

That's the Way it is

by Karla Hardin

When I was a child my family and I would take a lot of trips to my grandparents house. I remember how great I thought it was that they lived back in the mountains all alone.

Of course now there are almost seven other people living on the same street, grandpa says that they might have to move farther up the mountain if it becomes any more of a city.

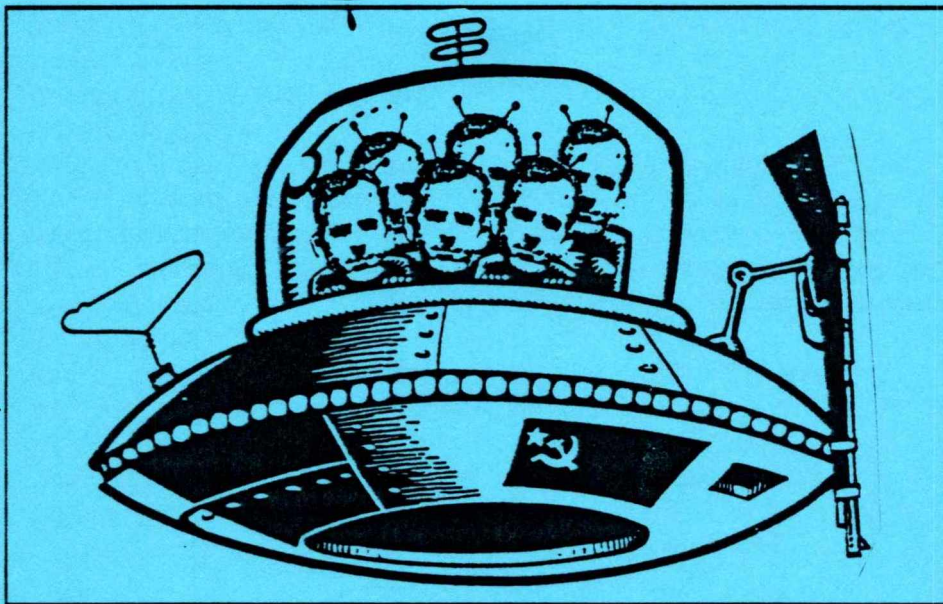
I have many fond memories of our trips to West Virginia, but the thing that sticks in my mind the most are the superstitions of the country. My grandparents, mainly grandma, had some strange ones. These went beyond throwing salt over your shoulder or not stepping on sidewalk cracks.

In my grandparents house it is bad luck to kill a spider, you must greet a cat if it comes to your door- or it will haunt you later. You can make a wish on deer eating clover in your front yard, and (my favorite) if you spill your drink in your plate you must bury the plate face down in the back yard or your next meal will make you sick.

My grandmother taught me to read Tarot cards when I was nine years old, I thought it was the most amazing thing. She instructed me to go to the graveyard down the road and concentrate on the spirit of my choice, so that I could practice. It came to me much easier then than it does now.

JOHN:Re & Karla

Going to the cemetery held its own superstition. I had to take an offering, usually flowers, to honor whoever I was disturbing. I learned a great deal about death and spirits that year. Not all people from this part of the country believe this way of course. It seems that a surprising number of these also go along with the Southern Baptist faith. When I asked my grandmother "why" to any of these she would just say "because that's the way it is."



It's a con- spiracy

by John

Myth,
Superstition
and Folklore:
along with the
size of Ken's
penis,
Conspiracy
theory fits

somewhere in these three categories.

It's undeniable that conspiracies are part of the modern folklore and the truth may be out there, but it is inextricably mixed with myth and superstition.

Don't get me wrong: I am very contemptuous of the Birchers and their paranoid masturbation fantasies. I believe that one stupid mistake can provide evidence for a thousand conspiracies, if you string enough unrelated facts together.

Andy Hooper reminds you: "Enjoy the Golden Age while you can." Who loves you baby? The Furniture Store, that's who. Comments, bribes and nude photos to John Hardin, 1733 Yellow Rose, Las Vegas, NV, 89108. E-mail jwesley@wizard.com

What bothers me is the fact that the more I read about conspiracy and conspiracy theories, the more (not less) believable they become. Oliver Stone's *JFK* certainly planted the seeds of doubt in my mind about the lone gun/lone nut theory. After reading the Big Book of Conspiracy from Factoid Books, the seeds have sprouted into full blown belief that Oswald *was* a patsy, and that there was some sort of cover-up. I don't pretend to know what kind of cover-up, exactly, which is what distinguishes me from the garden variety conspiracy nut.

Did you know that Jim Garrison's New Orleans jury did decide there was a conspiracy in the JFK assassination? It's true. They just did not find enough evidence to link Clay Shaw to the murder. A few years later, an ex-CIA man, Victor Marchetti, admitted that the CIA was "very interested in protecting their man Shaw" from prosecution. Of course, the CIA still denies any link to Shaw.

Did you know the so-called "magic bullet", which the Warren Commission decided was the killer bullet in the assassination, had less metal missing from it than the amount of metal retrieved from Gov. John Connelly's wrist?

Those kind of conspiracy theories, while gravely disturbing, don't challenge our basic conceptions about how the world works, but there are certainly others that do. I like to believe that the US gov't did retrieve a crashed alien craft at Roswell, NM. It ties in neatly with my distrust of the government, and my belief that there are probably extraterrestrials in the universe.

You know about Robert Lazar, right? He's the guy who claims to have worked in a secret facility in the Nevada desert, trying to reverse engineer the propulsion system of an alien spacecraft. Lazar claims that he was hired by government contract company EG&G (they are also the company that assembled the nuclear bombs used at the Nevada Test Site. You can see their building off the freeway on the way out of town to the North) and given a security clearance 38 levels above "Q". This amounted to "Majestic" clearance, which even US presidents don't have. Lazar does say, however, that former CIA head George Bush did know about the project.

Eventually, Lazar says, he saw nine different flying saucers, each different, and in dif-

ferent stages of deconstruction and dismantling. Lazar believes that the black budget for the project was siphoned off from the Star Wars program of the '80s. He claims to have been routinely harassed by armed guards, and he suspects mind tampering via drugs and hypnosis, though he cannot recall these episodes clearly. George Knapp, who broke the story here in Las Vegas, thinks Lazar may have been chosen to release the information and was either brainwashed to "remember" false memories, or to forget portions of real events.

OK so far. Big government secrecy and nastiness, and captured alien space craft: I can believe in both of them. I *want* to believe in them. The scary part comes next, and it is the part which Bob Lazar is supposedly most reluctant to discuss: The aliens consider us nothing but "containers". Containers for souls, and that Jesus and two other major spiritual leaders were genetically engineered and implanted on earth, and their births carefully monitored. According to Lazar, religion is nothing but a set of guidelines established by the aliens for the purpose of keeping us "containers" from damaging each other.

Do you see what my dilemma is? I want to believe that Bob Lazar is telling the truth when he tells stories of flying saucers under the hollow mountains of Area 51. I don't want to believe him when he intimates than I am nothing more than a Mason jar for an alien soul snack, or whatever. There is room in me for dichotomy. I can believe him and not believe him at the same time, but that's not a satisfying position, because there is still doubt. This whole soul thing could also be disinformation on the government's part, or on the part of the aliens. Conspiracy theory is like fractal geometry, or particle physics; as you get deeper into it, the unanswered questions become larger and larger.

(Post Script: I was considering publishing this article in Wild Heirs, to give it a larger circulation. Just as I was about to save it to disk, I got an error message I had never seen before. It said "Publish this and you're history, Hardin." I pressed the OK button and quietly turned off the computer.)