



## **The New Hate: A History of Fear and Loathing on the Populist Right**

*Arthur Goldwag*

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From “Birthers” who claim that Barack Obama was not born in the United States to counter-jihadists who believe that the Constitution is in imminent danger of being replaced with Sharia law, conspiratorial beliefs have become an increasingly common feature of our public discourse. In this deeply researched, fascinating exploration of the ideas and rhetoric that have animated extreme, mostly right-wing movements throughout American history, Arthur Goldwag reveals the disturbing pattern of fear-mongering and demagoguery that runs through the American grain.

*The New Hate* takes readers on a surprising, often shocking, sometimes bizarrely amusing tour through the swamps of nativism, racism, and paranoid speculations about money that have long thrived on the American fringe. Goldwag shows us the parallels between the hysteria about the Illuminati that wracked the new American Republic in the 1790s and the McCarthyism that roiled the 1950s, and he discusses the similarities between the anti-New Deal forces of the 1930s and the Tea Party movement today. He traces Henry Ford’s anti-Semitism and the John Birch Society’s “Insiders” back to the notorious *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and he relates white supremacist nightmares about racial pollution to nineteenth-century fears of papal plots.

“The most salient feature of what I have come to call the New Hate,” Goldwag writes, “is its sameness across time and space. The most depressing thing about the demagogues who tirelessly exploit it—in pamphlets and books and partisan newspapers two centuries ago, on Web sites, electronic social networks, and twenty-four-hour cable news today—is how much alike they all turn out to be.”

## The New Hate: A History of Fear and Loathing on the Populist Right Details

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## **From Reader Review The New Hate: A History of Fear and Loathing on the Populist Right for online ebook**

### **Greg says**

While the topic is extremely important, I must admit I was somewhat disappointed at the lack of focus in this book. The author's presentation is somewhat chaotic, and each chapter seems to be a heck of a lot less coherent than it could be.

I would recommend instead Richard Hofstadter's superb "The Paranoid Style in American Politics" and "Anti-Intellectualism in American Life." While both are "dated" now, having been written half a century before, they are much more tightly focused and, hence, their message is more comprehensible and the argument presented is easier to follow.

Mr. Goldwag is certainly "right on" in attempting to show how our "modern" forms of bigotry and prejudice are but sad reincarnations of what has been a deep -- but seldom acknowledged -- thread running throughout American history. Anti-semitism, anti-Catholicism, anti-black, anti-immigrant, and anti-intellectualism (in the form of resenting fact-based arguments) are NOT new developments, although they continue to morph into different forms. In our current day, they have assumed a poisonous combination fueled by undoubted resentment at President Obama's "usurpation" of the presidency.

This often inchoate rage is the reason why so many people negatively impacted by the rapid concentration of wealth among the tiniest elite have turned, instead, in anger against the "progressives" who have supported equal rights for gays, women, and non-whites. At heart, it is fueled by the wish to return to a "yesteryear" when things were not only "better" but, more importantly, "as they were meant to be."

Progressives have failed to properly understand this and have, therefore, left behind in the dust many persons who might have become open to change had they been more sympathetically understood and empathetically treated.

Our sad, suffering, country!

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### **Erik Graff says**

The thesis this book, a review of various right-wing populist hate groups and their proponents from the time of the American revolution until the present (2012 in this case), is that the character of these movements has remained pretty much consistent, formally speaking, however much the objects of hatred (immigrants, blacks, Latins, Asians, communists, socialists, Masons, Catholics, secularists, capitalists, Jews, gays etc.) have changed. Thematically arranged, the book is no encyclopaedia of hate groups, but those interested in the fringes of political discourse may find material here that is new. Interestingly, Donald Trump is given mention on a few occasions as regards his allegations about then-president Obama.

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### **Darryl Hall says**

It was interesting to see how most of these groups that create conspiracy theories, when boiled down to their main driving force, is just plain ole bigotry, of either dark skinned people, Jews, secret societies or some religion, or a wicked combination of these. The problem with the book to me was too much quoting of sources and some of the different chapters were too disconnected from each other.

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### **Robert Owen says**

Arthur Goldwag's "The New Hate" is an interesting "how the hell did we ever get here" review of the historical and contemporary forces that have led to the ascendance of far-right reactionary politics. The new hate, of course, is simply a repackaged version of the old hate, and Goldwag spends most of his book exploring the forms and functions of these antiques over the last two centuries.

Goldwag covers a host of different groups that became the objects of conspiracy theorists whose crackpot notions leached their way into mainstream thought. Although by no means the only groups that Goldwag explores, he gives particularly loving attention to those who, throughout our history, have railed against Freemasonry (Illuminati) and completely fictitious Elders of Zion. Although in each case the details are different, the basic crackpot playbook used to "expose" / exploit these groups is the same.

- There is a supersecret group intent upon world domination.
- Their plan is to weaken the "good" people by promoting social policies designed to molly-coddle the masses through initiative-robbing programs of social welfare.
- In the dystopian goo that results, the need for new and strong leaders will emerge, which the supersecret group will exploit to TAKE OVER THE WORLD!!!!!! Bahahahahaha!!!!!!

Be vigilant, the story inevitably goes, because the freemasons or the Jews or the Catholics or the communists or the Moozlums or the liberals are always at work trying to make your daughters into prostitutes and your sons into homosexuals..... Goldwag describes how, through their promotion by demagogues and pundits, these paranoid theories find their way into mainstream thought and become the prevailing subtext of political and social policy.

Behold the Tea Party!

Great read, and well worth the time.

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### **David says**

bathroom reading for the democratic leisure class

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### **Ailith Twinning says**

Interesting read. Just goes thru some conspiracy theories like the Protocols, Masons, Illuminati, and mostly just kinda points out what everyone seems to forget -- apart from the way information travels now (which is entirely new and different, except in the myriad ways in which it isn't), what people tend to say hasn't much changed.

Also, I think the cheeky title the author admits is him being cheeky might have been a bad idea, makes it impossible to recommend it to people I know, they'll never read it, but they would if it'd just been like "A History of American Secret Societies" or something.

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### **Jason Jeffries says**

I think I was fortunate to chose to read this at a good time, after the (2014) mid-terms. I loved this book. It's been depressing lately being a fan of this president, mostly because of his supporters (or lack thereof) - anyway, this book was great for perspective, providing a reminder that the Right has housed all kinds of reactionary small-minded hatemongers spouting ridiculous nonsense and hyperbole since the beginning, but here we are, so..."hope", I guess. I well-considered the 2 and 3-star reviews for this book before reading it and can grant a few minor points but the book is excellent, footnoted, good taste of various well-traveled histories and narratives along with a few new ones. I'm a big fan of following right-wing (and left-wing) nut jobs, conspiracies, white (and black) nationalism, Christian nationalism, etc. I'd read this book again. I'll share a few of my favorite marked passages:

"The most salient feature of what I have come to call the New Hate is its sameness across time and space. The most depressing thing about the demagogues who tirelessly exploit it—in pamphlets and books and partisan newspapers two centuries ago, on Web sites, electronic social networks, and twenty-four-hour cable news today—is how much alike they all turn out to be."

"With white nationalists, you understand that you have reached the ground zero of hatred, the reductio ad absurdum of conspiracy theory."

"the notion that religious Christians suffer from state-sanctioned discrimination in the United States today is a hard one to swallow, even if the law does still require them to pay for their own religious schooling or, for the time being at least, forbids public schools to teach creationism as science."

"Freemasonry is not only compatible with American democracy; its ideals are implicit in the founding documents of the Republic"

All marked passages:

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### **Matt says**

An odd El Camino of a book, *The New Hate: A History of Fear and Loathing on the Populist Right* is either a half-hearted attempt to deliver red meat to progressives or a scholarly exploration dressed in an ill-fitting mini skirt and borrowed stilettos. I'm not sure what the author, Arthur Goldwag, was going for here, but the result was a clunky, overstuffed historical survey of Populist Right hate groups and their writings (more on this below) without any discernible insight into the "New" hate beyond "Meet the new Hate...same as the old Hate."

Goldwag should be commended for the exhaustive research he clearly did for *The New Hate*, but boy-oh-boy, he really needed a better plan (or editor) for tackling this subject. He deep-dives into the history in America of several populist right hates, like anti-Semitism, anti-African American, the anti-Masonites, etc., as well as some enduring conspiracy theories. Goldwag quotes extensively—and exhaustingly—from representative writings from the purveyors of various hates. The content of its long chapters frequently came more from direct quotes and excerpts than original work from the author. Passage after quote after excerpt after passage, etc. There's value in reading the quotes and excerpts but they should be used in the service of making a point. All too often, the point they are used to illustrate is purely tautological. Goldwag frequently provides little more than contextual connective tissue between quotes. And, clearly, one good excerpt would just not do when he had three at his disposal.

This does not mean that there isn't good stuff here. I learned a lot about the history of the Masons in the U.S. and the Illuminati conspiracy theory. I just didn't find a point to the book (and I presume I largely agree with Goldwag's politics). If Goldwag wanted to write a scholarly historical survey, he didn't do anything beyond produce a set of uneven genealogy for a selective list of hates. If he was seeking to muckrake, he was too unfocused, obtuse and timid. As such, *The New Hate* would have worked better as the lively notes section of a far more interesting and useful book.

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### **Jaime Mozo Dutton says**

Depressing.

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### **Robert Dormer says**

What on earth was this book about? I thought it would be an analysis of right wing lunacy and hatred. Instead it's a....history book? Scholarly monograph? Collection of quotations? I'm not sure. This is one confusing and seriously unorganized book. The author didn't really state a specific thesis until almost 3/4ths of the way through. For the most part it reads like a copiously footnoted and well researched meandering stream of consciousness. Do we really need two separate sets of footnotes? And apparently the author never met a quote he doesn't like, because he literally can't make it to the end of a page without citing someone else's work, if not block quoting it. Quotes are fine and dandy, but when I find myself rolling my eyes and heaving an exasperated sigh at the sixth quote in the last four pages, perhaps they're being abused. Seriously, this book can be thought of as a series of long quotations tied together with a tissue of jarring transitions between nominally related subjects - one minute he's talking about this, the next that. A hint - if you find yourself using the phrase "but I have strayed from my point" more than once in a chapter (it's used three times in the chapter on Freemasons), then you need to step away from the keyboard and figure out just what your point \*is\*. What I'm saying here is, this book seems like it has an important point - it's just flawed because apparently the author either couldn't really decide what that point might be, or couldn't be bothered to focus in on it and actually write a book about just that. It's a welter of interesting information, I just wish that it was all tied together into some kind of coherent whole.

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## **David says**

I'll start by stating that this is a very disturbing book. I had to stop reading quite often. Sometime the content is simply vile. I am not speaking of the author, but the beliefs of groups can be quite disturbing. Clearly, if one believed what some of these groups do believe, then genocide would be justified, or even an imperative, and that is very disturbing. Further, some of these conspiracy theories can make one's head twist in to a knot. I was reminded of Monty Python and the Holy Grail, "if she weighs the same as duck, she's made of wood....." is much like many of these conspiracy theories. I am often gobsmacked by their credulity. I've said many times that the ability to cover up something for decades only to unmasked by some plucky person on YouTube is highly improbable. If they're that powerful, you'd be deep sixed long ago. Sadly, the Internet has given these groups a mechanism for sharing their wild beliefs. At one time, the Turner Diaries were available online, but I was afraid to read them or I'd show up on some watch lists, but that book was one of the inspirations of the Oklahoma City bombers, and I wonder how crazy it really is. On the positive side, we've had groups like this throughout our history, so the phenomenon isn't something birthed by the Internet. Sadly though, they continue, or get revived. We beat the Nazi's, shut down the Bund, but now they're back. These groups are a threat to a civil society, and must be taken seriously. While they may not be able to bring down the government, the ability to inspire shooters, bombers, and other crimes, is a risk. This is an important subject.

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## **Matthew says**

It really shouldn't be much of a surprise that I agreed with most of what was in here, but I would like to point out that calling modern conservative bigotry "the New Hate" is somewhat inaccurate, as it really seems to be made up of older hates that have been repainted for a different time. Take Henry Ford's concern about Jewish rabbinical courts in New York, bring it forward a few decades, and it becomes the anti-Shariah movement advocated by Frank "Eyebrows" Gaffney and Pamela "Shrieking Harpy" Geller. Take concern about eastern European immigrants who still spoke their mother tongues, bring it forward a century or so, and it becomes the innumerable brigade of morons blathering on about how we speak English in America, while managing to completely forget their ancestors, who, odds are, didn't speak English when they arrived in America.

(In case you hadn't noticed, I'm not a big fan of them.)

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## **Ryan says**

A great profile of US conspiracism and paranoia. The beginning and the end were compelling, well researched, and at times hilarious. While it's understandable that the anti-masonic movements had to be addressed in order to trace the genealogy of US conspiracy-theory, that section seemed to go on forever and ever and ever. Perhaps it was the material, perhaps it was the writing, and perhaps it was just the reader's interest- but that section was alone in being less than excellent. This is an interesting and compelling - and very readable- text for anyone interested in the history of political conspiracism in the US.

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### **Elizabeth Sulzby says**

This is an important book in understanding the history of and growth of the virulent hatred in American politics currently. Every part of the book is excellent. Goldwag distinguishes between real conspiracies and "conspiracy theory/theorists" who take all sorts of seemingly divergent facts and weaves them into a Glen Beck-type "Pssst, here's what that really means," mentality. Goldwag's contribution that was most important was to give the historical forebears of today's "true believers."

OCCUPY movement scholars should have this book in their virtual and hard copy libraries. I read it just after reading Kevin Boyle's Arc of Justice. The two complement each other quite well.

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### **Wise\_owl says**

"The New Hate" was a fascinating read into area's of history I was aware of, but hadn't fully plumbed. It's thesis, if it can be said to have one, is that the new round of conspiracy theories and focused Right-Wing Populism is not that different from other such episodes in America's history, going all the way back to it's founding as a country.

Goldwag covers prejudices that still exist; those against Blacks and Jews for example. As well as those who are less popular today than they once were; anti-Masonic and anti-catholic sentiment for example. He tracks the course of when and where each of these forces has a serious impact on American history and politics, and traces lineages between them. Showing how Antisemitism and Anti-Masonic groups often, though not always, amounted to the same thing. How the language once used against Catholic immigrants from Ireland and Germany is nearly identical to that now employed against Muslims; That their strange religion will prevent them from assimilating. That they are foreign to the body politic and seek to dominate it. That they are 'swamping' the US' shores and displacing locals.

He shows how conspiracy theories about outsiders controlling the government often follow the same formula; the Brilliant, if Evil, 'others', be they Masons, Jews, the Illuminati, etc. and their domestic 'dupes' who help them undermine and destroy 'civilization'. Having some experience myself on-line with discussions of 'Cultural Marxism' it was interesting to see how this early 20th century bit of Anti-Jewish slander had morphed and progressed into the 21st century.

All in all Goldwag can't be accused of not wearing his impressions and opinions on his sleeve, but I would say the book is an important read on the history of idea's, idea's which have great political influence. We forget that people believe these things and act on them at our own peril.

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