthrow or destabilization of defiant governments for some time to come, including the Bay of Pigs Invasion. Arbenz's Guatemalan government put forth a number of new policies, such as seizing and expropriating unused, unfarmed land that private corporations set aside long ago and giving the land to peasants, that the U.S. intelligence community deemed communist in nature, suspecting Soviet influence. Fueled by a fear of Guatemala becoming what CIA Director Allen Dulles described as a "Soviet beachhead in the western hemisphere," Dulles' concern reverberated within the CIA and the Eisenhower administration. In this context of the anti-communist fears of the U.S. McCarthyist era, Arbenz instigated sweeping land reform acts that antagonized the U.S.-based multinational United Fruit Company, which had large stakes in the old order of Guatemala and lobbied various levels of U.S. government to take action against Arbenz. Both Dulles and his brother were shareholders of United Fruit Company.

The operation, which lasted from late 1953 to 1954, planned to arm and train an ad-hoc "Liberation Army" of about 400 fighters under the command of a then-exiled Guatemalan army officer, Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas, and to use them in conjunction with a complex and largely experimental diplomatic, economic, and propaganda campaign. The operation effectively ended the experimental period of representative democracy in Guatemala known as the "Ten Years of Spring," which ended with Arbenz's official resignation. The operation was preceded by a plan, never fully implemented, as early as 1951, to supply anti-Arbenz forces with weapons, supplies, and funding: Operation PBFORTUNE. Afterwards there was another covert CIA project - Operation PBHISTORY - whose objective was to gather and analyze documents from the Arbenz government that would incriminate Arbenz as a Communist puppet. Despite amassing well over 150,000 pages, they found very little to substantiate the key premise of the operation. The socialism that gained influence under Arbenz's presidency in fact had no ties to the Soviet Union.

Operation Midnight Climax, 1954 to 1963

category: Politics (POL)

source: <http://www.time.com>

During the 1950's and 60's, taxpayer-financed operations of the CIA experimented with drugs in a project with the sophomoric code name Midnight Climax. Women, apparently moonlighting prostitutes, were paid \$100 for each assignment by the CIA. The operation, conducted by CIA alchemists from 1954 until 1963, was part of a quarter-century hunt for a psychogenic philosophers' stone. The purpose was to discover the secret of brainwashing, to protect U.S. agents and gain control over enemy spies. The research began after CIA officials were horrified by Jozsef Cardinal Mindszenty's vacant stare and mechanical voice at his 1949 treason trial in Budapest. Drugs and mind-control techniques had long been used by intelligence services, but the CIA feared that the Communists had made some breakthrough. By 1953, the CIA concluded that its worries were unfounded; still the research continued, despite some official misgivings.

Drugs were sought to incapacitate entire buildings full of people, poison food to create "confusion-anxiety-fear," cause headaches and earaches, and produce amnesia in foreign spies after interrogations or in CIA agents who were about to retire. To administer the drugs surreptitiously, CIA experimenters developed pencil-like injectors and small spray guns. Much of the research was devoted to LSD and other hallucinogenic drugs, which the CIA wrongly thought could be used to squeeze information from enemy agents and discredit them by disturbing their memories or changing their sex drives, making them either extremely over- or undersexed. CIA-paid researchers conducted LSD experiments on prisoners at the federal penitentiary in Atlanta, the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital in Lexington, Ky., the New Jersey reformatory in Bordentown and Michigan's Ionia State Hospital. Experimenters used tranquilizers and alcohol on mental patients and staff members at the Butler Memorial Hospital in Providence. Other scientists tried out brainwashing techniques - including isolation and sensory deprivation - on patients at McGill University's Allan Memorial Institute of Psychiatry in Montreal. In the early 1950's, the CIA tried to put some of its new findings to use, sending special interrogation teams to Europe and Asia. One team gave intravenous injections of an unidentified drug to three European agents of dubious loyalty and questioned them for eleven days before deciding that they were not turncoats. The CIA began winding down the experiments in 1964 and ended them altogether in 1973. At a Senate hearing, CIA Director Stansfield Turner accounted 149 projects for an undisclosed amount of money at 80 U.S. and Canadian universities, research foundations, hospitals and prisons. Over 39 projects involved human subjects, often without their knowledge.

The Murder of Emmett Louis Till, 1955

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

Emmett Louis “Bobo” Till (July 25, 1941 - August 28, 1955) was an African American boy from Chicago, Illinois, who was murdered at the age of 14 in Money, Mississippi, a small town in the state’s Delta region, after reportedly whistling at a white woman, Carolyn Bryant. The murder of Emmett Till was noted as one of the leading events that motivated the American Civil Rights Movement. The main suspects were acquitted, but later admitted to the murder. At about 12:30 a.m. on Sunday, August 28, 1955, Roy Bryant and his half-brother, J.W. Milam, got into a car with his wife Carolyn and another person whose identity has still not been confirmed. They drove to the home of Moses Wright (Till’s uncle) where Emmett was staying. Bryant pounded on the door until Wright opened it, and asked Wright if he had two black boys in the house. Milam asked Till whether he was “the one who’d done the talking” to Bryant’s wife and Till said he had. Bryant brought Till to be identified by his wife. When it was confirmed that Till was in fact “the talker,” the men put him in the back of a pickup truck and drove off. According to witnesses, they drove him to a weathered shed on a plantation in neighboring Sunflower County, where they beat him up and then shot him. A 70-pound cotton gin fan was tied to his neck with barbed wire to weigh down the body, which they dropped into the Tallahatchie River near Glendora, Mississippi, another small cotton town north of Money.

Till’s swollen and disfigured body was found in the Tallahatchie River three days after his abduction. When the body was recovered, Bryant, Milam and the police tried to convince people that it was not the same boy as Till was in Chicago and that the beaten boy was someone else. Till’s features were too distorted by the beatings to easily identify him, but he was positively identified due to a ring he wore that had been his father’s. His mother had given it to him the day before he left for Money. The brothers were soon under official suspicion for the boy’s disappearance and were arrested in early September.

Till’s mother insisted on a public funeral service, with an open casket to show the world the brutality of the killing: Till had been beaten and an eye gouged out, before he was shot through the head and thrown into the Tallahatchie River. Till was buried in Burr Oak Cemetery in Alsip, Illinois. The murder case was officially reopened in May 2004 and, as part of the investigation, the body was exhumed in order to perform an autopsy, and then it was reburied in a new casket. In July 2009, while his grave appeared undisturbed, his original casket in which his body was famously displayed years earlier was found rusting in a run-down shack on the cemetery grounds. Till’s family donated the original casket to the Smithsonian Institution.

Bay of Pigs Invasion, 1961

category: Latin (LAT)

source: Wikipedia

The Bay of Pigs Invasion (known as La Batalla de Girón, or Playa Girón in Cuba), was an unsuccessful attempt by a CIA-trained force of Cuban exiles to invade southern Cuba, with support from U.S. government armed forces, to overthrow the Cuban government of Fidel Castro. The plan was launched in April 1961, less than three months after John F. Kennedy assumed the presidency in the United States. The Cuban armed forces, trained and equipped by Eastern Bloc nations, defeated the exile combatants in three days. The invasion is named after the Bay of Pigs, which is just one possible translation of the Spanish Bahía de Cochinos. The main invasion landing specifically took place at a beach named Playa Girón, located at the mouth of the bay. In November 1961, CIA inspector general Lyman B Kirkpatrick, authored a report ‘Survey of the Cuban Operation,’ that remained classified top secret until 1996. It’s conclusions were:

1. The CIA exceeded its capabilities in developing the project from guerrilla support to overt armed action without any plausible deniability.
2. Failure to realistically assess risks and to adequately communicate information and decisions internally and with other government principals.
3. Insufficient involvement of leaders of the exiles.
4. Failure to sufficiently organize internal resistance in Cuba.
5. Failure to competently collect and analyze intelligence about Cuban forces.
6. Poor internal management of communications and staff.
7. Insufficient employment of high-quality staff.
8. Insufficient Spanish-speakers, training facilities and material resources.
9. Lack of stable policies and contingency plans.

In spite of vigorous rebuttals by CIA management, CIA Director Allen Dulles, CIA Deputy Director Charles Cabell, and Deputy Director for Plans Richard Bissell were all forced to resign by early 1962. In later years, the CIA’s behavior in the episode became the prime example cited for the psychology paradigm known as Groupthink syndrome. CIA operative E. Howard Hunt had interviewed Cubans in Havana prior to the invasion, and he later said that “all I could find was a lot of enthusiasm for Fidel Castro.”

Operation Mongoose, 1961

category: Latin (LAT)

source: Wikipedia

The Cuban Project (also known as Operation Mongoose, or the Special Group, or the Special Group Augmented) was a program of CIA covert operations developed during the early years of U.S. President John F. Kennedy. On November 30, 1961, aggressive covert operations against the communist government of Fidel Castro in Cuba was authorized by President Kennedy. The operation was led by Air Force General Edward Lansdale and went into effect after the failed Bay of Pigs invasion.

Operation Mongoose was a secret program of propaganda, psychological warfare, and sabotage against Cuba to remove the communists from power; which was a prime focus of the Kennedy administration, according to Harvard historian Jorge Domínguez. A document from the U.S. Department of State confirms that the project aimed to “help Cuba overthrow the Communist regime,” including its leader Fidel Castro, and it aimed “for a revolt which can take place in Cuba by October, 1962.” U.S. policy makers also wanted to see “a new government with which the United States can live in peace.”

Many assassination ideas were floated by the CIA during Operation Mongoose. The most infamous was the CIA’s alleged plot to capitalize on Castro’s well-known love of cigars by slipping into his supply a very real and lethal “exploding cigar.” While numerous sources state the exploding cigar plot as fact, at least one source asserts it to be simply a myth, and another that it was mere supermarket tabloid fodder. Another suggests that the story does have its origins in the CIA, but that it was never seriously proposed by them as a plot. Rather, the plot was made up by the CIA as an intentionally “silly” idea to feed to those questioning them about their plans for Castro, in order to deflect scrutiny from more serious areas of inquiry.

Other plots to do in Castro that are ascribed to the CIA include poisoning his cigars (a box of the lethal smokes was actually prepared and delivered to Havana); exploding seashells to be planted at a scuba diving site; a gift diving wetsuit impregnated with noxious bacteria and mold spores, or with lethal chemical agents; infecting Castro’s scuba regulator apparatus with tuberculous bacilli; dousing his handkerchiefs, his tea, and his coffee with other lethal bacteria; having a former lover slip him poison pills; and exposing him to various other poisoned items such as a fountain pen and even ice cream. The U.S. Senate’s Church Committee of 1975 stated that it had confirmed at least eight separate CIA run plots to assassinate Castro. Fabian Escalante, who was long tasked with protecting the life of Castro, contends that there have been 638 separate CIA assassination schemes or attempts on Castro’s life.

Operation Northwoods, 1962

category: Latin (LAT)

source: Wikipedia

Operation Northwoods, or Northwoods, was a false-flag plan that originated within the United States government in 1962. False flag operations are covert operations which are designed to deceive the public in such a way that the operations appear as though they are being carried out by other entities. The name is derived from the military concept of flying false colors; that is, flying the flag of a country other than one's own. False flag operations are not limited to war and counter-insurgency operations, and have been used in peace-time. This plan called for Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) or other operatives to commit genuine acts of terrorism in U.S. cities and elsewhere. These acts of terrorism were to be blamed on Cuba in order to create public support for a war against that nation, which had recently become communist under Fidel Castro. One part of the Operation Northwoods plan was to “develop a Communist Cuban terror campaign in the Miami area, in other Florida cities and even in Washington.”

Operation Northwoods included proposals for hijackings and bombings followed by the introduction of phony evidence that would implicate the Cuban government. The plan stated that “the desired resultant from the execution of this plan would be to place the United States in the apparent position of suffering defensible grievances from a rash and irresponsible government of Cuba and to develop an international image of a Cuban threat to peace in the Western Hemisphere.” Several other proposals were included within the Operation Northwoods plan, including real or simulated actions against various U.S. military and civilian targets. The plan was drafted by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and sent to the Secretary of Defense, but Operation Northwoods was never officially accepted and the proposals included in the plan were never executed. Journalist James Bamford summarized Operation Northwoods in his April 24, 2001 book *Body of Secrets*:

Operation Northwoods, which had the written approval of the Chairman [Lemnitzer] and every member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, called for innocent people to be shot on American streets; for boats carrying refugees fleeing Cuba to be sunk on the high seas; for a wave of violent terrorism to be launched in Washington, D.C., Miami, and elsewhere. People would be framed for bombings they did not commit; planes would be hijacked. Using phony evidence, all of it would be blamed on Castro, thus giving Lemnitzer and his cabal the excuse, as well as the public and international backing, they needed to launch their war.

Medgar W. Evers Assassination, 1963

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

Medgar Wiley Evers (July 2, 1925 - June 12, 1963) was an African American civil rights activist from Mississippi who was assassinated by Byron De La Beckwith. On June 12, 1963, Evers pulled into his driveway after just returning from a meeting with NAACP lawyers. Emerging from his car and carrying NAACP T-shirts that read "Jim Crow Must Go," Evers was struck in the back with a bullet fired from an Enfield 1917 0.303 rifle that ricocheted into his Jackson, Mississippi home. He staggered 30 feet before collapsing. He died at a local hospital 50 minutes later, just hours after President John F. Kennedy's speech on national television in support of civil rights.

Mourned nationally, Evers was buried on June 19 in Arlington National Cemetery, where he received full military honors in front of a crowd of more than three thousand people. Byron De La Beckwith, a fertilizer salesman and member of the White Citizens' Council and Ku Klux Klan, was arrested for Evers' murder. During the course of his first trial in 1964, De La Beckwith was visited by former Mississippi governor Ross Barnett and one time Army Major General Edwin A. Walker. All-white juries twice that year deadlocked on De La Beckwith's guilt. The murder and subsequent trials caused an uproar. Musician Bob Dylan wrote his 1963 song "Only a Pawn in Their Game" about Evers and his assassin. The song's lyrics included: "Today, Medgar Evers was buried from the bullet he caught/They lowered him down as a king." Nina Simone took up the topic in her song "Mississippi Goddam." Phil Ochs wrote the songs "Too Many Martyrs" and "Another Country" in response to the killing. Matthew Jones and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Freedom Singers paid tribute to Evers in the haunting "Ballad of Medgar Evers." Eudora Welty's short story "Where is the Voice Coming From," in which the speaker is the imagined assassin of Medgar Evers, was published in *The New Yorker*. Even Rex Stout used the event as a plot device in his civil rights themed mystery *A Right to Die*.

In 1994, thirty years after the two previous trials had failed to reach a verdict, De La Beckwith was again brought to trial based on new evidence, and Bobby DeLaughter took on the job as the prosecutor. During the trial, the body of Evers was exhumed from his grave for autopsy, and found to be in a surprisingly good state of preservation as a result of embalming. De La Beckwith was convicted of murder on February 5, 1994, after having lived as a free man for the three decades following the killing. De La Beckwith appealed unsuccessfully, and died in prison in January 2001.

Sixteenth Street Baptist Church Bombing, 1963

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

The 16th Street Baptist Church bombing was a racially motivated terrorist attack on September 15, 1963, by members of a Ku Klux Klan group in Birmingham, Alabama in the United States. The bombing of the African American church resulted in the deaths of four girls. Although city leaders had reached a settlement in May with demonstrators and started to integrate public places, not everyone agreed with ending segregation. Other acts of violence followed the settlement. The bombing increased support for people working for civil rights. It marked a turning point in the U.S. 1960's Civil Rights Movement and contributed to support for passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The three-story Sixteenth Street Baptist Church was a rallying point for civil-rights activities through the spring of 1963, and is where the students who marched out of the church to be arrested during the 1963 Birmingham campaign's Children's Crusade were trained. The demonstrations led to an agreement in May between the city's black leaders and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to integrate public facilities in the country.

In the early morning of Sunday, September 15, 1963, Bobby Frank Cherry, Thomas Blanton, Herman Frank Cash, and Robert Chambliss, members of United Klans of America, a Ku Klux Klan group, planted 22 sticks of dynamite with a delayed-time release outside the basement of the church. At about 11:22 a.m., when twenty-six children were walking into the basement assembly room for closing prayers of a sermon entitled "The Love That Forgives," the bomb exploded. According to an interview on National Public Radio on September 15, 2008, Denise McNair's father stated that the sermon never took place because of the bombing. Four girls, Addie Mae Collins (aged 14), Denise McNair (aged 11), Carole Robertson (aged 14), and Cynthia Wesley (aged 14), were killed in the blast, and 22 additional people were injured, one of whom was Addie Mae Collins' younger sister, Sarah. The explosion blew a hole in the church's rear wall, destroyed the back steps, and left intact only the frames of all but one stained-glass window. The lone window that survived the concussion was one in which Jesus Christ was depicted knocking on a door, although Christ's face was destroyed. In addition, five cars behind the church were damaged, two of which were destroyed, while windows in the laundromat across the street were blown out. Following the tragic event, white strangers visited the grieving families to express their sorrow. At the funeral for three of the girls (one family preferred a separate, private funeral), Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke about life being "as hard as crucible steel." More than 8,000 mourners attended the service. No city officials attended.

John F. Kennedy Assassination, 1963

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

The assassination of John F. Kennedy, the thirty-fifth President of the United States, took place on Friday, November 22, 1963, in Dallas, Texas, at 12:30 p.m. Central Standard Time in Dealey Plaza. Kennedy was fatally shot while riding with his wife Jacqueline in a Presidential motorcade. The ten-month investigation of the Warren Commission of 1963-1964, the United States House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) of 1976-1979, and other government investigations concluded that the President was assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald, who was murdered by Jack Ruby before he could stand trial. This conclusion was initially met with support among the American public, but polls conducted from 1966 on show as many as 80% of the American public have held beliefs contrary to these findings. The assassination is still the subject of widespread debate and has spawned numerous conspiracy theories and alternative scenarios. In 1979, the House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) found both the original FBI investigation and the Warren Commission Report to be seriously flawed. The HSCA also concluded that there were at least four shots fired, that there was a “high probability” that two gunmen fired at the President, and that it was probable that a conspiracy existed. Later studies, including one by the National Academy of Sciences, have questioned the accuracy of evidence used by the HSCA to support its finding of four shots.

An official investigation by the House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA), conducted from 1976 to 1979, concluded that Oswald assassinated President Kennedy as a result of a probable conspiracy. This conclusion of a likely conspiracy contrasts with the earlier conclusion by the Warren Commission that the President was assassinated by a lone gunman. In the ensuing four decades since the assassination, theories have been proposed or published that detail organized conspiracies to kill the President. These theories implicate, among others, Cuban President Fidel Castro, the anti-Castro Cuban community, Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson, the Mafia, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), E. Howard Hunt, and the Eastern Bloc - or perhaps some combination of these.

Governor Connally, riding in the same limousine in a seat in front of the President, was also critically injured but survived. Doctors later stated that after the governor was shot, his wife pulled him onto her lap, and the resulting posture helped close his front chest wound which was causing air to be sucked directly into his chest around his collapsed right lung. James Tague, a spectator and witness to the assassination, also received a minor wound to his right cheek while standing 531 feet away from where Oswald supposedly fired.

Lee Harvey Oswald Assassination, 1963

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

Lee Harvey Oswald (October 18, 1939 - November 24, 1963) was, according to three government investigations, the assassin of U.S. President John F. Kennedy, who was fatally shot on November 22, 1963, in Dallas, Texas. A United States Marine who defected to the Soviet Union and later returned, Oswald was arrested on suspicion of killing Dallas police officer J. D. Tippit shortly after President Kennedy was shot. Oswald denied any responsibility for the murders. Two days later on November 24, 1963, while being transferred under police custody from the city jail to the county jail, Oswald was shot and mortally wounded on live television by Jack Ruby, a Dallas nightclub operator who said that he had been distraught over the Kennedy assassination. Unconscious, Oswald was put into an ambulance and rushed to Parkland Memorial Hospital, the same hospital where President Kennedy had died two days earlier. Doctors operated on Oswald, but Ruby's single bullet had severed major abdominal blood vessels, and the doctors were unable to repair the massive trauma. Oswald was pronounced dead at 1:07 p.m.. After a full autopsy, Oswald's body was returned to his family. Oswald's grave is in Rose Hill Memorial Burial Park in Fort Worth. The original tombstone, which included Oswald's full name and dates of birth and death, was stolen. Today, the grave is marked by a stone which reads simply, Oswald.

In 1964, the Warren Commission concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald assassinated President Kennedy single-handedly, a conclusion also reached by prior investigations of the FBI and the Dallas Police Department. His wife Marina was sequestered by federal agents the day after the assassination and later released. However, she had Secret Service protection until she concluded her testimony before the Warren Commission. The proceedings of the commission were closed, but not secret, and about 3% of its files have yet to be released to the public, which has continued to provoke speculation among researchers. In 1968, the Ramsey Clark Panel met in Washington, D.C., to examine various photographs, X-ray films, documents, and other evidence pertaining to the death of President Kennedy. It concluded that President Kennedy was struck by two bullets fired from above and behind him. In 1979, an investigation by the United States House Select Committee on Assassinations concluded that Oswald had fired three shots, of which the last two struck the president and were the only shots to have done so. However, on the basis of the new acoustic evidence, the committee believed that a second gunman had fired a fourth shot, which missed the president. The inferred existence of second gunman automatically made the assassination a conspiracy.

Gulf of Tonkin Incident, 1964

category: Asian (AS)

source: Wikipedia

The Gulf of Tonkin Incident is the name given to two separate incidents involving the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) and the United States in the waters of the Gulf of Tonkin. On August 2, 1964 the U.S. destroyer USS Maddox, while performing an intelligence mission, was engaged by three North Vietnamese Navy torpedo boats of the 135th Torpedo Squadron, in a sea battle during which the Maddox expended over 280 three and five inch shells, and which involved strafing from four USN F8 Crusader jet fighter bombers. When it was over, there was damage to one U.S. aircraft, a single 14.5 mm hit on the destroyer, three damaged torpedo boats, and four North Vietnamese sailors killed and six wounded; with no U.S. casualties. The second Tonkin Gulf incident, which occurred on August 4, 1964, was also a naval battle, but this time, may have involved the “Tonkin Ghost”, and no actual North Vietnam Torpedo Boat attacks. The outcome of this second incident was the passage by Congress of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which granted President Lyndon B. Johnson the authority to assist any Southeast Asian country whose government was considered to be jeopardized by “communist aggression.” The resolution served as Johnson’s legal justification for deploying U.S. conventional forces and the commencement of open warfare against North Vietnam.

The use of the set of incidents as a pretext for escalation of U.S. involvement follows the issuance of public threats against North Vietnam, as well as calls from American politicians in favor of escalating the war. On May 4, 1964, William Bundy called for the U.S. to “drive the Communists out of South Vietnam,” even if that meant attacking both North Vietnam and Communist China. Even so, the Johnson administration in the second half of 1964 focused on convincing the American public that there was no chance of war between North Vietnam and the U.S.. North Vietnamese General Giap suggested that the USS Maddox patrol had been sent into the Gulf to provoke North Vietnam into giving an excuse for escalation of the war. Various government officials and men aboard the Maddox have suggested similar theories. American politicians and strategists had been planning provocative actions against North Vietnam for some time. George Ball told a British Journalist after the war that “at that time...many people...were looking for any excuse to initiate bombing”. In 2005, an internal National Security Agency historical study was declassified. It concluded that USS Maddox had engaged the North Vietnamese Navy on August 2, but that there may not have been any North Vietnamese Naval vessels present during the engagement of August 4.

Malcolm X Assassination, 1965

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

Malcolm X, born Malcolm Little (May 19, 1925 - February 21, 1965), also known as El-Hajj Malik El-Shabaz, was an African-American Muslim minister, public speaker, and human rights activist. To his admirers, he was a courageous advocate for the rights of African Americans and a man who indicted white America in the harshest terms for its crimes against black Americans. His detractors accused him of preaching racism, black supremacy, antisemitism, and violence. He has been described as one of the greatest and most influential African Americans in history. Malcolm X was born in Omaha, Nebraska. By the time he was thirteen, his father had died and his mother had been committed to a mental hospital. His childhood, including his father's lessons concerning black pride and self-reliance, and his own experiences concerning race, played a significant role in Malcolm X's adult life. After living in a series of foster homes, Malcolm X became involved in hustling and other criminal activities in Boston and New York. In 1946, Malcolm X was sentenced to eight to ten years in prison.

While in prison, Malcolm X became a member of the Nation of Islam. After his parole in 1952, he became one of the Nation's leaders and chief spokesmen. For nearly a dozen years, he was the public face of the Nation of Islam. Tension between Malcolm X and Elijah Muhammad, head of the Nation of Islam, led to Malcolm X's departure from the organization in March 1964. After leaving the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X became a Sunni Muslim and made a pilgrimage to Mecca, after which he disavowed racism. He traveled extensively throughout Africa and the Middle East. He founded Muslim Mosque, Inc., a religious organization, and the secular, black nationalist Organization of Afro-American Unity. Less than a year after he left the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X was assassinated while giving a speech in New York.

On February 21, 1965, in Manhattan's Audubon Ballroom, Malcolm X began to speak to a meeting of the Organization of Afro-American Unity when a disturbance broke out in the crowd of 400. A man yelled, "Nigger! Get your hand outta my pocket!" As Malcolm X and his bodyguards moved to quiet the disturbance, a man rushed forward and shot him in the chest with a sawed-off shotgun. Two other men charged the stage and fired handguns, hitting him 16 times. Angry onlookers caught and beat one of them as the others fled the ballroom. Malcolm X was pronounced dead at 3:30 p.m., shortly after he arrived at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital. Talmadge Hayer (also known as Thomas Hagan), Norman Butler and Thomas Johnson, all members of the Nation of Islam were arrested for the shooting and convicted.

Watts Race Riot, 1965

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

The term Watts Riots of 1965 refers to a large-scale riot which lasted 6 days in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles, California, in August 1965. By the time the riot subsided, 34 people had been killed, with another 2,032 injured and 3,952 arrested. It would stand as the most severe riot in Los Angeles history until the Los Angeles riots of 1992. The riot ostensibly was a reaction to a long record of police brutality by the LAPD and other racial injustices suffered by black Americans in Los Angeles, including job and housing discrimination. The riots began on August 11, 1965, in Watts, a neighborhood in Los Angeles, when Lee Minikus, a California Highway Patrol motorcycle officer, pulled over Marquette Frye, who Minikus believed was intoxicated because of his observed erratic driving. Frye failed to pass sobriety tests, including walking in a straight line and touching his nose, and was arrested soon after. Minikus refused to let Frye's brother, Ronald, drive the car home, and radioed for it to be impounded. As events escalated, a crowd of onlookers steadily grew from dozens to hundreds. The mob became violent, throwing rocks and other objects while shouting at the police officers. A struggle ensued shortly resulting in the arrest of Marquette and Ronald Frye, as well as their mother.

Though the riots began in August, there had previously been a buildup of racial tension in the area. The riots that began on August 11 resulted from an amalgamation of such events in Watts, and the arrest of three Frye family members broke the tension as violence spilled onto the streets of Watts for four days. Watts suffered from various forms and degrees of damage from the residents' looting and vandalism that seriously threatened the security of the city. Some participants chose to intensify the level of violence by starting physical fights with police, blocking the firemen of the Los Angeles Fire Department from their safety duties, or even beating white motorists. Others joined the riot by breaking into stores, stealing whatever they could, and some setting the stores themselves on fire.

LAPD Police Chief William Parker also fueled the radicalized tension that already threatened to combust, by publicly labeling the people he saw involved in the riots as "monkeys in the zoo." Overall, an estimated \$40 million in damage was caused as almost 1,000 buildings were damaged or destroyed. Most of the physical damage was confined to white-owned businesses that were said to have caused resentment in the neighborhood due to perceived unfairness. Homes were not attacked, although some caught fire due to proximity to other fires.

University of Texas at Austin Massacre, 1966

category: Societal (SOC)

source: Wikipedia

Charles Joseph Whitman (June 24, 1941 - August 1, 1966), a student at the University of Texas at Austin, killed 14 people and wounded 32 others during a shooting rampage on and around the university's campus. Three were killed inside the University's tower and ten killed from the 29th floor observation deck of the University's 307 foot administrative building on August 1, 1966; one died a week later from her wounds. The tower massacre happened shortly after Whitman murdered his wife and mother at their homes. He was shot and killed by Austin Police Officer Houston McCoy, assisted by Austin Police Officer Ramiro Martinez. The incident was the deadliest university shooting in United States history until the Virginia Tech massacre of 2007, when Seung Hui Cho killed 32 people.

Charles Whitman grew up in an upper-middle class family headed by a father who owned a successful plumbing contract business in Lake Worth, Florida. The elder Whitman was an authoritarian who provided for his family, but demanded near perfection from all of them. He was also known to become physically and emotionally abusive. Charles Whitman's frustrations were complicated by abuse of amphetamines and health issues including headaches that he reported in one of his final notes as "tremendous." A glioblastoma, which is a highly cancerous brain tumor, was discovered during autopsy that experts on the "Connally Commission" claimed may have conceivably played a role in causing his actions. He was also affected by a court martial as a United States Marine, failings as a student at the University of Texas, ambitious personal expectations, and psychotic features he expressed in his typewritten note left at 906 Jewell Street, Austin, Texas, dated both July 31, 1966 and later by hand "3 A.M., both dead August 1, 1966."

The first shots from the tower's outer deck came at approximately 11:48 a.m.. A history professor was the first to phone the Austin Police Department, after seeing several students shot in the South Mall gathering center; many others had dismissed the rifle reports, not realizing there actually was gunfire. Eventually, the shootings caused panic as news spread and, after the situation was understood, all active police officers in Austin were ordered to the campus. Other off-duty officers, Travis County Sheriff's deputies, and Texas Department of Public Safety troopers also converged on the area to assist. Whitman began facing return gunfire from the authorities and civilians who had brought out their personal firearms to assist police. Ramiro Martinez, an officer who confronted Whitman, later stated in his book that the civilian shooters should be credited, as they made it difficult for Whitman to take careful aim without being hit.

My Lai Massacre, 1968

category: Asian (AS)

source: Wikipedia

The My Lai Massacre was the mass murder conducted by a unit of the U.S. Army on March 16, 1968 of 347 to 504 unarmed citizens in South Vietnam, all of whom were civilians and a majority of whom were women, children (including babies) and elderly people. Many of the victims were sexually abused, beaten, tortured, and some of the bodies were found mutilated. The massacre took place in the hamlets of My Lai and My Khe of Son My village during the Vietnam War, and it is also known as the Son My Massacre or sometimes as the Song My Massacre. The U.S. military codeword for the hamlet was Pinkville. While 26 U.S. soldiers were initially charged with criminal offenses for their actions at My Lai, only William Calley was convicted. When the incident became public knowledge in 1969, it prompted widespread outrage around the world. The massacre also increased domestic opposition to the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. Three U.S. servicemen who made an effort to halt the massacre and protect the wounded were denounced by U.S. Congressmen, received hate mail and death threats and found mutilated animals on their doorsteps. Only 30 years after the event were their efforts honored.

Warrant Officer One Hugh Thompson, Jr., a helicopter pilot from an aero-scout team, witnessed a large number of dead and dying civilians as he began flying over the village - all of them infants, children, women and old men, with no signs of draft-age men or weapons anywhere. Thompson and his crew witnessed an unarmed passive woman kicked and shot at point-blank range by Captain Medina. The crew made several attempts to radio for help for the wounded. They landed their helicopter by a ditch, which they noted was full of bodies and in which there was movement. Thompson asked a sergeant he encountered there (David Mitchell of the 1st Platoon) if he could help get the people out of the ditch, and the sergeant replied that he would "help them out of their misery." Thompson, shocked and confused, then had a conversation with Second Lieutenant Calley, Platoon Leader of 1st Platoon, who claimed to be "just following orders." As the helicopter took off, they saw Mitchell firing into the ditch. Thompson then saw a group of civilians (again consisting of children, women and old men) at a bunker being approached by ground personnel. Thompson landed and told his crew that if the U.S. soldiers shot at the Vietnamese while he was trying to get them out of the bunker that they were to open fire at these soldiers. For their actions Thompson was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and his crew were awarded Bronze Stars and Soldier's Medals for saving the lives of at least 10 Vietnamese civilians.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Assassination, 1968

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

Martin Luther King, Jr., a prominent American Civil Rights leader and, according to a Gallup poll conducted in 2000, the second most admired person of the 20th century, was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 4, 1968, at the age of 39. On June 10, 1968, James Earl Ray, a fugitive from a Missouri prison, was arrested in London at Heathrow Airport, extradited to the United States, and charged with the crime. On March 10, 1969, Ray entered a plea of guilty and was sentenced to 99 years in the Tennessee state penitentiary. Ray's many later attempts to withdraw his guilty plea and be tried by a jury were unsuccessful; he died in prison on April 23, 1998, at the age of 70.

King was booked in room 306 at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, owned by black businessman Walter Bailey. He was there to support a sanitation worker's strike against the city. King's close friend and colleague, Reverend Ralph David Abernathy, who was present at the assassination, told the House Select Committee on Assassinations that King and his entourage stayed in room 306 at the Lorraine Motel so often that it was known as the "King-Abernathy Suite." According to biographer Taylor Branch, King's last words were to musician Ben Branch who was to perform that night at an event King was going to attend: "Ben, make sure you play 'Take My Hand, Precious Lord' in the meeting tonight. Play it real pretty."

At 6:01 p.m. on Thursday, April 4, 1968, while he was standing on the motel's second floor balcony, King was struck by a single 0.30 bullet fired from a Remington 760 Gamemaster. The bullet traveled through the right side of his neck, smashing his throat and down his spinal cord before lodging in his shoulder. King was rushed to St. Joseph's Hospital, where doctors opened his chest and performed manual heart massage. He was pronounced dead at 7:05 p.m. According to Taylor Branch, King's autopsy revealed that though he was only 39 years old, he had the heart of a 60 year old man. The assassination led to a wave of riots in more than 60 U.S. cities. Five days later, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared a national day of mourning for the lost civil rights leader. A crowd of 300,000 attended his funeral that same day. Vice President Hubert Humphrey attended on behalf of Lyndon B. Johnson, who was at a meeting on the Vietnam War at Camp David (there were fears that Johnson might be hit with protests and abuses over the war if he attended). At his widow's request, King eulogized himself. His last sermon at Ebenezer Baptist Church, a recording of his famous 'Drum Major' sermon, given on February 4, 1968, was played at the funeral. After the assassination, the city of Memphis quickly settled the strike, on favorable terms to the sanitation workers.

Robert F. Kennedy Assassination, 1968

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

Robert Francis “Bobby” Kennedy (November 20, 1925 - June 6, 1968), also referred to by his initials RFK, was an American politician, a Democratic Senator from New York, and a noted civil rights activist. An icon of modern American liberalism, he was a younger brother of President John F. Kennedy and acted as one of his advisers during his presidency. From 1961 to 1964, he was the U.S. Attorney General. Following his brother John’s assassination on November 22, 1963, Kennedy continued to serve as Attorney General under President Lyndon B. Johnson for nine months. In September 1964, Kennedy resigned to seek the U.S. Senate seat from New York, which he won in November. Within a few years, he publicly split with Johnson over the Vietnam War.

In March 1968, Kennedy began a campaign for the presidency and was a front-running candidate of the Democratic Party. In the California presidential primary on June 4, Kennedy defeated Eugene McCarthy, a fellow U.S. Senator from Minnesota. Following a brief victory speech delivered just past midnight on June 5 at The Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, he left the ballroom through the hotel kitchen after being told it was a shortcut, despite being advised to avoid the kitchen by his bodyguard, FBI agent Bill Barry. In a crowded kitchen passageway, Sirhan Sirhan, a 24-year-old Christian Palestinian-American (who felt betrayed by Kennedy’s support for Israel in the June 1967 Six-Day War), opened fire with a 0.22-caliber revolver and shot Kennedy three times. Following the shooting, Kennedy was rushed to Los Angeles’s Good Samaritan Hospital where he died early the next morning. His body was returned to New York City, where it lay in repose at Saint Patrick’s Cathedral for several days before the Requiem Mass held there on June 8. His brother, U.S. Senator Edward “Ted” Kennedy, eulogized him with the words:

My brother need not be idealized, or enlarged in death beyond what he was in life; to be remembered simply as a good and decent man, who saw wrong and tried to right it, saw suffering and tried to heal it, saw war and tried to stop it. Those of us who loved him and who take him to his rest today, pray that what he was to us and what he wished for others will some day come to pass for all the world. As he said many times, in many parts of this nation, to those he touched and who sought to touch him: “Some men see things as they are and say why. I dream things that never were and say why not.”

Stonewall Riots, 1969

category: Gay and Lesbian (GL)

source: Wikipedia

The Stonewall riots were a series of spontaneous, violent demonstrations against a police raid that took place in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, at the Stonewall Inn, in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City. They are frequently cited as the first instance in American history when people in the homosexual community fought back against a government-sponsored system that persecuted sexual minorities, and they have become the defining event that marked the start of the gay rights movement in the United States and around the world. American gays and lesbians in the 1950's and 1960's faced a legal system more anti-homosexual than those of some Warsaw Pact countries. Early homophile groups in the U.S. sought to prove that gay people could be assimilated into society, and they favored non-confrontational education for homosexuals and heterosexuals alike. The last years of the 1960's, however, were very contentious as many social movements were active, including the African American Civil Rights Movement, the Counterculture of the 1960's, and antiwar demonstrations. These influences, along with the liberal environment of Greenwich Village, served as catalysts for the Stonewall riots.

Very few establishments welcomed openly gay people in the 1950's and 1960's. Those that did were often bars, although bar owners and managers were rarely gay. The Stonewall Inn, at the time, was owned by the Mafia. It catered to an assortment of patrons, but it was known to be popular with the poorest and most marginalized people in the gay community: drag queens, representatives of a newly self-aware transgender community, effeminate young men, hustlers, and homeless youth. Police raids on gay bars were routine in the 1960's, but officers quickly lost control of the situation at the Stonewall Inn, and attracted a crowd that was incited to riot. Tensions between New York City police and gay residents of Greenwich Village erupted into more protests the next evening, and again several nights later. Within weeks, Village residents quickly organized into activist groups to concentrate efforts on establishing places for gays and lesbians to be open about their sexual orientation without fear of being arrested.

After the Stonewall riots, gays and lesbians in New York City faced gender, class, and generational obstacles to becoming a cohesive community. Within six months, two gay activist organizations were formed in New York, concentrating on confrontational tactics, and three newspapers were established to promote rights for gays and lesbians. Within a few years, gay rights organizations were founded across the U.S. and the world.

Operation Menu, 1969 to 1970

category: Asian (AS)

source: Wikipedia

Operation Menu was the codename of a covert United States Strategic Air Command (SAC) bombing campaign conducted in eastern Cambodia from March 18, 1969, until May 26, 1970, during the Vietnam War. The supposed targets of these attacks were sanctuaries and bases of the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) and forces of the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (NLF or derogatorily, Viet Cong), which utilized them for resupply, training, and resting between campaigns across the border in the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam). However, in practice some of the bombing was indiscriminate, and hundreds of thousands of civilians may have been killed as a result. The campaign failed in its objective of preventing North Vietnamese offensives, which continued during Operation Menu. It also enraged the Cambodian public and helped created a climate that allowed the Khmer Rouge to come to power.

The operation was devised as a method of sending messages to the leadership of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) that the newly-installed administration of U.S. President Richard M. Nixon was serious about its continued support for the Saigon government while simultaneously serving as a shield for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Vietnam. The campaign was planned and conducted in secrecy, since an aerial campaign against "neutral" Cambodia is a war crime and would have created a political firestorm in the U.S. where the war was already deeply unpopular. In the aftermath of the operation, details surrounding it became known by the United States Congress and the U.S. public, leading to dire consequences for the Nixon administration.

An official United States Air Force record of some U.S. bombing activity over Indochina from 1964 to 1973 was declassified by U.S. President William Clinton in 2000. The data reveals the true extent of the bombing of Cambodia, as well as Laos and Vietnam. According to the data, the Air Force began bombing the rural regions of Cambodia along its South Vietnam border in 1965 under the Johnson administration. This was four years earlier than previously believed. A report by historian Ben Kiernan and Taylor Owen states 2,756,941 tons of ordnance was dropped in 230,516 sorties on 113,716 sites. Just over 10 percent of this bombing was indiscriminate, with 3,580 of the sites listed as having "unknown" targets and another 8,238 sites having no target listed at all. The Menu bombings were an escalation of these air attacks. Nixon authorized the use of long-range B-52 bombers to carpet bomb the region. Historians now classify the campaign as a mere fourteen month phase in a series of secretive bombing raids that spanned eleven years.

Operation CHAOS, 1969 to 1973

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

Operation CHAOS or Operation MHCHAOS was the code name for a domestic espionage project conducted by the Central Intelligence Agency. A department within the CIA was established in 1967 on orders from President of the United States Lyndon B. Johnson and later expanded under President Richard Nixon. The operation was launched under Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) Richard Helms, by chief of counter-intelligence James Jesus Angleton, and headed by Richard Ober. The program's goal was to unmask possible foreign influences on the student antiwar movement.

When President Nixon came to office in 1969, all of the existing domestic surveillance activities were consolidated into Operation CHAOS. Operation CHAOS first used CIA stations abroad to report on antiwar activities of United States citizens traveling abroad, employing methods such as physical surveillance and electronic eavesdropping, utilizing "liaison services" in maintaining such surveillance. The operations were later expanded to include 60 officers. In 1969, following the expansion, the operation began developing its own network of informants for the purposes of infiltrating various foreign antiwar groups located in foreign countries that might have ties to domestic groups. Eventually, CIA officers expanded the program to include other leftist or counter-cultural groups with no discernible connection to Vietnam, such as groups operating within the women's liberation movement. The domestic spying of Operation CHAOS also targeted the Israeli embassy, and domestic Jewish groups such as the B'nai B'rith. In order to gather intelligence on the embassy and B'nai B'rith, the CIA purchased a garbage collection company to collect discarded documents.

Targets of Operation CHAOS within the antiwar movement included Students for a Democratic Society, the Black Panther Party and Women Strike for Peace. Officially, reports were to be compiled on "illegal and subversive" contacts between United States civilian protesters and "foreign elements" which might range from casual contacts to closely controlled party directives. At its finality, Operation CHAOS contained files on 7,200 Americans, and a computer index totaling 300,000 civilians and approximately 1,000 groups. The initial result of investigations lead DCI Richard Helms to advise then President Johnson on November 15, 1967, that the agency had uncovered "no evidence of any contact between the most prominent peace movement leaders and foreign embassies in the U.S. or abroad." Helms repeated this assessment in 1969. The secret nature of the former program was exposed when Seymour Hersh published an article in the New York Times on December 22, 1974.

Kent State Massacre, 1970

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

The Kent State shootings, also known as the May 4 massacre or Kent State Massacre, occurred at Kent State University in the city of Kent, Ohio, and involved the shooting of unarmed college students by members of the Ohio National Guard on Monday, May 4, 1970. The guardsmen fired 67 rounds over a period of 13 seconds, killing four students and wounding nine others, one of whom suffered permanent paralysis. Some of the students who were shot had been protesting against the American invasion of Cambodia, which President Richard Nixon announced in a television address on April 30. Other students who were shot had been walking nearby or observing the protest from a distance. There was a significant national response to the shootings: hundreds of universities, colleges, and high schools closed throughout the United States due to a strike by four million students, and the event further divided the country at an already socially contentious time about the role of the United States in the Vietnam War.

Those killed:	Jeffrey Glenn Miller.
	Allison B. Krause.
	William Knox Schroeder.
	Sandra Lee Scheuer.
Those wounded:	Joseph Lewis, Jr.
	John R. Cleary
	Thomas Mark Grace
	Alan Michael Canfora
	Dean R. Kahler
	Douglas Alan Wrentmore
	James Dennis Russell
	Robert Follis Stamps
	Donald Scott MacKenzie

All the students shot were in good standing at the university. Immediately after, students were ready to launch an all-out attack on the National Guard, but faculty members persuaded them otherwise.

Project FUBELT, 1970

category: Latin (LAT)

source: Wikipedia

Project FUBELT (also known as Track II) is the codename for the secret Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operations that were intended to undermine Salvador Allende's government and promote a military coup in Chile. The highlights of Project FUBELT are cited in declassified U.S. government documents released by the National Security Archive on September 11, 1998, 25 years after the coup, as well as in papers uncovered by a 1975 congressional inquiry. CIA memoranda and reports on Project FUBELT include meetings between United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and CIA officials, CIA cables to its Santiago station, and summaries of secret actions in 1970 - detailing decisions and operations to undermine the election of Salvador Allende in September 1970, to promote the military coup that brought Augusto Pinochet to power, and support for the military junta in the early years of its rule. The documents undermine the claims by Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger that they cancelled plans to support a coup against Allende. Among the revelations in the formerly secret documents were the following:

1. Handwritten notes, taken by CIA director Richard Helms, record the orders of President Richard Nixon to foster a coup in Chile.
2. In the first meeting between Helms and high agency officials on Operation codenamed "FUBELT", a special task force under the supervision of CIA Deputy Director for Plans, Thomas Karamessines, is established, headed by veteran agent David Atlee Phillips. The memorandum notes that the CIA must prepare an action plan for National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger within 48 hours.
3. Henry Kissinger, Thomas Karamessines and Alexander Haig (military assistant to Henry Kissinger), in a meeting in October 15, 1970, discuss promoting a coup in Chile.
4. In a secret cable, Thomas Karamessines conveyed Kissinger's orders to CIA station chief in Santiago, Henry Hecksher: "It is firm and continuing policy that Allende be overthrown by a coup."
5. The CIA ran a series of secret operations intended to push President Eduardo Frei Montalva to support "a military coup which would prevent Allende from taking office on 3 November."
6. After Allende's election, the U.S. considered getting Chile expelled from the Organization of American States.
7. Embassy officers and the State Department called to end assistance to Pinochet's government on human rights grounds, but are overruled by the Ambassador, the Pentagon and Treasury Department.

Watergate, 1972 to 1973

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

The term Watergate encompasses an array of illegal and secret activities undertaken by the Nixon administration which became known in the aftermath of five men being caught breaking into Democratic party headquarters at the Watergate Hotel in Washington, D.C. on June 17, 1972. The Washington Post picked up on the story and reporters Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward relied on an FBI informant known as “Deep Throat” to link the men to the Nixon White House. This became one of a series of scandals involving the Committee to Re-Elect the President. Nixon downplayed them as mere politics, and his White House denounced the story as biased and misleading. As the FBI eventually confirmed that Nixon aides had attempted to sabotage the Democrats, many began resigning and senior aides faced prosecution.

Nixon’s alleged role in ordering a cover-up came to light after the testimony of John Dean. In July 1973, White House aide Alexander Butterfield testified that Nixon had a secret taping system that recorded his conversations and phone calls in the Oval Office. Unlike the tape recordings by earlier Presidents, Nixon’s were subpoenaed. The White House refused to release them, citing executive privilege. A tentative deal was reached in which the White House would provide written summaries of the tapes, but this was rejected by Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, a former member of the Kennedy administration. Cox was fired at the White House’s request and was replaced by Leon Jaworski, a former member of the Johnson administration. Jaworski revealed an audio tape of conversations held in the White House on June 20, 1972, which featured an unexplained 18½ minute gap. The first deleted section of about five minutes has been attributed to human error by Rose Mary Woods, the President’s personal secretary, who admitted accidentally wiping the section while transcribing the tape. The gap, while not conclusive proof of wrong-doing by the President, cast doubt on Nixon’s claim that he was unaware of the cover-up. Though Nixon lost much popular support, including from some in his own party, he rejected accusations of wrongdoing and vowed to stay in office.

In April 1974, Nixon announced the release of 1200 pages of transcripts of White House conversations between him and his aides. Despite this, the House Judiciary Committee, controlled by Democrats, opened impeachment hearings against the President on May 9, 1974. On July 24, the Supreme Court ruled that the tapes must be released to Jaworski; one of the secret recordings, known as the Smoking Gun tape, was released on August 5, 1974, and revealed that Nixon knew of the cover-up from its inception and had administration officials try to stop the FBI’s investigation. Nixon resigned on August 9, 1974.

Upstairs Lounge Massacre, 1973

category: Gay and Lesbian (GL)

sources: <http://news.lavenderliberal.com> - and - <http://www.soulforce.org>

In 1973, the New Orleans-based gay and lesbian friendly Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) held regular, Sunday-evening services at the “Upstairs Lounge” on the floor above the Jimani Lounge, a French-Quarter bar at 141 Chartres Street. On the evening of June 24, 1973, the pastor, Rev. William Lawson, had just finished his sermon, when someone entered the building at street level and lobbed a Molotov cocktail into the stairway leading to the lounge. The arsonist ran off, but not before shutting the street-level door and padlocking it closed. The flames were contained to the stairwell until someone leaving the MCC service opened the door to exit and a flash fire ensued. Some twenty people escaped via the rooftop, but the rest who tried to make it out the second-floor windows were trapped by the window bars. Reverend Lawson died that way, his body wedged half-in and half-out of the building, screaming as he burned to death. In total, 32 people died in a massacre that would not be matched until Virginia Tech in 2007.

MCC founder Rev. Troy Perry went to New Orleans, but only two churches allowed him to conduct memorial services for the dead. All other churches in the city refused to take in the 20 or so MCC survivors who still needed a place to congregate and worship. Even some of the families of the dead refused to claim the bodies of their relatives as “exposure” of their homosexuality was far more horrifying than the fact that their “loved ones” had burned alive. The dead included partners Joe William Bailey and Clarence Josephy McCloskey, Jr., who perished together; Duane George “Mitch” Mitchell, assistance pastor at MCC, died trying to save his partner, Louis Horace Broussard; Mrs. Willie Inez Warren died with her sons, Eddie Hosea Warren and James Curtis Warren; Pastor of the MCC, Rev. William R. Larson, formerly a Methodist lay minister; Dr. Perry Lane Waters, Jr., a Jefferson Parish dentist (several victims were his patients and were identified by his x-rays); Douglas Maxwell Williams; Leon Richard Maples, a visitor from Florida; George Steven Matyi; Larry Stratton; Reginald Adams, Jr., MCC member, formerly a Jesuit Scholastic and partner of entertainer Regina Adams; James Walls Hambrick; Horace “Skip” Getchell, MCC member; Joseph Henry Adams; Herbert Dean Cooley, Upstairs Lounge bartender and MCC member; professional pianist David Stuart Gary; Guy D. Anderson; Luther Boggs; Donald Walter Dunbar; John Thomas Golding, Sr., member of MCC Pastor’s Advisory Group; professional linguist Adam Roland Fontenot; Gerald Hoyt Gordon; Kenneth Paul Harrington, federal government employee; Glenn Richard “Dick” Green, navy veteran; Robert “Bob” Lumpkin; the remaining victims were not identified. The arsonist was never caught.

Sacrifice of East Timor, 1975

category: Asian (AS)

source: <http://www.gwu.edu/>

The Indonesian invasion of East Timor in December 1975 set the stage for the long, bloody, and disastrous occupation of the territory that ended only after an international peacekeeping force was introduced in 1999. President Bill Clinton cut off military aid to Indonesia in September 1999 - reversing a longstanding policy of military cooperation - but questions persist about U.S. responsibility for the 1975 invasion; in particular, the degree to which Washington actually condoned or supported the bloody military offensive. Most recently, journalist Christopher Hitchens raised questions about the role of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in giving a green light to the invasion that has left perhaps 200,000 dead in the years since. Two newly declassified documents from the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library, released to the National Security Archive, shed light on the Ford administration's relationship with President Suharto of Indonesia during 1975. Of special importance is the record of Ford's and Kissinger's meeting in Jakarta with Suharto the day before the invasion. The document shows that Suharto began the invasion knowing that he had the full approval of the White House. Other documents found among State Department records at the National Archives elucidate the inner workings of U.S. policy toward the Indonesian crisis during 1975 and 1976. Besides confirming that Henry Kissinger and top advisers expected an eventual Indonesian takeover of East Timor, archival material shows that the Secretary of State fully understood that the invasion of East Timor involved the "illegal" use of U.S. supplied military equipment because it was not used in self-defense.

The leftist military revolt that overthrew Portugal's authoritarian regime in April 1974 encouraged nationalist movements in the Portuguese colony of East Timor to call for its gradual independence from Lisbon. East Timor's neighbor, Indonesia, was a major site of U.S. energy and raw materials investment, an important petroleum exporter, strategically located near vital shipping lanes, and a significant recipient of U.S. military assistance. In addition, Indonesia was interested in turning East Timor into its twenty-seventh province. Casualty estimates vary anywhere from 60,000-100,000 Timorese being killed in the first year after Indonesia invaded East Timor in 1975. Though the U.S. denied any prior knowledge or consent at the time, recent evidence contradicts prior statements of no U.S. support for the invasion. Indonesian plans for the invasion of East Timor were indeed discussed with Suharto by both Ford and Kissinger who each gave the green light. As Kissinger advised Suharto on the eve of the invasion: "it is important that whatever you do succeeds quickly" but that "it would be better if it were done after we returned" to the United States.

Koreagate, 1976

category: Asian (AS)

source: Wikipedia

Koreagate was an American political scandal in 1976 involving South Korean political figures seeking influence from members of Congress. An immediate goal of the scandal seems to have been reversing President Richard Nixon's decision to withdraw troops from South Korea. It involved the Korea Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) allegedly funneling bribes and favors through Korean businessman Tongsun Park in an attempt to gain favor and influence for South Korean objectives. Some 115 members of Congress were supposedly involved. Speculation also focused on the role of Unification Church founder Sun Myung Moon, former KCIA Director Kim Hyung Wook, and former South Korean Prime Minister Chung Il Kwon.

Tongsun Park and U.S. Congressman Richard Hanna (D-CA) were two of the main actors involved in the Koreagate scandal. Tongsun Park represented the Korean side of the secret agreement, while Richard Hanna was largely responsible for the American side of the deal. According to the agreement, both parties would share the commissions from American rice sales to South Korea and then use them to obtain favorable decisions for Seoul in the United States Congress. Hanna was responsible for aiding Chung Il Kwon and Park in finding effective lobbying techniques, which he did by advising the pair to emulate Taiwanese and Israeli models that had succeeded in the past. Park was responsible for providing extra financial incentives to Hanna and other members of Congress, a task made easy by the large rice sale commissions. Such financial incentives reportedly ranged from \$100,000 to \$200,000 at a time per individual.

The reasons behind the scandal involved political, social, and financial notions. Korean leaders, including Tongsun Park and President Park were angered with Nixon's decision to withdraw soldiers from South Korea and felt it was urgent to build support for preserving the remaining United States military presence. The Park government was also concerned with the approval of a substantial package of assistance for South Korea's military modernization programs. Another reason behind the scandal was to repress or counter increasing criticism of Park's illegitimate policies and human rights violations. According to many, the deceitfulness of Park's objectives would ultimately lead to his downfall. Tongsun Park ultimately came to the United States in April 1978 to testify publicly in a House hearing. During the testimony, Park admitted to disbursing cash to thirty members of Congress. In the end, only ten members of Congress were seriously implicated, of whom most decided to resign, while the statute of limitations expired for three. Park was granted full immunity for his testimony.

Harvey Bernard Milk Assassination, 1978

category: Gay and Lesbian (GL)

source: Wikipedia

Harvey Bernard Milk (May 22, 1930 - November 27, 1978) was an American politician who became the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in California, when he won a seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Politics and gay activism were not his early interests; he was not open about his homosexuality and did not participate in civic matters until around age 40, after his experiences in the counterculture of the 1960's. Milk moved from New York City to settle in San Francisco in 1972 amid a migration of gay men to the Castro District. He took advantage of the growing political and economic power of the neighborhood to promote his interests, and ran unsuccessfully for political office three times. His theatrical campaigns earned him increasing popularity, and Milk won a seat as a city supervisor in 1977, part of the broader social changes the city was experiencing. Milk's election was made possible by and was a key component of a shift in San Francisco politics. The assassinations and the ensuing events were the result of continuing ideological conflicts in the city.

Milk served 11 months in office and was responsible for passing a stringent gay rights ordinance for the city. On November 27, 1978, Milk and Mayor George Moscone were assassinated by Dan White, another city supervisor who had recently resigned but wanted his job back. Moscone planned to announce White's replacement on November 27, 1978. A half hour before the press conference, White entered City Hall through a basement window to avoid metal detectors, and made his way to Moscone's office. Witnesses heard shouting between White and Moscone, then gunshots. White shot the mayor in the shoulder and chest, then twice in the head after Moscone had fallen on the floor. White then quickly walked to his former office, reloading his police-issue revolver with hollow-point bullets along the way, and intercepted Milk, asking him to step inside for a moment. Dianne Feinstein heard gunshots and called the police. She found Milk face down on the floor, shot five times, including twice in the head at close range.

Despite his short career in politics, Milk became an icon in San Francisco and "a martyr for gay rights", according to University of San Francisco professor Peter Novak. In 2002, Milk was called "the most famous and most significantly open gay official ever elected in the United States". Anne Kronenberg, his final campaign manager, wrote of him: "What set Harvey apart from you or me was that he was a visionary. He imagined a righteous world inside his head and then he set about to create it for real, for all of us." Milk was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2009.

Greensboro Communist Workers Party Massacre, 1979

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

The Greensboro massacre took place on November 3, 1979 in Greensboro, North Carolina, United States. Five marchers were shot and killed by members of the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Party while in a protest. It was the culmination of attempts by the Communist Workers Party (known as the Workers Viewpoint Organization at the time of the shooting) to organize mostly black industrial workers in the area. The marchers killed were: Sandi Smith, a nurse and civil rights activist; Dr. James Waller, president of a local textile workers union who had given up his medical practice to organize workers; Bill Sampson, a graduate of the Harvard University School of Divinity; Cesar Cause, an immigrant from Cuba who graduated magna cum laude from Duke University; and Dr. Michael Nathan, chief of pediatrics at Lincoln Community Health Center in Durham, NC, a clinic that helped children from low-income families.

Hostility between the groups flared in July 1979 when protesters disrupted a screening of the 1915 epic, *Birth of a Nation* (D. W. Griffith's cinematographic portrayal of America's roots). Taunts and inflammatory rhetoric were exchanged during the ensuing months. On November 3, 1979, a rally and march of industrial workers and Communists was planned in Greensboro against the Ku Klux Klan. The Death to the Klan March was to begin in a predominantly black housing project called Morningside Homes. Communist organizers publicly challenged the Klan to present themselves and "face the wrath of the people." During the rally, a caravan of cars containing Klansmen and members of the American Nazi Party drove by the housing projects. After being heckled by Klansmen, several marchers began to attack the Klansmen's cars with sticks. A standoff ended in a scuffle, whereupon Klansmen and Nazis left their cars and wildly fired into the crowd with shotguns, rifles and pistols. Much of the shooting was filmed by local news stations.

Normally, police would have been present at such a rally. However, no police were present, which allowed the assailants to escape. A police detective and a police photographer did follow the Klan and neo-Nazi caravan to the site, but did not attempt to intervene. Bernard Butkovich, an undercover agent for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) later testified he was aware that Ku Klux Klansmen and members of the American Nazi Party unit he had infiltrated would confront the demonstrators. In previous testimony, the Nazis claimed the agent encouraged them to carry guns to the anti-Klan demonstration. This has led to accusations of police collusion in the shooting.

Abscam, 1980

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

Abscam (sometimes ABSCAM) was a United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) sting operation run from the FBI's Hauppauge, Long Island, office in the late 1970's and early 1980's. The operation initially targeted trafficking in stolen property but was converted to a public corruption investigation. The investigation ultimately led to the conviction of a United States Senator, five members of the House of Representatives, one member of the New Jersey State Senate, members of the Philadelphia City Council, and an inspector for the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

The FBI set up "Abdul Enterprises, Ltd." in 1978. FBI employees posed as Kram Abdul Rahman, a fictional Middle Eastern sheikh, in videotaped talks with government officials where they were offered money in return for political favors to a non-existent sheikh. A house (4407 W St. NW, Washington, D.C.), along with a yacht in Florida and hotel rooms in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, were used to set up meetings between various public officials and a mysterious Arab sheikh named "Kambir Abdul Rahman" who wanted to purchase asylum in the U.S., involve them in an investment scheme, and to get help in getting his money out of his country. Much of the operation was directed by Melvin Weinberg, a convicted con artist, who was hired by the FBI for that purpose. It was the first major operation by the FBI to trap corrupt public officials; up until 1970 only ten members of Congress had ever been convicted of accepting bribes. During the course of Abscam, the FBI handed out more than \$400,000 in bribes to Congressmen and middlemen.

On February 2, 1980, NBC Nightly News became the first media outlet to break the story that FBI personnel were targeting members of Congress in a sting operation. The FBI had codenamed the operation "Abscam", a contraction of "Abdul scam", after the name of the company. When the investigation became public in early 1980, controversy centered on the use of the "sting" technique and Weinberg's involvement in selecting targets. Although Weinberg was found to have previously engaged in numerous felonious activities, he avoided a three-year prison sentence and was paid \$150,000 in connection with the operation. Ultimately, all of the ABSCAM convictions were upheld on appeal, although some judges criticized the tactics used by the FBI. In the wake of ABSCAM, Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti issued "The Attorney General Guidelines for FBI Undercover Operations" (the Civiletti Undercover Guidelines) on January 5, 1981. These were the first Attorney General Guidelines for undercover operations, and they formalized procedures necessary to conduct them.

Miami Race Riots, 1980

category: African American

source: Wikipedia

Arthur McDuffie (1946 - 1979), an African American, whose death at the hands of five white Miami-Dade police officers, and the officers' subsequent acquittals, caused one of the worst race riots in United States history. McDuffie was an insurance salesman, and had previously been a United States Marine and a military police officer. In the early morning hours of December 17, 1979, police officers pursued 33-year-old McDuffie, who was riding his motorcycle. McDuffie had accumulated traffic citations and was driving with a suspended license. The officers involved in the chase - Ira Diggs, William Hanlon, Michael Watts, and Alex Marrero - later claimed McDuffie had run a red light and led police on an eight-minute chase. They claimed, after McDuffie lost control of his vehicle while making a left turn, he attempted to flee on foot but was subdued by the officers. McDuffie was accused of kicking Diggs during the scuffle. By the end of the struggle the officers had cracked his skull "like an egg," in the words of the prosecutor at the trial.

McDuffie was transported to a nearby hospital, where he died four days later of his wounds. The coroner's report concluded that he had suffered multiple skull fractures after being struck by a blunt object. The four officers were indicted for manslaughter, as well as tampering with or fabricating physical evidence. Marrero's charge was later elevated to second-degree murder. Acting director of the Dade County Public Safety Department Bobby Jones suspended them on December 27, noting that the four officers had been cited in 47 citizen complaints and 13 internal affairs probes since 1973. In addition, two other officers, Herbert Evans, Jr., and Ubaldo Del Toro, were charged with being an accessory to the crime.

On May 8, Del Toro was acquitted, with Judge Nesbitt saying the state had failed to prove its case. Nine days later, a jury acquitted the remaining officers on all 13 counts of the indictment after less than three hours of deliberation. The verdict sent people pouring into Miami streets, with approximately 5,000 people attending a protest at the downtown Metro Justice Building. However, by 6:00 p.m., the protest turned into a riot as three people were killed and at least 23 injured, with several of those in critical condition. Florida governor Bob Graham immediately ordered 500 National Guard troops into the area; despite doubling their number the next day, twelve more people died and 165 were injured as violence spread to the Black Grove, Overtown, Liberty City, and Brownsville sections of the city. In addition, fires, burglaries, and looting increased, with police reluctant to enter some areas due to sniper fire. By the third day, the violence declined as an 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew helped alleviate the violence.

Iran-Contra Scandal, 1981 to 1986

category: Latin (LAT) and Middle East (ME)

source: Wikipedia

The Iran-Contra affair was a political scandal in the United States which came to light in November 1986, during the Reagan administration, in which senior U.S. figures, including President Ronald Reagan, agreed to facilitate the sale of arms to Iran, the subject of an arms embargo. At least some U.S. officials also hoped that the arms sales would secure the release of hostages and allow U.S. intelligence agencies to fund Nicaraguan contras. The affair began as an operation to improve U.S.-Iranian relations. It was planned that Israel would ship weapons to a relatively moderate, politically influential group of Iranians, and then the U.S. would resupply Israel and receive the Israeli payment. The Iranian recipients promised to do everything in their power to achieve the release of six U.S. hostages, who were being held by the Lebanese Shia Islamist group Hezbollah, who were unknowingly connected to the Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution. The plan eventually deteriorated into an arms-for-hostages scheme, in which members of the executive branch sold weapons to Iran in exchange for the release of the American hostages. Large modifications to the plan were devised by Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North of the National Security Council in late 1985, in which a portion of the proceeds from the weapon sales was diverted to fund anti-Sandinista and anti-communist rebels, or Contras, in Nicaragua.

While President Ronald Reagan was a supporter of the Contra cause, no conclusive evidence has been found showing that he authorized the diversion of the money raised by the Iranian arms sales to the Contras. Handwritten notes taken by Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger indicate that Reagan was aware of potential hostages transfers with Iran, as well as the sale of Hawk and TOW missiles to “moderates elements” within that country. Oliver North, one of the central figures in the affair, wrote in a book that “Ronald Reagan knew of and approved a great deal of what went on with both the Iranian initiative and private efforts on behalf of the contras and he received regular, detailed briefings on both.” Mr. North also writes: “I have no doubt that he was told about the use of residuals for the contras, and that he approved it. Enthusiastically.” North’s account is difficult to verify because of the secrecy that still surrounds the affair.

After the weapon sales were revealed in November 1986, Reagan appeared on national television and said the weapons transfers had indeed occurred, but that the United States did not trade arms for hostages. However, investigations were hampered when large volumes of documents relating to the scandal were destroyed or withheld from investigators by Reagan administration officials.

Rodney King Race Riots, 1992

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

The 1992 Los Angeles Riots were sparked on April 29, 1992, when a jury acquitted four Los Angeles Police Department officers accused in the videotaped beating of African-American motorist Rodney King following a high-speed pursuit. Thousands of people in the Los Angeles area rioted over the six days following the verdict. At that time, similar, smaller riots and anti-police actions took place in other locations in the United States and Canada. Widespread looting, assault, arson and murder occurred. The riots, beginning in the evening after the verdicts, peaked in intensity over the next two days, but ultimately continued for several days. A curfew and deployment of the National Guard began to control the situation; eventually U.S. Army soldiers and United States Marines were ordered to the city to quell disorder as well. Fifty-three people died during the riots with as many as 2,000 people injured. Estimates of the material losses vary between about \$800 million and \$1 billion. Approximately 3,600 fires were set, destroying 1,100 buildings, with fire calls coming once every minute at some points; widespread looting also occurred. Stores owned by Korean and other Asian immigrants were widely targeted, although stores owned by Caucasians and African Americans were targeted by rioters as well. Many of the disturbances were concentrated in South Central Los Angeles, which was primarily composed of African American and Hispanic residents. Half of all riot arrestees and more than a third of those killed during the violence were Hispanic.

In the aftermath of the riots, pressure mounted for a retrial of the officers, and federal charges of civil rights violations were brought against them. As the first anniversary of the acquittal neared, the city tensely awaited the decision of the federal jury; seven days of deliberations raised fears of further violence in the event of another “not guilty” verdict. The decision was read in an atypical 7:00 a.m. Saturday court session on April 17, 1993. Two officers - Officer Laurence Powell and Sergeant Stacey Koon - were found guilty, while officers Theodore Briseno and Timothy Wind were acquitted. Mindful of accusations of sensationalist reporting in the wake of the first trial and the resulting chaos, media outlets opted for more sober coverage, which included calmer on-the-street interviews. Police were fully mobilized with officers on 12-hour shifts, convoy patrols, scout helicopters, street barricades, tactical command centers, and support from the National Guard and Marines. All four of the officers involved have since quit or have been fired from the LAPD. Rodney King was awarded \$3.8 million in damages from the City of Los Angeles for the attack.

The Murder of Brandon Teena, 1993

category: Gay and Lesbian (GL)

source: Wikipedia

Brandon Teena (December 12, 1972 - December 31, 1993) was an American trans man who was raped and murdered in Humboldt, Nebraska in December 1993, by ex-convicts John Lotter and Marvin "Tom" Nissen. His life and death were the subject of the Academy Award-winning 1999 film *Boys Don't Cry*, which was based on the documentary film *The Brandon Teena Story*. During a Christmas Eve party, Nissen and Lotter grabbed Teena and forced him to remove his pants, proving that Teena was biologically male. Lotter and Nissen later assaulted Teena, and forced him into a car. They drove to an area by a meat-packing plant in Richardson County, where they assaulted and raped him. They then returned to Nissen's home where Teena escaped from Nissen's bathroom by climbing out the window. Teena went to Lana Tisdell's house, a friend who had witnessed the first assault earlier that evening. He was convinced by Tisdell to file a police report, though Nissen and Lotter had warned Teena not to tell the police about the rape or they would "silence him permanently." Teena also went to the emergency room where a standard rape kit was assembled, and later lost. Sheriff Charles B. Laux questioned Teena about the rape; reportedly, he seemed especially interested in Teena's transsexuality, to the point that Teena found his questions rude and unnecessary, and refused to answer. Nissen and Lotter learned of the report, and they began to search for Teena. They did not find him, and three days later the police questioned them. The sheriff declined to have them arrested due to lack of evidence.

On New Year's Eve, Nissen and Lotter drove to Lisa Lambert's house where Teena had been staying and broke in. They found Lambert in bed and demanded to know where Teena was. Lambert refused to tell them. Nissen searched and found Teena under the bed. The men asked Lambert if there was anyone else in the house, and she replied that Phillip DeVine, who at the time was dating Tisdell's sister, was staying with her. They shot and killed DeVine, Lambert, and Teena, in front of Lambert's toddler. Nissen and Lotter then left, later being arrested and charged with murder. Nissen accused Lotter of committing the murders, testified against Lotter, and was sentenced to life in prison. Lotter proceeded to deny the veracity of Nissen's testimony. The jury found Lotter guilty of murder and he received the death penalty. Lotter and Nissen both appealed their convictions, and their cases have went to review. In September 2007, Nissen recanted his testimony against Lotter. He claimed that he was the only one to shoot Teena and that Lotter was not involved. Lotter is currently appealing and is using Nissen's new testimony to assert his claims of innocence.

Oklahoma City Bombing, 1995

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

The Oklahoma City bombing occurred on April 19, 1995, when American militia movement sympathizer Timothy McVeigh detonated a truck filled with explosives parked in front of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City. McVeigh's co-conspirator, Terry Nichols, had assisted in the bomb preparation. It was the most destructive act of terrorism on American soil until the September 11, 2001 attacks, claiming 168 lives, including 19 children under the age of 6. More than 680 people were injured. The blast destroyed or damaged 324 buildings within a sixteen-block radius, destroyed or burned 86 cars, and shattered glass in 258 nearby buildings. The bomb was estimated to have caused at least \$652 million worth of damage.

Motivated by his hatred of the federal government and angered by what he perceived as its mishandling of the Waco Siege (1993) and the Ruby Ridge incident (1992), McVeigh timed his attack to coincide with the second anniversary of the deaths at Waco. Within 90 minutes of the explosion McVeigh was stopped by Oklahoma State Trooper Charlie Hanger for speeding and driving without a license plate, and arrested for unlawfully carrying a weapon. Forensic evidence quickly linked McVeigh and Nichols to the attack, Nichols was arrested, and within days both were charged. Michael and Lori Fortier were later identified as accomplices. Extensive rescue efforts were undertaken by local, state, federal, and worldwide agencies in the wake of the bombing, and substantial donations were received from across the country. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) activated eleven of its Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces, consisting of 665 rescue workers who assisted in rescue and recovery operations.

The official investigation, known as "OKBOMB," was the largest criminal investigation case in American history; FBI agents conducted 28,000 interviews, amassing 3.5 short tons (3.2 t) of evidence, and collecting nearly one billion pieces of information. The bombers were tried and convicted in 1997. McVeigh was executed by lethal injection on June 11, 2001, and Nichols was sentenced to life in prison. Michael and Lori Fortier testified against McVeigh and Nichols; Michael was sentenced to twelve years in prison for failing to warn the U.S. government, and Lori received immunity from prosecution in exchange for her testimony. As with other large-scale terrorist attacks, conspiracy theories dispute the official claims and allege the involvement of additional perpetrators. As a result of the bombing, the U.S. government passed legislation designed to increase the protection around federal buildings to deter future terrorist attacks.

Extraordinary Renditions, 1995 to ?

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

Extraordinary Renditions and irregular renditions are terms used to describe the apprehension and extrajudicial transfer of a person from one state to another. “Torture by proxy” is used by some critics to describe situations in which the United States has purportedly transferred suspected terrorists to countries known to employ harsh interrogation techniques that may rise to the level of torture. It is alleged that the CIA runs a secret global abduction and internment operation of suspected terrorists, known as “extraordinary rendition,” which since 2001 has captured about 3,000 people and transported them around the world. It has been alleged that torture has been employed with the knowledge or acquiescence of the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom.

The U.S. program prompted several official investigations in Europe into alleged secret detentions and unlawful inter-state transfers involving Council of Europe member states. A June 2006 report from the Council of Europe estimated 100 people had been kidnapped by the United States’ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) on EU territory (with the cooperation of Council of Europe members), and rendered to other countries, often after having transited through secret detention centers (“black sites”) used by the CIA, some sited in Europe. According to the separate European Parliament report of February 2007, the CIA has conducted 1,245 flights, many of them to destinations where suspects could face torture, in violation of article 3 of the United Nations Convention Against Torture. A large majority of the European Union Parliament endorsed the report’s conclusion that many member states tolerated illegal actions of the CIA and criticized several European governments and intelligence agencies for their unwillingness to cooperate with the investigation. The United States has also been accused of operating “floating prisons” to house and transport those arrested in its war on terror, according to human rights lawyers, who claim there has been an attempt to conceal the numbers and whereabouts of detainees.

The Bush administration has freely admitted this practice stating that, among other provisions, they have specifically asked that torture not be used. Torture can still occur, however, despite these provisions, and much documentation exists alleging that it has happened in many cases. In these instances, the initial captor allows the possibility of torture by releasing the prisoner into the custody of states that practice torture. Within days of his inauguration, President Obama signed an Executive Order opposing rendition torture and establishing a task force to recommend how to prevent rendition torture in the future.

Chinagate, 1996

category: Asian (AS)

source: Wikipedia

The 1996 United States campaign finance controversy, also known as Chinagate, was an alleged effort by the People's Republic of China to influence domestic American politics during the 1996 federal elections. The issue first received public attention in early 1997, with news that a Justice Department investigation had uncovered evidence that agents of China sought to direct contributions to the Democratic National Committee (DNC) in violation of U.S. laws regarding foreign political contributions. The Chinese government denied all accusations. Twenty-two people were eventually convicted of fraud or for funneling Asian funds into the United States elections, and others fled U.S. jurisdiction. Several of these were associates of Bill Clinton or Al Gore. In late 1996, the Justice Department opened a task force to investigate allegations of illegal donations to the Clinton/Gore re-election campaign and to Clinton's legal defense fund. Clinton announced in February 1997 that there should be a "vigorous" and "thorough" investigation into reports that China tried to direct financial contributions from overseas sources to the DNC. "Obviously it would be a very serious matter for the United States if any country were to attempt to funnel funds to one of our parties for any reason whatever," Clinton said. Both FBI Director Louis Freeh and Justice Department task force head Charles La Bella unsuccessfully argued for appointment of an independent counsel.

Ultimately, Justice Department prosecutors secured the conviction of several fund-raisers for various offenses. John Huang served 500 hours of community service and paid a \$10,000 fine. Johnny Chung served 3,000 hours of community service. Charlie Trie served four months of in-home detention. Maria Hsia served 90 days of home detention and paid a \$5,300 fine. Indonesian billionaire James Ready was fined \$8.6 million. Ernest Green served three months home detention. Michael Brown served 150 hours of community service and paid a \$5,000 fine. In all, the Justice Department task force secured criminal convictions against 22 people by 2001. A House investigation, headed by Republican Dan Burton, focused on allegations of campaign finance abuse, including the contributions channeled through Chung, Huang, and Trie. The investigation was lengthy, spanning both the 105th and 106th Congresses, and according to a Democratic report had cost over \$7.4 million as of August 31, 1998, making it the most expensive Congressional investigation ever (the Senate Watergate investigation cost \$7 million in 1998 dollars). The Burton investigation was controversial as many people who were supposedly involved in Chinagate either refused to be questioned, pled the Fifth Amendment against self incrimination, or left the country altogether.

The Murder of James Byrd, Jr., 1998

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

James Byrd, Jr., (May 2, 1949 - June 7, 1998) was an African American who was murdered in Jasper, Texas, on June 7, 1998. The murderers, Shawn Allen Berry, Lawrence Russell Brewer, and John William King, wrapped a heavy logging chain around his ankles, hooked the chain to a pickup truck, and then dragged Byrd about three miles along a macadam pavement as the truck swerved from side to side. Death came when Byrd's body hit the edge of a culvert, which cut off his arm and head. The murderers unchained his torso and left it on the shoulder of the road in front of the town's black cemetery. His lynching-by-dragging gave impetus to passage of a Texas hate crimes law, and, later, the federal hate crimes law, officially known as the *October 22, 2009 Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act*, commonly known as the "Matthew Shepard Act." President Barrack Obama signed the bill into law on October 28, 2009.

On June 7, 1998, Byrd, age 49, accepted a ride from Berry (age 24), Brewer (age 31), and King (age 23). Berry, who was driving, recognized Byrd from around town. Instead of taking him home, the three men took Byrd behind a convenience store, beating him with anything they could find, urinated on his unconscious body, stripped him naked, chained him by the ankles to their pickup truck, and dragged him for three miles. Brewer claimed that Byrd's throat had been slashed before he was dragged, but forensic evidence suggests that Byrd had been trying to keep his head up while being dragged, and an autopsy suggested that Byrd was alive for much of the time. Byrd died when his right arm and head were severed after his body hit a culvert.

Berry, Brewer, and King dumped their victim's mutilated remains in the town's black cemetery; the three men then went to a barbecue. Along the area where Byrd was dragged, authorities found a wrench with "Berry" written on it. They also found a lighter that was inscribed with "Possum," which was King's prison nickname. The following morning, Byrd's limbs were found scattered across a seldom-used road. The police found 75 places that were littered with Byrd's remains. Since Brewer and King were well-known white supremacists the murder was a hate crime and the Federal Bureau of Investigation was called to investigate.

King's body bore several tattoos: a black man hanging from a tree, Nazi symbols, the words "Aryan Pride," and the patch for a gang of white supremacist inmates known as the Confederate Knights of America. In a jailhouse letter to Brewer that was intercepted by jail officials, King expressed pride in the crime and said he realized that he might have to die for committing it. Berry, Brewer, and King were tried and convicted for Byrd's murder. Brewer and King received the death penalty, while Berry was sentenced to life in prison.

The Murder of Matthew Wayne Shepard, 1998

category: Gay and Lesbian (GL)

source: Wikipedia

Matthew Wayne Shepard (December 1, 1976 - October 12, 1998) was a 21-year-old student at the University of Wyoming who was tortured and murdered near Laramie, Wyoming in October, 1998. He was attacked on the night of October 6-7, and died at Padre Valley Hospital in Fort Collins, Colorado, on October 12 from severe head injuries. During the trial, witnesses stated that Shepard was targeted because he was homosexual. Shepard's murder brought national and international attention to the issue of hate crime legislation at the state and federal levels.

Shepard met Aaron McGivney and Russell Henderson at the Fireside Lounge in Laramie, Wyoming. McGivney and Henderson offered Shepard a ride in their car. After admitting he was gay, Shepard was robbed, pistol whipped, tortured, tied to a fence in a remote, rural area, and left to die. McGivney and Henderson also discovered his address and intended to burgle his home. Still tied to the fence, Shepard was discovered 18 hours later by Aaron Krefeld, who initially mistook Shepard for a scarecrow. At the time of discovery, Shepard was still alive in a coma. Shepard suffered fractures to the back of his head and in front of his right ear. He had severe brain stem damage, which affected his body's ability to regulate heart rate, body temperature and other vital functions. Shepard never regained consciousness and remained on full life support. As he lay in intensive care, candlelight vigils were held by the people of Laramie. He was pronounced dead at 12:53 a.m. on October 12, 1998, at Padre Valley Hospital in Fort Collins, Colorado. Police arrested McGivney and Henderson finding the gun and the victim's shoes and wallet in their truck.

In trial the defendants used various rationales to defend their actions. They originally pleaded the gay panic defense, arguing that they were driven to temporary insanity by alleged sexual advances by Shepard. At another point they stated that they had wanted only to rob Shepard and never intended to kill him. The prosecutor in the case alleged that McGivney and Henderson pretended to be gay in order to gain Shepard's trust to rob him. During the trial, Chastity Paisley and Kirsten Price, girlfriends of McGivney and Henderson, testified that Henderson and McGivney both plotted beforehand to rob a gay man. McGivney and Henderson then went to the Fireside Lounge and selected Shepard as their target. Henderson pleaded guilty on April 5, 1999, and he received two consecutive life sentences. The jury in McGivney's trial found him guilty of felony murder. As they began to deliberate on the death penalty, Shepard's parents brokered a deal, resulting in McGivney receiving two consecutive life terms without the possibility of parole.

Columbine High School Massacre, 1999

category: Societal (SOC)

source: Wikipedia

The Columbine High School Massacre occurred on Tuesday, April 20, 1999, at Columbine High School in Columbine, an unincorporated area of Jefferson County, Colorado, United States, near Denver and Littleton. Two senior students, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, embarked on a massacre, killing 12 students and one teacher. They also injured 21 other students directly, and three people were injured while attempting to escape. The pair then committed suicide. It is the fourth-deadliest school massacre in United States history, after the 1927 Bath School disaster, 2007 Virginia Tech massacre and the 1966 University of Texas massacre, and the deadliest for an American high school. The massacre provoked debate regarding gun control laws, the availability of firearms in the United States, and gun violence involving youths. Much discussion also centered on the nature of high school cliques, subcultures and bullying, as well as the role of violent movies and video games in American society. The shooting also resulted in increased emphasis on school security and moral panic aimed at Goth culture, social outcasts, the gun culture, use of pharmaceutical anti-depressants by teenagers, violent films and music, teenage internet use, and violent video games.

In the months prior to the attacks, Harris and Klebold acquired two 9 mm firearms and two 12-gauge shotguns. A rifle and the two shotguns were bought by a friend, Robyn Anderson, at the Tanner Gun Show in December, 1998. Harris and Klebold later bought a handgun from another friend, Mark Manes, for \$500. Manes was jailed after the massacre for selling a handgun to a minor, as was Philip Duran, who had introduced the duo to Manes. With instructions from the Internet, they also built 99 improvised explosive devices of various designs and sizes. They also sawed the barrels and butts off their shotguns in order to make them easier to conceal. The two perpetrators committed numerous felony violations of state and federal law, including the National Firearms Act and the Gun Control Act of 1968, even before the massacre began. During the shootings, Harris carried a 12 gauge Savage-Springfield 67H pump-action shotgun and a Hi-Point 995 Carbine 9 mm semi-automatic rifle with thirteen 10-round magazines, fired 96 times. Harris's other weapon, the shotgun, was fired a total of 25 times. Harris committed suicide by shooting himself in the head with his shotgun. Klebold carried a 9 mm Intratec TEC-9 semi-automatic handgun manufactured by Navegar, Inc., with one 52-, one 32-, and one 28-round magazine. He also carried a 12 gauge Stevens 311D double barreled sawed-off shotgun. Klebold's primary weapon was the TEC-9 handgun, which was fired a total of 55 times. Klebold would later commit suicide via a shot to the left temple with the TEC-9.

Jack Abramoff Indian Lobbying Scandal, 1999 to 2006

category: American Indian (AI)

source: Wikipedia

The Jack Abramoff Indian lobbying scandal is a United States scandal relating to the work performed by political lobbyists Jack Abramoff, Ralph E. Reed, Jr., Grover Norquist and Michael Scanlon on Indian casino gambling interests for an estimated \$85 million in fees. Abramoff and Scanlon grossly over billed their clients, secretly splitting the multimillion-dollar profits. In one case, they secretly orchestrated lobbying against their own clients in order to force them to pay for more lobbying services. The lobbyists were accused of illegally giving gifts and making campaign donations to legislators in return for votes or support of legislation. Representative Bob Ney (R-OH) and two aides to Tom DeLay (R-TX) have been directly implicated; other politicians, mostly Republicans with connections to Indian affairs, have various ties.

On January 3, 2006, Abramoff pled guilty to three felony counts - conspiracy, fraud, and tax evasion - involving charges stemming principally from his lobbying activities in Washington on behalf of Native American tribes. In addition, Abramoff and other defendants must make restitution of at least \$25 million that was defrauded from clients, most notably the Native American tribes. On May 8, 2006, Neil Volz, former chief of staff to Representative Bob Ney (R-Ohio), staff director of the House Administration Committee, and later part of Team Abramoff, pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy, including wire fraud and violating House rules. On March 23, 2007 former Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Interior J. Steven Griles pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice in the Senate investigation of the Abramoff scandal.

On Friday, November 25, 2005, the Wall Street Journal reported the expansion of the investigation to four members of Congress: in addition to Ney and DeLay, the report includes Rep. John Doolittle (R., Calif.) and Senator Conrad Burns (R., Mont.) On December 2, 2005, the New York Times reported that federal prosecutors were considering a plea bargain arrangement that would give Abramoff some consideration if he provided evidence that would implicate members of Congress and their senior staffers in receiving job offers in return for legislative favors. The guilty pleas signed by Abramoff in early January, 2006, state that he bribed public officials. One of the cases of bribery described in detail involves a person identified as "Representative #1," who was reported by the Washington Post to be Representative Bob Ney (R-OH). Ney's spokesman confirmed that Ney was the Representative identified, but denied any improper influence. The agreement also details Abramoff's practice of hiring former congressional staffers to lobby their former congressional employers, in violation of a one-year federal ban on such lobbying.

The Florida Pill-Mill Massacres, 2001 to Present

category: Medical (MED)

source: Broward County, Florida, 2009 Grand Jury Report

Florida has been plagued by a pain-management pill-mill crisis from 2001 forward which has cost thousands of lives to drug overdose deaths. Physicians licensed by the Florida Board of Medicine (M.D.'s) and the Florida Board of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.'s) have inappropriately prescribed opioids - most notably a powerful pain killer called oxycodone - and other controlled substances for huge personal financial gains. This prescribing behavior has resulted in the deaths of thousands of people during this period, and the Florida boards of medicine have done nothing effectual to stem the rising death toll. The epicenter of this crisis is in Broward County located in Southeast Florida. According to the *Interim Report of the Broward County Grand Jury - the proliferation of pain clinics in South Florida (Spring Term A.D. 2009)*, "in 2007 there were 4 pain clinics operating in Broward County. From those 4 pain clinics in Broward County the number swelled to 66 pain clinics operating in South Florida in 2008. From August 2008 to November 2009 the number of pain clinics opening and operating in South Florida exploded in number from 66 to 176, and the number of pain clinics opening and operating in Broward County increased from 47 to 115."

In regards to mortality from improper prescribing, the report stated that "the Florida Medical Examiners Commission reported that in 2006 there were 2,780 lethal dose reports of prescription drugs detected in deceased persons in the State of Florida or an average of more than 7 reported deaths per day. In 2007 the Florida Medical Examiners Commission reported that there were 3,317 lethal dose reports of prescription drugs detected in deceased persons in the State of Florida or an average of more than 9 reported deaths per day. In 2008 the Florida Medical Examiners Commission reported that there were 3,750 lethal dose reports of prescription drugs detected in deceased persons in the State of Florida or an average of more than 10 reported deaths per day. In 2008 there were an additional 6,286 reports where prescription drugs were detected in deceased persons that were not considered to be at a lethal dose level but may have been found in combination with other substances. The total of 10,036 prescription drugs detected was related to 4,924 deaths or an average of nearly 13 ½ deaths per day in Florida during 2008." Yet, it goes on to ask "whether the boards of medicine will have the fortitude to regulate and discipline its members in this very lucrative field is another question." In the meantime, Florida pill-mill physicians continue to practice in a murder-for-money manner with little if any effectual hindrance from the very boards of medicine who are responsible for their licensing and regulation. Pending legislation may or may not change this situation.

Cincinnati Race Riots, 2001

category: African American (AA)

source: Wikipedia

The 2001 Cincinnati riots were the largest urban disorders in the United States since the Los Angeles riots of 1992. The rioting was a reaction to the fatal shooting in Cincinnati, Ohio of Timothy Thomas, a 19-year-old black male, by Steven Roach, a police officer, during an on-foot pursuit by several officers. While the city was embroiled in emotional discussions about racial tensions and police conduct regarding prior events, Timothy Thomas ran from police down a dark alley, and was killed at 2:20 a.m. on April 7. Thomas had 59 misdemeanor charges, which led to 14 open warrants for his arrest. Most of the charges were non-violent, but did include 2 counts of minor assault. The charges included parking tickets, not wearing a seatbelt, loitering, as well as running from police. Thomas initially was approached by two off-duty policemen who were familiar to him in the Over-the-Rhine neighborhood. The chase was joined by several police who were in the area when Officer Roach joined in the pursuit. According to Roach's statements, Thomas unexpectedly came from around a corner and he reacted with deadly force as he thought Thomas was reaching for a weapon.

The riots began three days later on April 10, 2007 at nightfall. A group which was peacefully protesting in police presence near City Hall was dispersed and elements reformed on the residential outskirts of downtown. They moved into the business area of downtown Cincinnati and rioted. There was violence against unarmed citizens who were in the area by the rioters. Businesses were looted, storefronts damaged, and small fires were set. The police's reaction was to guide the nucleus of the crowd by forming human walls to prevent the crowd from spreading while not fully encircling it, permitting it to progress in the opening allowed. There were several injuries reported, none were serious, and some gunshots were reported. The news of the rioting spread quickly and simultaneous riots broke out throughout Cincinnati suburbs of negligible damage. The streets were deserted in the early morning hours and businesses that were not damaged returned to as normal operations as possible. However, violence the second day was widespread. More incidents outside of the downtown area were reported. Even though there was the presence of some black community leaders (church congregation leaders, non-business organization leaders, etc.) before nightfall they were unable to keep the crowd from becoming violent. On the third night of violence, looting, and vandalizing, Charlie Luken, the mayor of Cincinnati at the time, issued a city-wide curfew which was accompanied by rain and the riots stopped. The immediate damage was estimated at \$3.6 million.

Abu Ghraib Prison Abuse Scandal, 2003

category: Military (MIL) and Middle East (ME)

source: Wikipedia

Beginning in 2004, accounts of physical, psychological, and sexual abuse, including torture, rape, sodomy, and homicide of prisoners held in the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq (also known as Baghdad Correctional Facility) came to public attention. These acts were committed by personnel of the 372nd Military Police Company of the United States Army together with additional U.S. governmental agencies. As revealed by the 2004 Taguba Report, a criminal investigation by the United States Army Criminal Investigation Command had already been underway since 2003 where many soldiers of the 320th Military Police Battalion had been charged under the Uniform Code of Military Justice with prisoner abuse. In 2004 articles describing the abuse, including pictures showing military personnel abusing prisoners, came to public attention, when a 60 Minutes II news report (April 28) and an article by Seymour M. Hersh in The New Yorker magazine (posted online on April 30 and published days later in the May 10 issue) reported the story.

The United States Department of Defense removed seventeen soldiers and officers from duty, and eleven soldiers were charged with dereliction of duty, maltreatment, aggravated assault and battery. Between May 2004 and March 2006, eleven soldiers were convicted in courts martial, sentenced to military prison, and dishonorably discharged from service. Two soldiers, Specialist Charles Graner, and his former fiancée, Specialist Lynndie England, were sentenced to ten years and three years in prison, respectively, in trials ending on January 14, 2005, and September 26, 2005. The commanding officer at the prison, Brigadier General Janis Karpinski, was demoted to the rank of Colonel on May 5, 2005. Col. Karpinski has denied knowledge of the abuses, claiming that the interrogations were authorized by her superiors.

The online news magazine Salon has reported on multiple deaths of Iraqi prisoners in U.S. custody, and according to a report issued by the American Civil Liberties Union, at least 28 have died at Abu Ghraib. The prisoner Manadel al-Jamadi died in Abu Ghraib prison after being interrogated and tortured by a CIA officer and a private contractor. Rape also occurred. An Iraqi teenage boy was raped by a uniformed man while photos of it were taken by a female U.S. military police. Other photos show sexual assaults on prisoners with objects including a truncheon, wire and a phosphorescent tube, and a female prisoner having her clothing forcibly removed to expose her breasts. In another case, a female inmate was raped by an American military policeman. In a third reported case, witnesses said U.S. guards repeatedly raped a 14 year old girl in 2003. In a fourth reported case, Senior U.S. officials admitted rape had taken place at Abu Ghraib.

Valerie Plame Affair, 2004

category: Politics (POL)

source: Wikipedia

The phrase Plame Affair (also known as Plamegate) refers to the identification of Valerie Plame Wilson as a covert Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officer. Mrs. Wilson's relationship with the CIA was formerly classified information. The disclosure was made in a newspaper column entitled "Mission to Niger" written by Robert Novak, and published on July 14, 2003. Mrs. Wilson's husband, former Ambassador Joseph C. Wilson, has stated his opinion in various interviews and subsequent writings (as listed in his 2004 memoir *The Politics of Truth*) that members of former President George W. Bush's administration revealed Mrs. Wilson's covert status as retribution for his op-ed entitled "What I Didn't Find in Africa," published in *The New York Times* on July 6, 2003. There has been debate over what kinds of damage may have resulted from the public disclosure of Valerie Wilson's identity as a CIA operative in Novak's column and its fallout, how far and into what areas of national security and foreign intelligence that damage might extend, particularly vis-à-vis Plame's work with her cover company, Brewster Jennings & Associates. Plame has characterized the damage as "serious," noting, "I can tell you, all the intelligence services in the world that morning were running my name through their databases to see, 'Did anyone by this name come in the country? When? Do we know anything about it? Where did she stay? Well, who did she see?'" In an op-ed published by the *Los Angeles Times*, Joe Wilson wrote "She immediately started jotting down a checklist of things she needed to do to limit the damage to people she knew and to projects she was working on."

On October 3, 2004, the *Washington Post* quotes a former diplomat predicting immediate damage: "[E]very foreign intelligence service would run Plame's name through its databases within hours of its publication to determine if she had visited their country and to reconstruct her activities. ... That's why the agency is so sensitive about just publishing her name." In contrast, in an October 27, 2005, appearance on *Larry King Live*, Bob Woodward commented: "They did a damage assessment within the CIA, looking at what this did that [former ambassador] Joe Wilson's wife [Plame] was outed. And turned out it was quite minimal damage. They did not have to pull anyone out undercover abroad. They didn't have to resettle anyone. There was no physical danger to anyone, and there was just some embarrassment." Mark Lowenthal, who retired from a senior management position at the CIA in March, 2005, reportedly stated that "you can only speculate that if she had foreign contacts, those contacts might be nervous and their relationships with her put them at risk. It also makes it harder for other CIA officers to recruit sources."

Foley and Haggard Sex Scandals, 2006

category: Politics (POL) and Religion (RE)

source: Wikipedia

The Mark Foley scandal, which broke in late September 2006, centers on soliciting e-mails and sexually suggestive instant messages sent by Mark Foley, a Republican Congressman from Florida, to teenaged boys who had formerly served as congressional pages. The investigation was closed on September 19, 2008, citing insufficient evidence to pursue criminal charges as both “Congress and Mr. Foley denied us access to critical data,” said Florida Department of Law Enforcement Commissioner Gerald Bailey. The scandal has grown to encompass the response of Republican congressional leaders to previous complaints about Foley’s contacts with the pages and inconsistencies in the leaders’ public statements. There are also allegations that a second Republican Congressman, Jim Kolbe, had improper conduct with at least two youths, a 16-year old page and a recently graduated page. The scandal led to Foley’s resignation from Congress on September 29, 2006. In some quarters, the scandal is believed to have contributed to the Republican Party’s loss of control over Congress in the November 7, 2006 election, as well as the end of House Speaker Dennis Hastert’s leadership of the House Republicans.

Ted Arthur Haggard (born June 27, 1956) is a former American evangelical preacher. Known as Pastor Ted to the congregations he served, he is the founder and former pastor of the New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado; a founder of the Association of Life-Giving Churches; and was leader of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) from 2003 until November, 2006. In 2005, Haggard was listed by Time magazine as one of the top 25 most influential evangelicals in America. Haggard was a firm supporter of former U.S. President George W. Bush, and author Jeff Sharlet reported in 2005 that Haggard “talks to... Bush or his advisers every Monday” and stated at that time that “no pastor in America holds more sway over the political direction of evangelicalism.” In November, 2006, prostitute and masseur Mike Jones alleged that Haggard had paid Jones to engage in sex with him for three years and had also purchased and used crystal methamphetamine. A few days later Haggard resigned from all of his leadership positions after he admitted sexual immorality and methamphetamine use. Initially Haggard denied even knowing Mike Jones, but as a media investigation proceeded he acknowledged that some allegations were true. After the scandal was publicized, Haggard entered three weeks of intensive counseling, overseen by four ministers. In February 2007, one of those ministers, Tim Ralph, said that Haggard “is completely heterosexual.” Ralph later said he meant that therapy “gave Ted the tools to help to embrace his heterosexual side.”

Virginia Tech Massacre, 2007

category: Societal (SOC)

source: Wikipedia

The Virginia Tech Massacre was a school shooting that took place on Monday, April 16, 2007 on the campus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) in Blacksburg, Virginia, United States. In two separate attacks, approximately two hours apart, the perpetrator, Seung-Hui Cho, killed 32 people and wounded many others before committing suicide. The massacre is the deadliest peacetime shooting incident by a single gunman in United States history, on or off a school campus. Cho, a senior English major at Virginia Tech, had previously been diagnosed with a severe anxiety disorder. During much of his middle school and high school years, he received therapy and special education support. After graduating from high school, Cho enrolled at Virginia Tech. Due to federal privacy laws, Virginia Tech was not informed of Cho's previous diagnosis or the accommodations he had been granted at prior schools. In 2005, Cho was accused of stalking two female students; after an investigation a Virginia special justice declared Cho mentally ill and ordered him to attend treatment.

The attacks received international media coverage and drew widespread criticism of U.S. laws and culture. It sparked intense debate about gun violence, gun laws, gaps in the U.S. system for treating mental health issues, the perpetrator's state of mind, the responsibility of college administrations, privacy laws, journalism ethics, and other issues. Television news organizations that aired portions of the killer's multimedia manifesto were criticized by victims' families, Virginia law enforcement officials, and the American Psychiatric Association. The massacre prompted the state of Virginia to close legal loopholes that had previously allowed Cho, an individual adjudicated as mentally unsound, to purchase handguns without detection by the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). It also led to passage of the first major federal gun control measure in more than 13 years. The law strengthening the NICS was signed by President George W. Bush on January 5, 2008. The Virginia Tech Review Panel, a state-appointed body assigned to review the incident, criticized Virginia Tech administrators for failing to take action that might have reduced the number of casualties. The panel's report also reviewed gun laws and pointed out gaps in mental health care as well as privacy laws that left Cho's deteriorating condition in college untreated. Cho used two firearms during the attacks: a 0.22-caliber Walther P22 semi-automatic handgun and a 9 mm semi-automatic Glock 19 handgun. The shootings occurred in separate incidents, with the first at West Ambler Johnston Hall and the second at Norris Hall.

The 2007 Financial Crisis, 2007 to Present

category: Economics (EC)

source: Wikipedia

The financial crisis of 2007 was triggered by a liquidity shortfall in the United States banking system. It has resulted in the collapse of large financial institutions, the “bail out” of banks by national governments and downturns in stock markets around the world. In many areas, the housing market has also suffered, resulting in numerous evictions, foreclosures and prolonged vacancies. It is considered by many economists to be the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930's. It contributed to the failure of key businesses, declines in consumer wealth estimated in the trillions of U.S. dollars, substantial financial commitments incurred by governments, and a significant decline in economic activity. Many causes have been proposed, with varying weight assigned by experts. Both market-based and regulatory solutions have been implemented or are under consideration, while significant risks remain for the world economy. Although this economic period has at times been referred to as “the Great Recession,” this same phrase has been used to refer to every recession of the several preceding decades.

The collapse of a global housing bubble, which peaked in the U.S. in 2006, caused the values of securities tied to real estate pricing to plummet thereafter, damaging financial institutions globally. Questions regarding bank solvency, declines in credit availability, and damaged investor confidence had an impact on global stock markets, where securities suffered large losses during late 2008 and early 2009. Economies worldwide slowed during this period as credit tightened and international trade declined. Critics argued that credit rating agencies and investors failed to accurately price the risk involved with mortgage-related financial products, and that governments did not adjust their regulatory practices to address 21st century financial markets. Governments and central banks responded with unprecedented fiscal stimulus, monetary policy expansion, and institutional bailouts in response to financial innovations that were designed to achieve particular client objectives, such as offsetting a particular risk exposure (such as the default of a borrower) or to assist with obtaining financing. Examples pertinent to this crisis included: the adjustable-rate mortgage; the bundling of subprime mortgages into mortgage-backed securities (MBS) or collateralized debt obligations (CDO) for sale to investors, a type of securitization; and a form of credit insurance called credit default swaps (CDS). The investor Warren Buffett famously referred to derivatives like MBS's, CDO's and CDS's as “financial weapons of mass destruction” in early 2003.

The crisis continues to this day.