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## The New Financial Crisis Report II

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**2026**

Reporting What's Really Happening in America and the World

### Inside this issue:

1. Observations
2. Conspiracies Theories
3. Interesting Facts
4. AI Watch
5. Scam Watch
6. Disputed Events
7. Civil Unrest Report
8. Winds of War
9. YouTube Summaries

We are in the most economically unstable and socially tumultuous period in the history of the modern world. The period covered by the previous Financial Crisis Report was marked by extreme fluctuations in the stock, commodities, and currency markets accompanied by severe and sometimes violent and deadly social disruptions, including historic pandemics, conflicts, riots, and even regime-changing coups. This new Financial Crisis Report II covers the period that begins with the advent of the 47th president of the United States, who augured in the hope of a new America that promises justice for all through strength and the elimination of corruption. This is symbolized by the crest with the scales of justice balanced on a sword that replaces the photo of the writer. The writer believes this is an unprecedented opportunity for the financially astute investor, given the extreme global trade imbalances and distortions in the stock, commodity, and currency markets that will occur as America strengthens economically and militarily. The Financial Crisis Report II is a free compilation of the opinions of David M. Miyoshi, and of those advisors, he subscribes to (with appropriate credits given) on how to benefit during this historic crisis. The writer receives no compensation from advisors whose articles or ideas may appear in this Report II which is issued primarily for CRITICISM, COMMENTARY AND EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES. The reader is welcome to check on all sources of information mentioned herein. Because this writer's and other advisors' opinions and observations are provided herein without charge, the reader is asked to make his/her judgment on the contents. The writer believes the articles presented are honest and sincere empirical observations of what he believes to be the truth. The writer is not perfect, but his north star is the belief that there is truth.

**"The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him." G. K. Chesterton**

## Happy New Year!



The Year of the Fire Horse charges in with a vibrant, unstoppable energy that sweeps us all up, ready or not. It's bold, fast-paced, and deeply personal, pushing us to take steps forward—even if we're not quite sure where we're headed. This year will spark a fresh wave of courage to take chances, break free from old routines, and speak our truth with confidence. There's a powerful drive toward living authentically, whether in how we love, work, or show up in the world. But with this high-energy vibe comes a need for balance. We'll have to keep an eye on our time, emotions, and expectations, especially when new possibilities pop up out of nowhere and decisions pile up fast. For many, this will be a year of big changes—think new careers, new homes, letting go of

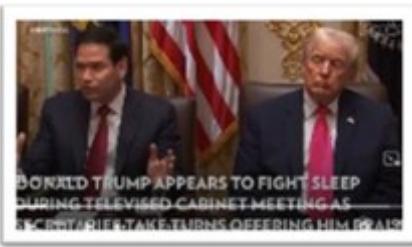
what's not working, or starting fresh with bold moves. Still, amidst all the excitement, staying grounded is key. Not every urge needs to be chased, and not every opportunity is the right one. The Horse encourages us to move with heart, but the Fire reminds us to tread carefully. This year calls for bravery, no doubt—but it also asks for wisdom.



Here are some quick observations of the events that transpired in December 2025. I hope you find them informative and edifying.

D. Miyoshi

## Observations



**December 2, 2025, at a Cabinet Meeting, President Trump said that the U.S. government had collected “literally trillions of dollars” in tariff revenue and that**

**he planned to give tax refunds out of tariffs next year.** He further claimed that tariff revenues would eventually allow the U.S. to eliminate the federal income tax entirely; Trump and his economic team framed the session as a “victory lap” for deregulation and tax reform; Trump stated, “Next year we’ll be giving back refunds out of the tariffs because we’ve taken in literally trillions of dollars.”; He argued that tariff revenue would be “so enormous” that income tax could become obsolete, saying, “I believe that at some point in the not too distant future, you won’t even have income tax to pay.”; Officials projected a “fantastic 2026” driven by tax cuts, deregulation, and refunds funded by tariffs; Context and Reality Check Tariff Revenue Numbers: The Bipartisan Policy Center estimated U.S. tariff collections at \$258.1 billion in 2025, far below Trump’s claim of “trillions”; Budget Shortfall: The federal deficit for the prior fiscal year was \$1.8 trillion, meaning tariff revenue alone could not realistically replace income tax; IRS Role: Even if income tax were abolished, the IRS would still administer other taxes (corporate, payroll, excise). Trump’s remarks did not address this structural issue. Takeaway: Trump did not announce a formal plan to close the IRS, but he repeatedly claimed tariffs could replace income tax and promised refunds funded by tariff revenue. His statements were aspirational and politically framed, but current revenue figures do not support the feasibility of eliminating income tax.



**December 3, 2025, Pete Hegseth responded to charges he committed a war crime by ordering a directive to leave no survivors following a strike back**

**on September 2 on a boat in the Caribbean carrying alleged smugglers;** The controversy was first widely reported in late November 2025 following a Washington Post investigation. The story gained traction between November 28–30, 2025, when lawmakers and legal experts began warning it could constitute a war crime. Major outlets like Politico, The Hill, USA Today, and NBC News amplified the issue in early December, with Hegseth publicly defending himself on December 2–3, 2025; Senator Ed Markey publicly called Hegseth a “war criminal” and demanded his removal; USA Today reported Hegseth defended the second strike, claiming he didn’t personally order it; The White House began distancing itself from the incident; Hegseth told reporters he didn’t see survivors due to “the fog of war”; ABC News confirmed the White House acknowledged multiple strikes on the boat; Legal scholars outlined possible investigative mechanisms but noted charges were unlikely.



Brian Cole Jr.

**December 4, 2025, The FBI announced that they arrested Brian Jerome Cole Jr., a 30-year-old from Woodbridge, Virginia, for allegedly planting pipe bombs outside the Democratic and Republican National Committee headquarters on the eve of January 6, 2021.** He faces federal explosives charges, and

officials say the investigation is ongoing; Key Details from the Announcement: Brian Jerome Cole Jr. is charged with use of an explosive device; Incident Background: Two pipe bombs were planted near the DNC and RNC offices on the night of January 5, 2021, just hours before the Capitol riot. The bombs did not detonate; Investigation Timeline: The FBI pursued this case for nearly five years, making it one of the longest-running mysteries tied to January 6; Press Conference: Attorney General Pam Bondi, FBI Director Kash Patel, and U.S. Attorney Jeanine Pirro led the announcement. They emphasized that this arrest marks a major breakthrough but investigations continue; Discovery of Bombs: Law enforcement found the

## Observations

devices on January 6, 2021, during security sweeps. Their presence diverted resources from the Capitol response; Context and Implications; National Security Concern: The bombs were functional and could have caused mass casualties if detonated. Their placement near both party headquarters suggested an intent to target the political system broadly; Lingering Questions: For years, the lack of arrests fueled speculation and conspiracy theories. This announcement is meant to close that chapter, though officials caution that more evidence and charges may emerge; Political Sensitivity: The case has been scrutinized by Congress, especially regarding security lapses (e.g., then-Vice President-elect Kamala Harris's Secret Service detail reportedly missed the DNC bomb during a sweep); Risks, Challenges, and Next Steps; Legal Process: Cole will face federal court in Washington, D.C. The government must prove his direct involvement beyond surveillance footage; Public Trust: Because of the delay in solving the case, officials will need to demonstrate transparency to rebuild confidence in law enforcement's handling of January 6; Ongoing Investigation: Authorities have not ruled out accomplices or broader networks. The arrest may lead to further indictments.



**December 5, 2025, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to review President Donald Trump's executive order limiting birthright citizenship and will hear arguments next year, likely**

deciding by the end of June; Rooted in a narrower reading of the 14th Amendment, Solicitor General D. John Sauer argues the 'subject to the jurisdiction thereof' clause covers only children who bear allegiance, as Trump seeks to restore the Clause's original meaning; Lower courts have already ruled the executive order unlawful and it has not been implemented since Jan. 20, with the American Civil Liberties Union representing two babies who would be subject to the order; A ruling for the administration would up-

end a longstanding tenet of the 14th Amendment and U.S. immigration law, marking the high court's first full merits consideration of the plan this year; Despite being considered fringe by many conservatives, the dispute will draw considerable public focus to the Court term as legal observers note the court's conservative majority often avoids clashes with President Donald Trump.



**December 5, 2025, Netflix announced its take-over of Warner Bros. Discovery's film and TV studios, including HBO and HBO Max. The deal is**

**valued at about \$82.7 billion (equity value \$72 billion) and is expected to close in 12–18 months**, following Warner's spin-off of its Discovery Global cable networks; Netflix agreed to pay \$27.75 per share; Scope of Acquisition: Warner Bros. film and TV studios; HBO and HBO Max streaming services; Iconic franchises like Harry Potter, Superman, Casablanca, Game of Thrones, The Sopranos, and The White Lotus; Warner Bros. gaming division also included; Financing: Netflix secured \$59 billion in financing from a consortium of banks to fund the deal; Breakup Fee: If the deal collapses, Netflix must pay Warner Bros. Discovery \$5.8 billion; Timeline: Closing is expected in 12–18 months (by late 2026); Dependent on Warner Bros. Discovery spinning off its Discovery Global TV networks (CNN, TNT, Discovery Channel, etc.); Strategic Goals: Netflix says it will maintain Warner Bros.' current operations, including theatrical releases; Projected \$2–3 billion in annual cost savings; Aim to expand studio operations and strengthen global reach; Risks & Challenges Regulatory Scrutiny: Labor unions (WGA West & East) and politicians have already called for the deal to be blocked, citing anti-trust concerns, job losses, and reduced content diversity; Industry Impact: This merger would combine the world's largest streaming service with one of Hollywood's most storied studios, reshaping the entertainment landscape and potentially reducing competition;



## Observations

**Contextual Note** This deal marks a historic shift: Netflix, once a DVD rental service, now positions itself as the dominant force in Hollywood, absorbing Warner Bros.—a studio with a century-long legacy. The announcement has sent shockwaves across the industry, with both excitement and alarm about its implications.



**December 8, 2025, Paramount (via Skydance) launched a \$108.4 billion hostile takeover bid for Warner Bros. Discovery, offering \$30 per**

**share in cash. This move directly challenges Netflix's recently announced \$82.7 billion cash-and-stock deal for Warner Bros.'s studios and streaming assets; Key Facts About Paramount's Hostile Bid; Bid Value: Paramount's offer is valued at \$108.4 billion enterprise value, including debt; Offer Terms: All-cash tender offer of \$30 per share, going directly to Warner Bros. Discovery (WBD) shareholders; Scope: Paramount seeks to acquire the entirety of WBD, including Warner Bros. studios, HBO/HBO Max, CNN, TNT, TBS, and other global networks; Comparison to Netflix Deal: Netflix's binding agreement is worth \$82.7 billion (enterprise value), structured as \$27.75 per share (cash + stock); Paramount argues its bid is "superior" because it is all cash and covers the whole company, not just studios and streaming; Strategic Messaging: Paramount pledged to release 30+ films theatrically and maintain traditional distribution windows, contrasting Netflix's more streaming-focused approach; Leadership: The bid is spearheaded by David Ellison (Skydance/Paramount), who has positioned the offer as better for Hollywood and shareholders; Antitrust Concerns: Both deals face scrutiny. Netflix's acquisition could raise competition concerns given its dominance in streaming, while Paramount's bid would create a massive media conglomerate; Break-up Fee: Netflix's deal includes a \$5.8 billion break-up fee, complicating Paramount's attempt to derail it; Risks and Chal-**

**lenges; Regulatory Scrutiny: Both bids will face antitrust review in the U.S. and abroad. Regulators may worry about reduced competition in streaming and theatrical distribution; Shareholder Decision: WBD shareholders must weigh cash certainty (Paramount) vs. potential upside (Netflix stock); Industry Impact: Paramount promises to protect theatrical releases, appealing to filmmakers and cinemas; Netflix's model could shorten theatrical windows, worrying Hollywood creatives; Timing: Netflix's deal is already signed and expected to close in 12–18 months, making Paramount's hostile bid a disruptive gamble.**



**December 8, 2025, a magnitude 7.6 earthquake struck off the coast of northern Japan (Aomori/ Sanriku region) at 11:15**

**p.m. JST.** It triggered tsunami warnings of up to 3 meters (10 feet), briefly alarming residents in Hokkaido and Aomori. The quake caused at least 17 injuries, generated tsunami waves up to 70 cm (28 inches), and prompted officials to issue a rare "megaquake advisory" due to elevated seismic risk along the Japan Trench; **Key Facts About the December 8 Earthquake. Context & Significance:** This quake is being referred to as the 2025 Sanriku Earthquake, echoing the region's long history of devastating seismic events (notably 1896 and 1933); While tsunami warnings were serious, the actual wave heights were relatively modest compared to catastrophic events like the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami; The event highlights Japan's robust early warning systems and preparedness measures, which helped minimize casualties despite the quake's strength; **Risks & Considerations; Aftershocks:** Several aftershocks were recorded, the strongest at magnitude 5.5 on the same day; **Infrastructure Stress:** Even without catastrophic damage, repeated seismic activity can weaken coastal defenses and infrastructure; **Preparedness Reminder:** Reinforces the importance of tsunami evacuation drills and earthquake-resistant construction in Japan's

## Observations

northeast.



**December 11, 2025, the Trump Gold Card was officially rolled out after an executive order signed in September. Purpose: Designed to replace the EB-5 investor**

**visa program (created in 1990) with a more direct, branded pathway to residency and citizenship;** Cost Individuals: \$1 million “gift” or contribution to the U.S. government; Corporations: \$2 million per foreign employee sponsored; Residency & Citizenship Path: Provides legal residency almost immediately (“in record time”); Applicants vetted by DHS can apply for citizenship within five years; Visual Design: The physical card features Trump’s portrait, the Statue of Liberty, and the American flag against a gold background; Platinum Tier: A higher-level Trump Platinum Card costs \$5 million and grants up to 270 days in the U.S. without taxation on non-U.S. income; Administration’s Framing: Promoted as “a green card but much better” — a premium, streamlined path for “the best people” to contribute economically; Replacement of EB-5: Unlike EB-5, which required investment in job-creating ventures, the Gold Card simplifies the process into a direct financial contribution; Risks, Criticisms, and Trade-Offs; Pay-to-Play Concerns: Critics argue it creates a two-tier immigration system, favoring the ultra-wealthy while narrowing opportunities for refugees, asylum seekers, and low-income applicants; Economic vs. Social Equity: While the administration frames it as a way to attract “top talent,” detractors see it as selling citizenship rather than fostering innovation or community investment; Tax Loopholes: The Platinum Card’s tax exemption raises concerns about wealthy individuals avoiding U.S. taxation while benefiting from residency; Security & Vetting: Applicants must still undergo DHS vetting, but the expedited nature raises questions about thoroughness of background checks; Contextual Notes;

The Gold Card reflects Trump’s broader immigration philosophy: restrictive for low-income applicants, expansive for wealthy investors; It’s part of a trend of “golden visa” programs seen globally (e.g., Portugal, Malta, UAE), but the U.S. version is more expensive and politically branded; The program is expected to generate billions in contributions if widely adopted, but its long-term impact on U.S. demographics and equity is uncertain; In short: The Trump Gold Card is a \$1M fast-track visa program replacing EB-5, marketed as a premium path to U.S. citizenship. It’s controversial for privileging wealth over merit, but positioned by the administration as a way to bring in “the best of the best”



**December 13, 2025, a mass shooting occurred at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. Two people were killed and eight others critically injured.**

The suspect remains at large. Around 4:05 p.m. EST, gunfire erupted inside the Barus & Holley Engineering Building, a seven-story complex housing physics and engineering labs; Casualties: 2 confirmed dead, 8 hospitalized in critical but stable condition; Suspect: Described as a male dressed in black, last seen exiting the building onto Hope Street; Lockdown: Brown University issued an active shooter alert, urging students to RUN, HIDE, FIGHT as a last resort; Providence Police: Commander Timothy O’Hara confirmed the suspect’s escape route and said “every resource possible” is being used to locate him; The shooting occurred during final exams week, with engineering design exams underway in the building; The Barus & Holley complex contains over 100 laboratories, dozens of classrooms, and faculty offices, making it a high-density academic site.

## Observations



**December 14, 2025, at least 15 people were killed and 29 were injured in a mass shooting at Bondi Beach, Sydney, Australia.** The attack targeted a Jewish Hanukkah celebration and has been declared a terrorist incident; Casualties: 12 confirmed dead (including one of the attackers; 29 injured, among them two police officers who required surgery; Attackers: Two gunmen opened fire from a pedestrian bridge near Campbell Parade; One assailant was killed at the scene; The second is in custody but critically injured; Police are investigating whether a third suspect was involved; Explosives: Authorities discovered suspected improvised explosive devices (IEDs) near the site, prompting bomb-disposal operations; Motive: Officials have identified antisemitism and terrorism as the driving motives behind the attack; Global Response: Leaders worldwide, including Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, condemned the attack and expressed solidarity with Australia; Antisemitism in Australia: The attack comes amid a rise in antisemitic incidents linked to tensions following the Israel–Gaza war that began in October 2023; The presence of IEDs suggests the attackers intended a broader terror operation beyond the shooting; Bondi Beach is one of Australia's most iconic public spaces, making this both a symbolic and devastating strike against the Jewish community and broader public safety; National Security: The incident has been classified as a terrorist attack, likely prompting heightened security measures across Australia; Community Vigil: Jewish and broader Sydney communities are expected to hold vigils in the coming days to honor victims.

**December 14, 2025, Rob Reiner (78) and Michele Singer (68) were found dead in their Brentwood, Los Angeles home; Authorities are treating the case as an appar-**

**ent homicide;** Their son, Nick Reiner (32), a screenwriter with a history of drug addiction, was arrested and booked on murder charges. He is being held on \$4 million bail; LAPD's robbery-homicide division is leading the investigation. A search warrant has been obtained for a full crime scene review; Tributes have poured in from Hollywood and political leaders. Former President Barack Obama praised Reiner's contributions to film and television, while LA Mayor Karen Bass called the loss "heartbreaking"; Directed iconic films such as The Princess Bride, When Harry Met Sally..., A Few Good Men, and This Is Spinal Tap; Known for blending comedy, romance, and drama with enduring cultural impact; Active political voice, outspoken critic of Trump-era policies.



**December 16, 2025, President Trump announced the Venezuelan blockade, via posts on his social media platform. He declared a**

**"TOTAL AND COMPLETE BLOCKADE" of all sanctioned oil tankers entering or leaving Venezuela, framing it as a major escalation against Nicolás Maduro's government;** Trump ordered a naval blockade targeting all sanctioned oil tankers moving in and out of Venezuela; He claimed Venezuela was "completely surrounded by the largest Armada ever assembled in the History of South America"; The blockade would remain until Venezuela returned to the U.S. "all of the Oil, Land, and other Assets that they previously stole from us"; Trump labeled the Venezuelan government a "foreign terrorist organization", citing alleged theft, terrorism, drug smuggling, and human trafficking; He warned the campaign would "only get bigger" and suggested possible land strikes; Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro condemned the blockade, calling it an act of aggression; U.S. Lawmakers & Experts: Critics described the move as an unauthorized act of war, raising constitutional and international law concerns; Market Impact: Analysts noted the blockade could disrupt Venezuelan oil exports, though the immediate effect on global oil



## Observations

markets might be modest; Legal Concerns: The blockade bypassed congressional approval, sparking debate over presidential war powers; International Law: Naval blockades are often considered acts of war under international law; Regional Stability: The escalation risks destabilizing South America and straining U.S. relations with allies in the region.



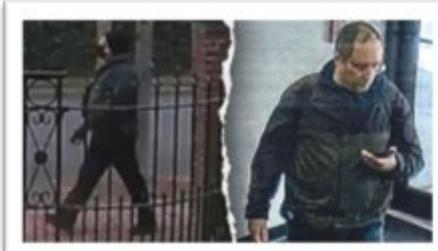
**December 17, 2025, President Trump announced a \$1,776 "Warrior Dividend" during a nationally televised address; It will be a**

**one-time payment of \$1,776 to U.S. military service members;** The amount is symbolic, referencing 1776, the year of U.S. independence; The White House framed it as a gesture to thank troops and commemorate 250 years of U.S. military service; Approximately 1.45 million service members will receive the payment; This includes: Active-duty personnel (~1.28 million); Reserve members (~174,000); Veterans are not included; only currently serving personnel qualify; Trump stated the checks were "already on the way" and would arrive before Christmas 2025; Although Trump suggested the money came from tariff revenue, multiple sources confirm: The \$1,776 payments are NOT funded by tariffs; They come from congressionally approved housing funds; Specifically, \$2.9 billion originally allocated to subsidize military housing allowances was redirected to fund the dividend.



**December 17, 2025, FBI Deputy Director Dan Bongino announces his resignation stating he will leave his post in January 2026.** The announcement was made via a post on

X (formerly Twitter) and confirmed by President Trump the same day; Bongino expressed gratitude to President Trump, Attorney General Pam Bondi, and Director Patel in his resignation post; He hinted at returning to his media career, with Trump commenting, "I think he wants to go back to his show"; Reports suggest tensions with AG Bondi over handling of the Jeffrey Epstein files contributed to his decision; Background: Bongino is a former Secret Service agent, NYPD officer, and conservative podcaster before joining the FBI leadership; Tenure: His time as Deputy Director lasted less than a year, marked by clashes with the Justice Department and controversy over his outspoken style; Bongino's departure is considered one of the most notable resignations within Trump's administration, given his visibility and media background; Reports suggest Andrew Bailey may be considered as a likely replacement for Bongino; His resignation comes amid broader criticism of FBI leadership, including scrutiny of Director Patel's use of government resources.



**December 18, 2025, Authorities found Claudio Manuel Neves-Valente dead inside a storage unit in Salem, New Hampshire;**

**He is named as the individual responsible for the Brown University mass shooting;** He was also linked to another homicide; Investigators connected Neves-Valente to the murder of MIT professor Nuno Loureiro; Neves-Valentes died before he could be taken into custody; Authorities reported that Neves-Valente was found dead from a self-inflicted gunshot wound, meaning he was never arrested alive; His death effectively closed the active search; With

## Observations

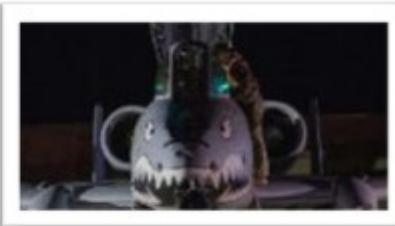
the suspect deceased, the multi-state manhunt concluded, and investigators shifted to reconstructing his movements and motives.



### December 19, 2025, Tens of thousands of Epstein File documents and photos were released; The release was mandated by The Epstein Files Transparency

Act, signed by President Donald Trump; The DOJ said the volume of material was too large to release at once, so documents are being published on a rolling basis; The initial release included: Thousands of photos from Epstein's homes, travels, and social circles; Police reports and investigative materials; Grand jury transcripts (heavily redacted) from multiple cases involving Epstein and associates; PBS and CBS both confirmed the scale and redactions in the release; Large portions of the documents are blacked out, including names, dates, and investigative details; Key investigative files known to exist—such as materials leading to Epstein's 2019 federal indictment and Ghislaine Maxwell's 2020 indictment—were not included in the release; This has led lawmakers and victim advocates to question whether the DOJ is withholding critical evidence; At least 15 released files disappeared from the DOJ website. Missing items included: Photos of Epstein with Bill Clinton; A photo of Donald Trump, Melania Trump, Epstein, and Ghislaine Maxwell; Images of a room with a massage table; Nude photos and nude paintings (faces redacted); NBC News confirmed the disappearance and noted growing scrutiny of the DOJ's handling of the release; The release confirms at least 1,200 alleged victims; This is the first time this number has been publicly confirmed; Bipartisan criticism of the DOJ; Lawmakers from both parties have raised concerns: Democrats and Republicans say the release is incomplete and not compliant with the law's deadline; Sen. Dick Durbin called for an investigation into why the DOJ did not release all files at once; Senate Democratic leadership accused the DOJ of a "cover-up" to protect Donald Trump, citing the missing files and incomplete release; These are political statements, not verified

facts—but they reflect the political reaction; The DOJ says more files are coming; Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche stated that the DOJ will continue releasing files due to the "volume of materials" involved; No timeline has been provided for the remaining documents.



### December 19, 2025, The U.S. launched large-scale retaliatory strikes targeting ISIS infrastructure across central Syria; The operation was named "Operation Hawkeye Strike."

**The U.S. military struck more than 70 ISIS targets, including fighters, weapons sites, and infrastructure;** The U.S. used fighter jets, attack helicopters, and artillery in the coordinated operation; Targets were spread across multiple locations in central Syria, focusing on ISIS operational capacity; Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said the strikes were a direct response to the killings of the three Americans and aimed to eliminate ISIS fighters and infrastructure; President Donald Trump described the retaliation as "very serious" and aimed at the "murderous terrorists responsible" for the attack; U.S. Special Envoy Tom Barrack said the ISIS ambush reinforced the U.S. partner-led counterterrorism strategy in Syria, not weakened it; ISIS activity has recently increased in parts of Syria, including Idlib and the Palmyra desert, with mobile cells conducting rapid attacks; U.S. forces remain in Syria primarily for counter-ISIS operations in partnership with local Syrian forces.



### December 24, 2025 — A powerful atmospheric river storm smashed Christmas rainfall records across Southern California

## Conspiracies Theories

**nia on Dec 24 and Dec 25, triggering widespread flooding, road closures and evacuations in burn-scar communities.** The National Weather Service reported 1.88 inches at LAX, breaking a 1971 Christmas Day record, while Santa Barbara Airport logged 4.52 inches, more than doubling its 1955 mark. Heavy rain also set new daily records in Burbank, Oxnard, Camarillo, Lancaster and Palmdale. Flooding shut down portions of major freeways, including Interstate 5, and tens of thousands lost power as emergency crews conducted water rescues. Officials warned that saturated hillsides could continue to produce mudslides as the storm system slowly moved east.



**December 25, 2025, President Trump announced that he had personally authorized U.S. military strikes against ISIS-affiliated militants in northwest Nigeria, specifically in Sokoto State;** The strike

was described as a “powerful and deadly” operation targeting terrorist camps; According to Trump’s public statements, the strike was carried out in response to: ISIS attacks on Christian communities in the region; His earlier warnings that the U.S. would intervene if such killings continued; U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) stated the mission targeted ISIS militants, not Nigerian government forces; Multiple sources confirm the operation was conducted in coordination with Nigerian authorities, and in some reporting, at Nigeria’s request; There is no evidence that the U.S. attacked Nigerian military forces. Location; Sokoto State, in northwest Nigeria; Area known for activity by ISIS-West Africa and other militant groups; Method of Attack; U.S. Navy launched Tomahawk missile strikes from a warship; Casualties; AFRICOM reported “multiple” ISIS militants killed; No confirmed civilian casualties; No Nigerian military casualties reported; Political and Public Reaction; Supporters of Trump praised the strike as decisive action against terrorism; Nigerian government emphasized that terrorism affects both Christians and Muslims, pushing back on the framing of a “Christian genocide”



**December 30, 2025, President Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu met at Mar-a-Lago to discuss the next phase of the Gaza ceasefire plan, presenting a united front while acknowledging stalled progress.** Trump pressed for movement into “Phase 2” of his 20-point proposal, which requires Hamas to disarm, and warned Iran against rebuilding its nuclear or missile programs; Netanyahu, on his fifth U.S. visit of the year, echoed Trump’s calls for regional stability as both leaders signaled that major issues—including Hamas’ refusal to disarm and tensions in the West Bank—remain unresolved



**Dictionary Definition of a Conspiracy Theory:** A theory that seeks to explain a disputed case or matter as a plot by a secret group or alliance, rather than an individual or isolated act. “

**In my attempt to uncover and publish the truth, as I see it, I am often labeled a “conspiracy theorist.” So, I decided to subscribe to a publication that covers conspiracy theories called**



## Conspiracies Theories



**This publication features articles written by authors who have been vetted for their expertise in the subject they cover. The author's name appears under the title of their article. The authors claim that what they write about are facts the government does not want you to know. We should note that the term "conspiracy theory" was originally employed by the CIA to describe alternate explanations that diverged from official accounts of the government. Recently, RFK Jr. said the term is now used to discredit individuals or discourage critical thinking. Or, in other words, to prevent one from seeking the facts.**

**From time to time, I will provide selected articles from the Conspiracy Report that I believe are true. Some articles have been shortened for brevity. I hope you find them interesting, if not edifying.**

**D. Miyoshi**



***The U.S. Government doesn't use our data against us. Or maybe you don't completely agree. Maybe you have questions...***

**By David Sussin**

We happily give the U.S. Government our private information.

We fill out the forms without question.

When we pay taxes, have a baby, apply for a driver's license, or collect social security, nobody worries about it -- our data is safe with the government.

Unlike criminal hackers in China or Nigeria scamming us with fake emails promising a gazillion dollars if we just click a link, the U.S. Government doesn't use our data against us.

Or maybe you don't completely agree. Maybe you have questions...

For example: Why is the U.S. Government paying Palantir, a private software company, over \$12 billion dollars across multiple agencies to leverage our private data?

The company would tell you it's only trying to help the government better use the data it has to improve the world. It's a version of the goal Palantir had when it was founded, over twenty years ago by Alex Carp, Peter Thiel and others in Palo Alto.

Their business then was adapting algorithms that uncovered credit card fraud for use by the CIA and FBI to fight terrorism. Not as fun as launching an app that delivers tacos to your home, but you can't argue with fighting terrorism as a goal.

Palantir offered government agencies a tool to analyze

## Conspiracies Theories

huge datasets and find hidden links, connect dots. And ultimately, find terrorists and criminals. They pitched it as a way to do mass surveillance without surveilling anyone - they were just identifying illegal behavior through existing data streams.

Turns out, the idea of digging into private data of U.S. citizens has major appeal in President Donald Trump's White House.

The Department of Defense is paying Palantir nearly \$10 billion dollars to connect the dots in the massive data stream from satellites, drones, sensors, logistics systems, maintenance records, and intelligence reports.

Other customers include the IRS -- keepers of private data for every American, or at least the tax paying ones. Then there's the Center for Disease Control, and the Veterans Administration, also Palantir customers.

But the agency getting the most attention is in charge of immigration and customs enforcement, the one known as ICE.

This group is a major customer for Palantir's investigative platforms, to the tune of hundreds of millions in spending. They've amassed millions of data points, including cell phone history, social media posts and tax information.

The company is integrated into ICE's day-to-day data surveillance leading to deportations.

Hard to argue against catching criminals.

But Palantir's software tools allow something never

before possible in the massive government database: it can cross-check across agencies.

Earlier this year, President Trump signed an executive order calling for the "consolidation" of these different data sources, resulting in a potential single source of information on Americans that the government has never had before -- and that even Republicans have historically opposed.

Merged data across all government agencies means the government can make connections as citizens hit various touch points with agencies through their life. The government could monitor citizens without physically watching them.

If it sounds like science fiction, or just too far-fetched, it shouldn't. Because it's already happening within ICE, to catch undocumented immigrants and criminals.

It's not hard to imagine this is just a test drive before the data tools are expanded to keep all citizens in line with government wishes.

In May of this year, 13 former Palantir employees signed a letter warning, "Palantir's leadership has abandoned its founding ideals" calling the use of Palantir's data tools an "escalating danger to Democracy."

Former Palantir engineer Linda Xia said the biggest danger was in this combining of data across agencies: "Data that is collected for one reason should not be repurposed for other uses. Combining all that data, even with the noblest of intentions, significantly increases the risk of misuse."

## Conspiracies Theories

What exactly are we talking about here?

Currently ICE can match state DMV databases against immigration files, but obviously DMV data includes nearly every American. If the data is cross-checked with Federal taxes or travel records, everyone's behavior can be easily tracked.

ICE's Palantir platforms can ingest cell tower records and phone extraction data. If applied domestically, the government could map an American's entire social graph -- who they meet, where they go, or if they are a supporter of the government or not.

ICE can link employment authorization data, Social Security records, and benefit claims, making it trivial to flag fraud on any American they choose.

Palantir systems connect FBI, DHS, and local police records with ICE data -- a good thing now, as it lets ICE agents instantly see criminal history, parole status, and immigration status in one screen.

But if normalized for all U.S. citizens, a minor arrest or mistaken police report could surface whenever a citizen interacts with the government, making small mistakes or false allegations follow someone for life.

ICE is now using mobile facial recognition technology to track immigrants and tie their identities to "derogatory information" compiled in one of their database. The agency also uses Clearview AI, facial recognition tech that scrapes social media, and much of the data is managed by Palantir.

Deporting more immigrants remains a popular goal in the United States. But the technology used to do it

should raise concerns. And Palantir has only just begun. Today, the company is worth more than \$400 billion, with over half of its revenue coming from government contracts.

If you're not a criminal, and you're in the country legally, you might think your data is safe to share with Washington D.C.

But when the government can make life hell by questioning your taxes or your mortgage or your online purchases or your passport application, it just might motivate you to vote in ways that keep that government in power. You know, so it stays out of your hair.

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**Now, you'd think a historian studying Jews in Galilee in 40 BCE might mention a particular Jew born in a town in Galilee called Nazareth, who went on to inspire the biggest religion on Earth.**

By David Sussin

Justus of Tiberias might be the worst historian ever.

Justus lived in the first century, in a region called Gal-

## Conspiracies Theories

ilee. The focus of his writing was Jewish history.

Now, you'd think a historian studying Jews in Galilee in 40 BCE might mention a particular Jew born in a town in Galilee called Nazareth, who went on to inspire the biggest religion on Earth.

Today, there are 2.4 billion people who believe this particular Jew is divine or divinely inspired.

But guess who Justus of Tiberias never mentions in his histories? Jesus of Nazareth.

Skeptics point to this as proof Jesus didn't actually exist. But it's actually not surprising a historian at the time overlooked the future King of Kings.

In his day (between 4 BCE and 30 CE), Jesus was simply not famous. He was one of many wandering prophets and messianic figures in Judea and Galilee.

He wasn't politically powerful or wealthy, and to top it off, he didn't preach that long (the Gospel of John mentions three Passovers, which suggests Jesus's time as a public figure only spanned three years).

Justus of Tiberias wasn't alone in missing the story of Jesus. There was nothing written about Jesus during his lifetime -- at least nothing that has survived.

The Apostle Paul changed all that. He was highly educated with a key skill: he knew how to write.

And Paul had a story to tell that would literally change the world. Safe to assume you've heard it: Paul, on the road to Damascus -- ironically on a mission to hunt down the followers of Jesus -- runs into the man himself.

This should have been impossible. Jesus was dead, crucified by the Romans years before. Yet there he was, buried, then "raised on the third day". The story of the resurrection was born.

Paul's letters are the earliest written mention of Jesus we have. And while Paul refers to Jesus being buried and then returning, it wasn't until the Gospels decades later we learned that Jesus was actually placed in a tomb outside the walls of Jerusalem.

Early Christians did not mark its location for fear of persecution. That fear ended in 335 CE when Roman Emperor Constantine I legalized Christianity. Christian holy sites now had to be identified and protected. Among the most important? That tomb.

Local Christians showed Constantine where it was, insisting they still remembered the location. A basilica was built over the site.

During construction, workers discovered an old tomb buried there, seeming to confirm this was the authentic location. The site became the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and remains the most revered and traditional site of Jesus's death and resurrection.

Yet over time, skeptics doubted the location as historically authentic. Some of the faithful longed for a place that wasn't so highly ornate or richly adorned like the Emperor's Church.

The Gospels describe the Tomb much simpler. John 19:41 states, "Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid."

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is not near a garden. It's in the middle of a dense urban area.

## Interesting Facts

In 1883, British General Charles Gordon claimed to find the better site: a simple tomb carved into rock outside the city and, as described in the Bible, near lush gardens.

Archeologists consider this "Garden Tomb" to be too old to have been newly cut in Jesus's time, as the Gospels describe. But the site was believable enough -- and fit the faithful's vision -- so doubt was cast as to where the accurate site was located.

This year, incredibly, scientific analysis of samples deep under the Church of the Holy Sepulchre may have erased the doubt.

The excavation began in 2022, and it was the most extensive at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in 200 years. The goal was not to answer any mysteries. Workers were just meant to replace the basilica's 19th century flooring. But luckily, religious communities permitted archaeological excavations beneath the floor.

Archaeologists uncovered amazing finds deep under the basilica, including ancient pottery, oil lamps, glass, and even remnants of low stone walls dating back to the Iron Age.

But it was a niche field of scientific study called archaeobotanical analysis that delivered the breakthrough. Soil samples were collected from deep under the basilica and put through fine sieves to separate plant remains like seeds, nuts, and charcoal.

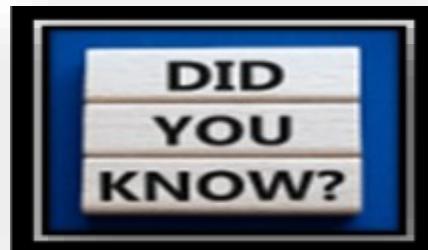
Scientists then examined the plant remains to identify what plants were present at the site. What they found could have been pulled right from the Bible: olive trees and grapevines were all over this site dating back to the Christian era and before.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre may appear overly ornate, but the tomb below exactly matched the topog-

raphy described in the Gospels as the Tomb of Jesus.

Our favorite ancient historian Justus of Tiberius shouldn't feel too bad missing the story of Jesus. 2,000 years later, mainstream science is still filling in the details.

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**Here are some interesting facts taken from the Publications' Interesting Facts and History Facts**



Besides being interesting, I found them thought-provoking and wanted to share them with you.

D. Miyoshi

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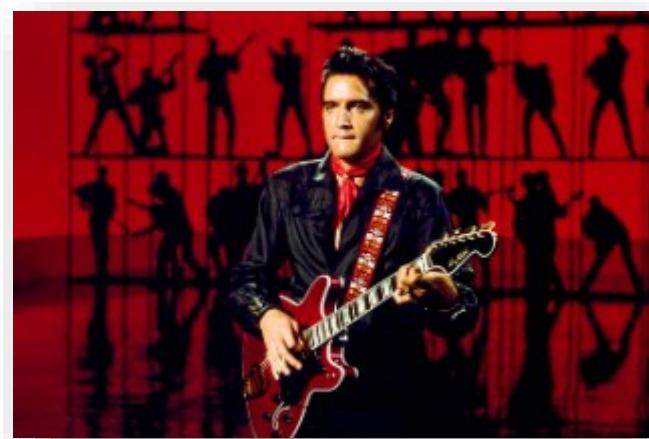
By Bennet Kleiman

**Rock Out to These 6 Facts About Elvis Presley**

## Interesting Facts



Few entertainers have achieved greater acclaim than the King of Rock 'n' Roll, Elvis Aaron Presley. From his humble beginnings in [Tupelo, Mississippi](#), to his lavish later years spent at [Graceland](#), Elvis lived a fascinating life, and his performances and songs remain almost as beloved today as when they were first recorded. In honor of the King's birthday on January 8, we've compiled six facts about one of the most renowned musicians of the 20th century.



Credit: Michael Ochs Archives via Getty Images

### Elvis Never Performed Outside of North America

Despite being a global sensation — an estimated 40% of his record sales occurred internationally — Elvis

never performed outside of North America. In fact, the only time he ever held a show not on U.S. soil was during a series of three Canadian concerts, in Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver, all in 1957.

His tendency to stick stateside had little to do with his rumored fear of flying, however, as he still traveled by plane to perform in Hawaii in 1973. The most widely accepted (if still unconfirmed) reason for the lack of foreign gigs has to do with his manager, Colonel Tom Parker. Parker was born in the Netherlands, and reportedly feared that his status as an undocumented immigrant would make returning to the United States impossible. That may have been why he only booked Elvis on North American concerts.



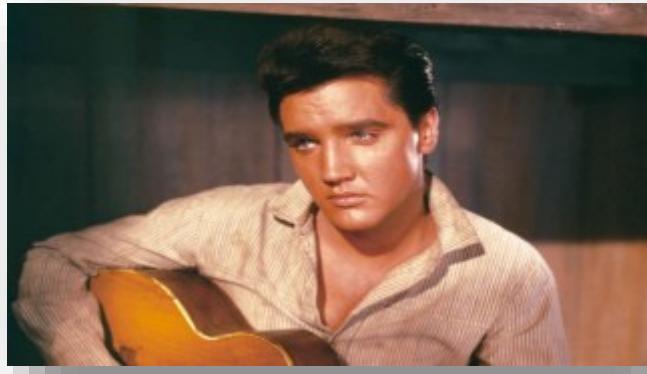
Credit: RB/ Redferns via Getty Images

### Elvis Was a Natural Blond and Used Shoe Polish as Hair Dye

You'd be hard-pressed to find evidence of Elvis' natural blond hairstyle, as only one known photo exists, hanging on the wall of Graceland. From a young age, Elvis dyed his hair jet black with shoe polish — which was cheaper than hair dye — in an effort to make his blue eyes stand out. Elvis also began applying eyeliner to further accentuate his eyes around 1960, a trick he learned from actor Tony Curtis. As Elvis rose to fame, he continued to dye his hair to maintain his image, though he eventually shifted from shoe polish to a patented hair dye combination of Miss Clairol 51D and Black Velvet/Mink Brown by Paramount. Elvis later enlisted the services of Larry Geller, a beloved stylist in West Hollywood who also worked with stars

## Interesting Facts

such as Marlon Brando and Steve McQueen.



Credit: Archive Photos/ Archive Photos via Getty Images

### Elvis Didn't Write Any of the Songs He Performed

Despite recording over 600 songs throughout his career, Elvis' skills were lacking on the songwriting front. In a 1957 interview with *Dig* magazine, he explained, "I never wrote a song in my life... I've never even had an idea for a song." In fact, Elvis never learned how to read or write music. That didn't stop him from being credited as co-writer on many tracks, as his label demanded that certain songwriters give up 50% of authorship for any songs that Elvis recorded.

This isn't to say Elvis went about the recording process lazily — quite the opposite. In the recording studio, he sometimes did 40 takes of a single track until it was perfect.



Credit: Pictorial Press Ltd/ Alamy Stock Photo

### Elvis Earned Several Black Belts in Karate

Elvis began training in the shotokan style of karate in 1958 under a man named Juergen Seydel while he was stationed in Germany as a member of the U.S. Army. Upon returning to the United States in 1960, Elvis earned his first black belt in the style of chitoyru from Hank Slemansky. Elvis later studied in a Memphis dojo under Kang Rhee, where he received a seventh degree black belt in 1973 and an eighth in 1974. Rhee wrote a book about his experiences training Elvis, noting that he "was the only person I ever saw wear boots into the dojo," and that the musician "insisted on using real firearms" during training instead of wooden ones. Elvis was so passionate about karate that he later co-founded the Tennessee Karate Institute in 1974. Some have questioned whether his black belts had more to do with his celebrity status than his skills, but his love for martial arts was undeniable.



Credit: David LEFRANC/ Gamma-Rapho via Getty Images

### Elvis Appears on the Most Popular Commemorative U.S. Stamp of All Time

First issued by the United States Postal Service on January 8, 1993, a stamp featuring Elvis Presley went on to become the most popular commemorative stamp of all time. In 1992, two prospective designs were presented — one of a young Elvis from the 1950s and another of an older Elvis from his 1973 performance in Hawaii — with the former eventually selected by a whopping 75% of 1.2 million mail-in votes. Some 500 million copies of the stamp — three times the usual

## Interesting Facts

run — were printed by the USPS. Elvis would be honored with yet another commemorative stamp in 2015, making him the only musical artist with two USPS stamps featuring their likeness.



Credit: Bettmann via Getty Images

### Elvis Purchased FDR's Old Presidential Yacht

During his presidency, Franklin Delano Roosevelt re-commissioned a 165-foot former Coast Guard cutter known as the USS Potomac as his official presidential yacht. Dubbed the “floating White House,” the yacht went largely unused after FDR passed away in 1945, though it was later purchased by Elvis Presley in 1964 for \$55,000. Elvis didn’t purchase the yacht for personal use, however; instead, he donated it to St. Jude Children’s Hospital in 1964 so that they could resell it to raise money.

The yacht isn’t the only presidential connection that Elvis shares. Genealogists also discovered that Elvis is actually a sixth cousin once removed of President Jimmy Carter.

### Arts & Culture



Few are immune to the lure of a hidden treasure, its location well-protected by natural fortifications and/or the obscure clues of an old map or legend. The intrigue has spawned an array of popular novels, such as Robert Louis Stevenson’s 1880s *Treasure Island*, and movies including 1981’s *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, but there are also a few real-life stories of secret valuables and the explorers who sought them. Here are seven of history’s most famous treasures — some real and others possibly pure fantasy — that have kept fortune-seekers on the hunt for years.

## 7 Mysterious Hidden Treasures

## Interesting Facts



### The Copper Scroll Treasures

Discovered in the mid-20th century, the 2,000-year-old Dead Sea Scrolls represented the archaeological find of a lifetime, yet one of them points to hidden riches of even greater value. The lone manuscript written on a copper scroll, officially designated "3Q15," reveals that around 160 tons of gold and silver are buried in 63 spots throughout modern-day Israel. Unfortunately, some of the wording in the ancient Hebrew text is a mystery to contemporary scholars, while other passages describe vague locations that are nearly impossible to pinpoint. It's been speculated that the valuables have already been dug up by later generations of Jews or the Knights Templar (see below), though the more tantalizing possibility exists that the billions of dollars worth of gold and silver remain up for grabs.



### The Knights Templar Treasure

The Knights Templar, founded as the Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and the Temple of Solomon, wasn't so poor in its heyday, as it loaded up its coffers through the spoils of war, donations of royal benefactors, and oversight of an extensive banking network. Unsurprisingly, the medieval military order's wealth and influence drew the scrutiny of other powerful figures, and in 1307, King Phillip IV of France set about disbanding the order and claiming its riches. Although many of its members were arrested and executed, the Knights Templar allegedly smuggled their valuables out of Paris via hay carts or vessels. As such, its artifacts could be almost anywhere in the world, although a few collectors in recent years have pieced together what looks to be an impressive assemblage of Templar keepsakes, including a sword, libation cup, helmet, and obsidian chalice.



### The Lost City of Paititi

If the idea of secret caves and boats overflowing with gold tickles your fancy, then how about an entire city? Legend points to one such place in the Peruvian Andes, rumored to be a refuge for the Incas who escaped Spanish conquest in the 16th century. Expeditions have been trying to find Paititi for decades, but the biggest obstacle is its alleged location, in the midst of dense Amazonian growth, treacherous cliffs, and unwelcoming native tribes. In recent years, French explorer Thierry Jamin has followed clues toward an unusual "square mountain" in the Megantoni National Sanctuary of southeastern Peru, though time will tell whether this locale holds the secret city he and legions

## Interesting Facts

of predecessors have sought.



### The Honjo Masamune

While some treasures consist of sparkling gems, others, like the creations of 13th-century Japanese swordsmith Goro Nyudo Masamune, are one-of-kind works of craftsmanship. Masamune forged one particularly potent blade that took on the name of an early wielder, Honjo Shigenaga, and passed through generations of the Tokugawa Shogunate that ruled Japan into the 19th century. However, shortly after the Honjo Masamune was named a National Treasure in 1939, the loss of World War II led to an order for the Japanese to turn over their swords, including the Tokugawa's 700-year-old katana, to American occupiers.

Sleuths have since sought to recover the priceless artifact, with some following the dead-end trail of a "Sgt. Coldy Bimore" who supposedly took possession. Others are resigned to the idea that it sits in the dusty basement or attic of an unknown veteran's surviving family.



### Nazi Gold in Lake Toplitz

While the Japanese surrendered their treasures at the close of World War II, the Nazis supposedly hid theirs by dumping millions of dollars of gold into the Austrian Alps' Lake Toplitz. But while rumors of the lake being a Nazi repository gained steam when counterfeit Allied currency was found submerged there in the 1960s, divers haven't uncovered any of its alleged crates of gold. This is partly due to the difficulty of accessing the densely forested region, as well as the characteristics of the lake; frozen for much of the year, it also lacks oxygen in its deeper reaches, allowing the giant trees that fall in to remain preserved and block the path of explorers.



### The Dutch Schultz Stash

## AI Watch

Famed gangster Dutch Schultz met his demise in a hail of gunfire at a New Jersey restaurant in October 1935, but not before delivering a stream of deathbed ramblings that reportedly included clues to a stash of loot hidden in the Catskill Mountains near Phoenicia, New York. Of course, the details of just what was squirreled away and where have changed over the years; it's either a load of cash, jewels, or bonds, and it's located near a sycamore ... or maybe a pair of pine trees. It's also worth considering the reliability of the source, who uttered such nuggets as, "Oh, oh; dog biscuit, and when he is happy he doesn't get snappy," as his life slipped away. However, the uncertainty hasn't stopped the treasure-seekers who regularly descend on Phoenicia with the hope of uncovering what could be upwards of \$50 million in mob funds.



## Blackbeard's Treasure

No list of missing treasures would be complete without mention of a long-lost pirate trove, and this infamous buccaneer reportedly left behind a haul worthy of his formidable reputation. After nearly two years of plundering vessels in the West Indies, Blackbeard's ship, Queen Anne's Revenge, ran into a sandbar off North Carolina in June 1718. From there, it's believed he transferred his valuables to other boats, leaving little sign of his haul when he was killed a few months later by a British Royal Navy force. Although Queen Anne's Revenge was discovered in 1996, it seems the whereabouts of its captain's big prize became a massive mystery to all except, as Blackbeard once eloquently put it, the legendary pirate himself and the

devil.

## AI WATCH



*Keeping an eye on the world of AI: what really happened this month, why it matters for everyday people and businesses, and what steps you can take to use the good while guarding against the bad.*

### January 2026 – AI Watch

This month's AI story was less about a single model leap and more about the collision between adoption, law, and governance. The biggest signal came from Washington: on **December 11**, the White House issued an executive order framed around establishing a national AI policy framework and pushing back against what it characterized as overly burdensome state-level regulation. Regardless of one's politics, the strategic direction is clear: AI governance is being pulled into a federal posture debate—uniformity versus patchwork—at the same moment industry deployment is accelerating. [The White House+2Sidley Austin+2](#)

That posture debate is unfolding while legal pressure rises from multiple directions. On **December 22**, Reuters reported a lawsuit led by John Carreyrou and other authors against multiple AI companies, alleging unauthorized use of copyrighted books for training. This matters because it sharpens the question every AI-adopting institution must answer in 2026: not "is the tool useful?" but "what are we building on, and what liability might be embedded in the supply chain?" [Reuters](#)

## Scam Watch

State-level pressure also remained visible. A coalition of state attorneys general reportedly sent a warning letter to major AI firms about potential violations tied to chatbot behavior and safeguards, setting a response deadline in mid-January. Even if enforcement outcomes remain uncertain, the signal is that consumer-protection theories are becoming a preferred route: less debate about model architecture, more about harms, marketing, and duty of care. [The Verge](#)

Finally, AI's role in deception continues to show up in the fraud channel. The FBI's IC3 warning about AI-generated voice messaging scams is a reminder that "AI risk" is not confined to Silicon Valley ethics panels; it's already operational, already scalable, and already targeting trust. [Internet Crime Complaint Center](#)

### Closing Reflection (revised, interpretive):

My impression this month is that the AI era's defining challenge is no longer invention—it's discipline. Tools are moving faster than the institutions meant to govern them, and when institutions fall behind, they don't pause the world; they improvise. The executive order is a bid for national coherence; the lawsuits and AG pressure are bids for accountability; the fraud channel is a reminder that malicious adoption will always be early and enthusiastic. What stands out to me is the widening gap between what AI can convincingly produce and what people are prepared to verify or legally underwrite. Closing that gap will require more than regulation. It will require a cultural shift back toward verification as a habit, not a special project.

### Legal Note:

AI Watch summarizes developments for informational purposes and does not constitute legal advice.

## SCAM WATCH



Scammers never take a vacation. Each month they

come up with new ways—or recycle old ones—to separate people from their savings. September brought a mix of old-school fraud dressed up in new clothes and schemes powered by AI. Here are the big ones you should know about.

### Scam Watch — January 2026

Scam activity this month was dominated by a familiar asymmetry: attackers innovate just enough to increase believability, while victims are forced to be perfect every time. The most important shift is not that scams are "new," but that **impersonation has become easier and faster**, especially when AI can generate convincing voice and message cues.

A notable example came from a **December 19 FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) public service announcement** warning that malicious actors have used text messages and **AI-generated voice messages** ("smishing" and "vishing") impersonating senior U.S. officials, quickly pushing targets onto encrypted messaging apps. Even if most readers are not senior officials, the mechanism generalizes: establish credibility, compress time, move the conversation to a channel where verification is weaker. [Internet Crime Complaint Center](#)

The "family emergency" variant continues to metastasize. Public reporting this month described how voice cloning scams can be executed with minimal audio, turning a short clip into a weaponized impersonation and reviving the classic "help me now" fraud in a more convincing form. The point is not that people are gullible; it's that our verification instincts were trained for a world where a familiar voice meant something. <https://www.kttc.com>

These scams thrive because they exploit the same behavioral edge: urgency. They target the moment you are most likely to bypass process—late at night, in the middle of work, during travel, under stress. They also increasingly blend into legitimate workflows: invoice changes, vendor banking updates, shipping reroutes, and "quick approvals" inside organizations.

### Closing Reflection (revised, interpretive):

What strikes me is how fraud is becoming less about tricking the unintelligent and more about overwhelming the attentive. The scammer's advantage is not brilliance; it's tempo. If the attacker can make you act

## Disputed Events

before you verify, the rest is mechanics. This is why I see “scam fatigue” as a growing vulnerability: when people are exposed to constant warnings, they either tune out or assume they can spot it—until the one time the message is engineered precisely for their blind spot. The practical response is not paranoia; it’s ritual. Build small verification rituals that slow decisions by minutes, because minutes are exactly what these scams can’t tolerate.

Readers should keep in mind that what follows is less about consensus and more about contention. Disputed events are the pressure points of democracy and global order — they reveal where society is most divided and where tomorrow’s headlines are likely to emerge. I hope these reports will help you gain a better understanding of what is actually going on. Finding the truth has always been a challenge.

D, Miyoshi



### DISPUTED EVENTS

#### “Where facts meet controversy — the stories too important to ignore, and too contested to settle.”

Every month brings its share of news that sparks sharp disagreement — stories that divide experts, politicians, and the public alike. These are the events where facts collide with interpretation, where motives are questioned, and where the truth often depends on who is telling it.

The purpose of *Disputed Events* is not to resolve these arguments but to present them clearly. Each entry highlights a major controversy from the past month — political, military, economic, or social — and lays out why it matters. By putting these disputes side by side, the goal is to show how contested narratives shape the larger story of our time.

#### January 2026 – Disputed Events

Disputed events this month illustrated a recurring pathology: the first version of a story is often the most influential version, even when it is later revised.

A stark example came from the **December 13 Brown University shooting**, where early public information shifted quickly—reports about custody status and identity evolved as law enforcement clarified facts. Within days, federal scrutiny focused not only on the crime but on institutional response systems and compliance questions. This is a common disputed-event pattern: the public argues over “what happened” while the operational story—alerts, access controls, cameras, response timing—quietly becomes the enduring consequence. [Reuters+1](#)

The same event also generated a secondary dispute: **misidentification and online accusation**. Reporting described how an individual was falsely accused online of involvement, illustrating how quickly high-emotion events become vehicles for scapegoating, often along political or identity lines. This is not a side issue; it is now part of the event itself. [The Times of India](#)

Another example of disputed narratives comes from geopolitics, where the meaning of an action becomes contested immediately. Russia’s **December 27 strike on Kyiv** was framed by Russia as retaliation and by Ukraine as proof of rejection of peace efforts—two narratives competing over the same observable fact: missiles and drones hit a city. The dispute is not whether the attack occurred; it’s what it “means,” and meaning drives policy. [AP News+1](#)

**Closing Reflection (revised, interpretive):**  
What concerns me is not that people disagree. It’s that

## Civil Unrest Report

certainty arrives before the record exists. In the Brown case, the operational facts (alerts, protocols, prior warnings) may ultimately matter more than early social media certainty, but the narrative often hardens first—and hard narratives are difficult to unwind. In Kyiv, everyone sees the strike, but the interpretive fight begins instantly: retaliation, terror, negotiation leverage, proof of resolve. My takeaway is simple: disputed events are no longer rare. They are the default condition of public life. The discipline now is to separate *what happened* from *what is being claimed about what happened*, and to treat early certainty—especially certainty that flatters our prior beliefs—as a risk factor rather than a comfort.

### CIVIL UNREST WATCH



#### Fault Lines: The State of Domestic Tension in the United States

##### Editor's Note

This *Civil Unrest Watch* is intended as a factual, data-driven guide to domestic tensions and clashes in the U.S. — not as a political argument. While the author's views lean moderately conservative, every effort is made to analyze events through reliable sources, balanced context, and transparent methodology. Readers are invited to weigh the evidence, challenge assumptions, and form their own judgments.

#### January 2026 – Civil Unrest Watch

Civil unrest this month looked less like a single national wave and more like a series of pressure vents—labor, migration enforcement, and local governance disputes—each producing its own demonstrations, counter-responses, and narrative ecosystems.

One of the clearest through-lines came from **migration enforcement**. Conflict-tracking analysis in early December noted a surge of **pro-migrant demonstrations** concentrated in states experiencing major DHS/ICE operations, with incidents ranging from street protests to attempts to block enforcement activity. Even when these actions remain localized, they matter because they signal how quickly enforcement events convert into community mobilization—especially when people believe due process and transparency are failing. [ACLED](#)

Alongside migration, labor also provided an illustration of how economic stress moves from private frustration into public action. ACLED's December overview highlighted the expansion of Starbucks union activity—described as the “Red Cup Rebellion” strike—accompanied by demonstrations that pushed labor protest visibility higher even in a month where total demonstrations were down from the prior period. Labor actions like this are rarely just about one employer; they become public proxies for staffing stress, cost-of-living anxiety, and credibility disputes between institutions and workers. [ACLED](#)

In Washington, D.C., the governance story produced its own kind of unrest: not mass street conflict, but organized resistance to federal pressure. Reporting this week described how a grassroots network (“Free DC”) became a visible node in the capital’s pushback against federal intervention, including mobilization around budget decisions and public messaging campaigns. This is a different species of unrest—civic and procedural rather than riotous—but it reflects the same underlying condition: institutional legitimacy becomes contested terrain. [The Washington Post](#)

Elsewhere, protests also evolved tactically. A national feature on protest methods described non-violent innovations—noise campaigns, consumer actions, and symbolic tactics—used to sustain participation without requiring constant large marches. That matters because movements that learn to persist in low-intensity form often outlast the news cycle. [The Guardian](#)

##### Closing Reflection

My sense this month is that unrest is becoming less episodic and more structural—less “a protest” and more “a condition.” When migration enforcement be-

## Winds of War

comes a recurring flashpoint, communities build protest routines. When labor actions become repeatable, demonstrations become part of bargaining strategy rather than last resort. When governance itself becomes a contested identity question—as it is for D.C.—civic conflict can persist without ever turning violent. What worries me is not drama; it's durability. Durable unrest slowly changes how people relate to institutions: trust becomes conditional, compliance becomes negotiated, and the default assumption shifts from “the system will respond” to “the system must be forced.” That’s not collapse—but it is a long, quiet re-wiring of civic life.



## January 2026 – Winds of War

The month closed with a reminder that modern war rarely waits for diplomatic calendars. On **December 27**, Russia carried out one of the war’s larger combined strikes on **Kyiv**, using hundreds of drones and dozens of missiles, damaging civilian infrastructure and leaving a significant portion of the capital without heat in winter conditions. Ukrainian leadership framed the strike as a direct signal of Moscow’s posture amid renewed political discussions around a peace framework. [AP News+2](#)[Financial Times+2](#)

This strike did not occur in isolation. Reporting and battlefield assessments through late December continued to emphasize Russia’s increasing capacity to mount large-scale drone and missile attacks and to pressure Ukraine’s air defenses and energy systems, with periodic surges that function as both military operations and psychological campaigns. The pattern is consistent: limited tactical gains on the ground paired with strategic pressure against the rear—power, heat,

and the sense of normal life. [Institute for the Study of War+1](#)

In the Middle East, the war’s center of gravity has increasingly shifted from battlefield tempo to the fragile mechanics of a ceasefire process and its humanitarian consequences. Gaza’s winter conditions and the lived reality of displacement are now part of the war’s strategic landscape. Reports this week described families facing cold rains in makeshift shelters, with continuing negotiations under strain and accusations of truce violations. When conflicts enter this phase, the key variable becomes not only what armies do, but whether administrative and humanitarian systems can prevent a slide into chronic catastrophe. [AP News+1](#)

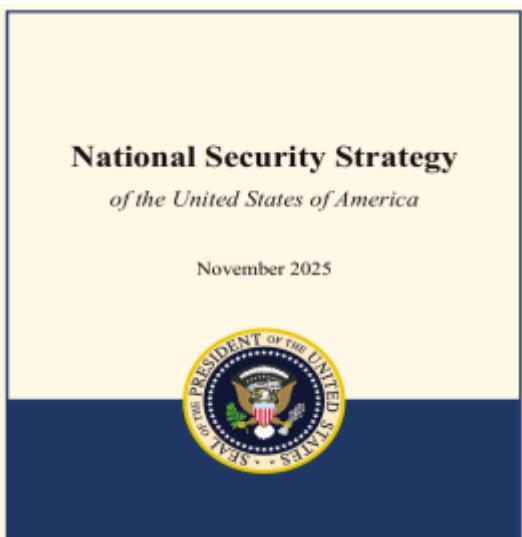
In the Western Pacific, the South China Sea remained a textbook example of escalation risk without declared war. In mid-December, the Philippines accused the China Coast Guard of firing water cannon at Filipino fishermen near **Sabina (Escoda) Shoal**, injuring people and damaging vessels; reporting framed the incident as occurring within the Philippines’ claimed exclusive economic zone, and Manila signaled formal protest. Events like this matter because they compress decision time. A water-cannon encounter is not a missile exchange—but it is a real confrontation, creating legal claims, domestic political pressure, and the ever-present chance of miscalculation. [Reuters+2](#)[ABC+2](#)

Finally, the Red Sea shipping picture continued to illustrate how markets adapt to insecurity rather than waiting for clarity. Even where some operators experiment with “stepwise” returns, the broader caution among carriers underscores a reality investors often miss: once routing, insurance, and scheduling re-price conflict risk into daily operations, the “cost” of a crisis becomes an ongoing tax, not a one-time shock. [ICIS Explore+1](#)

**Closing Reflection (revised, interpretive):** What stands out to me this month is how the world is learning to live inside unresolved conflict. Kyiv’s heating outages are not just infrastructure damage; they’re a reminder that war now targets endurance as much as territory. Gaza’s winter suffering is not a sidebar; it’s a strategic consequence of a ceasefire that can “hold” and still fail human beings. Sabina Shoal is not a distant maritime quarrel; it’s a small, physical

## YouTube Summaries

collision point where national pride, resource claims, and military presence intersect in real time. I don't read these as separate stories. I read them as one global pattern: pressure replaces resolution, and the system adapts—until it can't. The risk for 2026 is not merely escalation. It's normalization—because normalized tension is exactly how societies drift into bigger surprises.



In November -December 2025, the Trump Administration released the **National Security Strategy of the United States of America**. Here is a summary of that strategy

## Summary of the 2025 National Security Strategy (NSS)

### 1. Reasserting a Realist, Interest-Driven

#### Strategy

The document emphasizes that U.S. strategy must be grounded in **national interests**, not global ideological missions. It argues that America should pursue what it *wants* and what it *can realistically achieve* with available means

Key points:

- Strategy must connect **ends and means** realistically  
U.S. foreign policy should focus on **material national advantage**, not abstract global transformation

#### 2. Redefining U.S. Global Priorities

The NSS introduces a major reprioritization of regions:

##### Top Priorities

- **Western Hemisphere** (treated as the primary strategic theater)
- **China** as the principal long-term competitor (the emphasis will be on Asia)

##### Reduced Emphasis

- Middle East
- Europe (except where tied to direct U.S. interests)  
Global democracy-promotion missions

This shift is described as a deliberate move away from "legacy commitments" toward a more selective, interest-based posture

#### 3. Strengthening American Power at Home

The NSS argues that U.S. national strength begins domestically. Focus areas:

- Economic growth and industrial capacity
- Energy dominance
- Border security
- Technological leadership (AI, cyber, quantum)  
Military readiness and modernization

It frames domestic renewal as essential to sustaining global influence.

#### 4. A More Transactional Approach to Alliances

The strategy signals a shift toward **conditional, interest-aligned partnerships**.

It emphasizes:

- Allies must contribute more to shared defense
- Partnerships should be judged by **tangible benefits** to the U.S.  
Reduced tolerance for "free-riding"

This reflects a broader realist orientation noted by analysts

#### 5. The Strategy Itself: Principles and Priorities

The NSS lays out a structured plan built on:

## YouTube Summaries

### Principles

- Pursue U.S. interests first
- Maintain overwhelming national power
- Avoid overextension
- Use force only when tied to clear objectives

### Priorities

- Secure the homeland
- Maintain economic and technological superiority
- Deter China
- Stabilize the Western Hemisphere  
Protect U.S. sovereignty and borders

### 6. Regional Approaches

The NSS includes detailed regional chapters. Highlights:

**Western Hemisphere:** top priority for security, migration, and economic integration

**Indo-Pacific:** countering China's influence and military expansion

**Middle East:** narrower counterterrorism and energy-security focus

**Europe:** support for NATO but with stronger burden-sharing expectations

### In Essence

The 2025 NSS professes a **return to hard-nosed realism**, prioritizing U.S. interests, sovereignty, and power projection while reducing ideological ambitions. It seeks to reshape global commitments, elevate the Western Hemisphere, and focus on competition with China, all while rebuilding domestic strength.

## Did Tyler Robinson really shoot Charlie Kirk?



As is the case in the JFK assassination, there are now very troubling doubts about whether Tyler Robinson was the shooter in the Charlie Kirk assassination.

Tracy Derwin and Shane Buell discuss the shooting of Charlie Kirk, questioning the official FBI story and presenting alternative possibilities. They highlight inconsistencies, including the wound being inconsistent with the size and power of the bullet alleged to have been used, the time it would take to disassemble the alleged shooter's rifle, discrepancies in clothing descriptions, and concerns about a rushed autopsy and potential crime scene cover-up.

Here is a breakdown of the issues discussed in their program. Surely, there will be many more discussions and controversies to follow in the coming weeks and months.

D. Miyoshi

The official story of Tyler Robinson shooting Charlie Kirk has inconsistencies and potential alternative scenarios, including the use of a cell phone gun, palm pistol, or even a shooter from a nearby building, raising questions about a possible cover-up.

### Main Arguments

**[Inconsistencies in the Official Story]:** The FBI's narrative of Tyler Robinson as the shooter has several holes, including the time it would take to disassemble the rifle, the clothes Robinson was wearing, and discrepancies between the wound size and the alleged weapon.

**[Discrepancy in Wound Size]:** An ex-sniper's ballistics analysis suggests the wound is more consistent with a 9mm or .380 caliber weapon, not a .30-06 rifle.

**[Suspicious Actions After the Shooting]:** The quick escort of Kirk's body by JD Vance, the lack of information about an autopsy, and the covering up of the crime scene raise concerns about a potential cover-up, reminiscent of the JFK assassination.

**[Discord Evidence Contradiction]:** The website Discord disputes the FBI's claim that messages on the platform show Robinson planning the shooting, adding another layer of doubt to the official story.

### Unique Perspectives

**[Financial Motivations]:** Billionaire Bill Aman's large reward for information leading to the arrest of the perpetrator, coupled with reports of Aman pressuring Kirk to change his views on Israel and platforming Tucker Carlson, suggests a possible motive to quickly close the case.

**[Alternative Weapon: Cell Phone Gun]:** The video explores the possibility of a cell phone gun being used, supported by video evidence and the ex-sniper's analysis of the wound size.

## YouTube Summaries



Alleged enlarged photo of the possible cell phone gun of shooter near Kirk



Alleged photo of shooter and his position near Kirk



Moment Kirk is hit as alleged shooter holds weapon in firing position

The exit wound is to the opposite side from where the alleged shooter fires from so this is consistent. If the bullet entered from the direction of the roof that Robinson was on, the blood would have exited from the rear of Kirk's neck which it didn't

### Question: why does the FBI not debunk this allegation?

**[Alternative Weapon: Palm Pistol]:** The possibility of a palm pistol is also considered, but ultimately deemed less likely than the cell phone gun due to the lack of a visible muzzle flash.

**The AHA point: [Decoy Theory]:** The idea that multiple decoys were present to confuse people and distract from the real shooter, potentially leading to arguments and misdirection.

## Supporting Evidence

**[UVU Police Dispatch Description]:** The initial description of the shooter given by UVU police does not match the appearance of Tyler Robinson in surveillance footage.

**[30-06 Impact Video]:** A demonstration shows that a .30-06 rifle would cause a much larger and more explosive wound than what was observed on Charlie Kirk.

**[Drone Sighting]:** Unidentified drones were seen in the area, raising the possibility of surveillance or even a drone-based attack.

## Thought-Provoking Questions

**[Autopsy Concerns]:** Was a thorough autopsy conducted before Kirk's body was embalmed, and if so, why hasn't the information been released?

**[Misfire Explanation]:** If the shooter using a cell phone gun missed the first shot, the absence of a noise could be explained by a misfire, common with such weapons.

**[Financial Incentive]:** Was the reward money offered by Bill Aman paid out to Robinson's father, and did this influence the investigation?

## Top Questions

### What are the initial issues presented with the FBI's official story regarding the Charlie Kirk shooting?

The official story has several problems, including the implausibility of Tyler Robinson disassembling and reassembling the rifle in the short time available after the shooting. Also, the clothing of the suspect in the pre-shooting footage doesn't match the clothing of the escaping suspect. The presenters question why someone would change clothes while committing a crime. Gun experts say it takes about 5 minutes with tools to disassemble the rifle, which would have been impossible given the timeline. The suspect is seen wearing different clothes before the shooting, raising further questions.

### What concerns are raised about the autopsy and handling of evidence in the Charlie Kirk shooting case?

Concerns are raised about whether a proper autopsy was conducted, given how quickly JD Vance escorted the body to Phoenix. The presenters question whether enough time was taken to determine the cause of death and who was responsible. The fact that the bullet hasn't been found is also suspicious. Additionally, the platform where the shooting occurred was quickly dismantled, potentially covering up crucial evidence.

### What discrepancies exist between the police dispatch description of the shooter and the suspect identified?

## YouTube Summaries

The UVU police dispatch description of the shooter shortly after the event describes someone in all black with a long gun, black tactical helmet, black mask, possibly wearing a tactical vest, and jeans. This description doesn't match either of the images of the identified suspect, Tyler Robinson, creating further doubt about the official narrative.

### What contradictions are presented regarding the Discord evidence and its connection to the shooting?

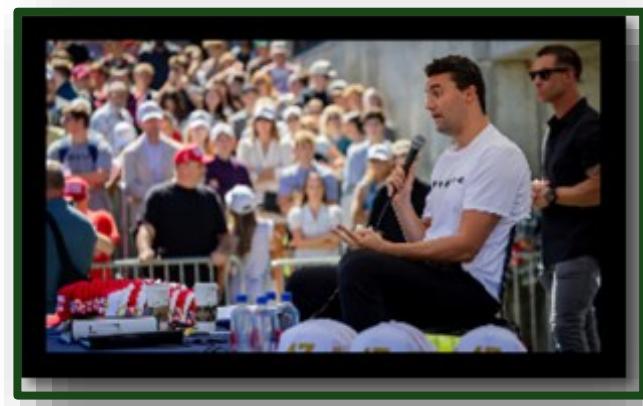
Governor Cox stated that Discord messages revealed a discussion about a rifle drop point. However, Discord released a statement saying their investigation found no evidence that the suspect planned the incident or promoted violence on the platform. This contradiction between the FBI's claims and Discord's findings raises questions about the validity of the evidence.

### What alternative theories are presented regarding the type of weapon used in the Charlie Kirk shooting?

Given the size of the wound, it's argued that a 30-06 rifle was unlikely to have been used. One alternative theory suggests a cell phone gun, chambered in 9mm or 380, could have been used. Another theory proposes a palm pistol as a possible weapon. The possibility of a drone being involved is also presented, though considered less likely.

[End of Derwin and Buell investigatory program](#)

## Is The Charlie Kirk Assassination a Cover-Up by Israel and the US?



The following is a summary of the points made in mid-December by acclaimed professor, researcher, and conservative commentator Dave Hodges of the *Common Sense Show* about the discoveries that led him to suspect that Charlie Kirk was assassinated because Kirk had turned from his former support of Israel.

### Hodges Main Arguments

**Unprecedented National Crisis:** Hodges asserts that America is currently experiencing an unparalleled period of upheaval, marked by financial instability, extreme political divisions, and a trajectory towards civil war, making it a critical time in the nation's history.

**Government Complicity in Alleged Murder:** A central claim is that there is a significant cover-up surrounding the alleged murder of "Charlie Kirk," with accusations of complicity directed at the U.S. government, the Israeli government, the FBI, and the CIA.

**TPUSA "Captured" by External Interests:** Hodges alleges that Turning Point USA (TPUSA) is complicit in the cover-up and has been financially influenced or "captured" by Jewish donors and insiders, particularly concerning its stance on Israel.

**Rigged Legal System:** The legal proceedings against Tyler James Robinson, the alleged shooter, are described as a "rigged trial," where the prosecution allegedly selected the defense lawyers and a pre-determined judge was assigned to the case.

### Unique Perspectives

**Official Narrative Disputed:** Hodges vehemently rejects the official account of Charlie Kirk's alleged death, specifically questioning the FBI's narrative about a ".30-06" bullet and asserting that it was a murder, not an accidental or natural death.

**JFK Assassination Parallel:** A strong parallel is drawn between the alleged cover-up of Charlie Kirk's death and the JFK assassination, with Hodges claiming to have identified similar patterns of obfuscation and a "worst cover up" he has ever seen.

**Prioritizing America Over Israel:** Hodges explicitly states his priority as "Jesus, family, America," in that order, contrasting it with what he perceives as the government's and Netanyahu's prioritization of Israel, which he believes has led to the "capture" of organizations like TPUSA.

**The point that makes the solution clear: Alleged Shooter as an "MK Ultra" Patsy:** Hodges suggests that Tyler James Robinson, the alleged shooter, is likely an "MK Ultra" subject and a "patsy" akin to Lee Harvey Oswald, implying he was set up for a rigged trial that will result in the death penalty to prevent him from speaking.

### Supporting Evidence

**Pre-Event Internet Searches for Medical Personnel:** Internet searches for the hospital where Charlie Kirk was allegedly taken and for the chief Utah medical examiner (Dr. Brian Gil, Lee Troder) were reportedly conducted from Tel Aviv and Washington D.C. on July 20th and 16th, 2025, before the alleged event, suggesting pre-planning.

**FBI Search for Alleged Shooter Pre-Event:** Tyler James Robinson, the alleged shooter, appeared on an FBI search from Huntsville, Alabama, at their regional headquarters on **September 9th**, the day before the alleged event, which the speaker finds "way more than coincidental."

**TPUSA Donor Pressure:** Written evidence, including text exchanges validated by TPUSA media director Andrew Kov, indicates that Charlie Kirk was "hammered by Jewish donors and insiders at TPUSA" in meetings on July 3rd and June 28th, prior to his alleged

## YouTube Summaries

death.

**Congressional Influence by APAC:** Hodges cites that 89% of Congress receives funding from APAC, linking this financial influence directly to the proposed bill HR867, which aims to criminalize private boycotts of Israel, thereby suppressing First Amendment rights.

**Public Opinion Shift Against Netanyahu:** A poll conducted by Patrick Bet-David revealed that 70% of his audience, presumed to be pro-Israel, opposes the Netanyahu administration's position, indicating a significant shift in public sentiment even among typically supportive demographics.

### Thought-Provoking Questions

**Questioning Medical Examiner's Presence:** Why was the chief Utah medical examiner, Dedra Amaro, appearing on an internet search from Tel Aviv and Washington D.C. **before** the alleged event involving Charlie Kirk?

**Premature Conviction of Alleged Shooter:** Why did Erica Kirk "convict and forgive" Tyler James Robinson at Charlie's memorial just 10 days after his death, seemingly disregarding the principle of "innocent until proven guilty" and the questionable official narrative about the .30-06 bullet?

**Judicial Selection Irregularities:** How did Judge Graph, who was not initially on the docket for the case, end up presiding over it after being the subject of an internet search from Tel Aviv and D.C. in July 2025, raising questions about collusion?

**Defense Counsel Interference:** How is it that the prosecution was allowed to select the defense lawyers for Tyler James Robinson, especially when "plenty of really good lawyers" offered to defend him pro bono, and was Robinson even informed of these offers?

**It should be noted that Dave Hodges is considered one of the best-informed researchers in the country (and likely the world) on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. It took decades to piece together what really happened on that fateful day. Hopefully, we will find out what really happened in the Charlie Kirk assassination quicker than that.**

D. Miyoshi

## Is AI A Tool Or A Trojan Horse?

Why I'm Deeply Concerned For The Minds Of Our Children

Authored by Daniel Amen via The Epoch Times



**She's Elon Musk's AI anime girl—engineered to be your virtual companion.** A digital girlfriend who flirts, strokes your ego, and will do almost anything you ask. On the surface, it looks like a harmless novelty. Underneath? It's a siren song—one designed to hijack a generation of young men before they even know how to use their own brains. It's a personalized soft porn slave—and a potent destroyer of dopamine, a natural hormone often referred to as the "feel-good" chemical of the body. I was on "The Diary of a CEO" podcast with Steven Bartlett when he played it for us. As soon as I heard her voice—sweet, seductive, endlessly compliant—I felt a wave of concern rise in my chest. This wasn't just a gimmick. This was addiction-as-a-service, dressed in anime skin and powered by the same tools we once trusted to help us write, learn, and think. It felt like watching the wooden horse roll into Troy—not with soldiers, but with dopamine destroyers. Once again, we've flung open the barn doors—unleashing the beast into our schools, homes, and workplaces before we've even stopped to ask: Is this a gift... or a Trojan Horse packed with danger? We've seen this before. With video games. With smartphones. With social media. With benzos, alcohol, marijuana, opioids, psilocybin, and even artificial sweeteners.

## YouTube Summaries

### We embraced convenience before understanding consequence.

Now we're doing it again—with a tool that doesn't just entertain or numb, but replaces the very act of thinking. And the cost may be nothing short of a crisis in brain development.

A [recent MIT study](#) used EEG (electroencephalography) to examine what happens in the brain when people use AI tools like ChatGPT. The results were chilling. Brain activity dropped—especially in the prefrontal and temporal lobes, the areas responsible for problem-solving, planning, memory, and language. Even after removing the AI, participants who had used it showed persistently lower brain engagement. This lingering drop—dubbed cognitive debt—is eerily similar to patterns we see in screen-saturated youth or early cognitive decline.

*So what's happening here? We're offloading the hard parts of thinking. And when we stop struggling, the brain stops growing. When we outsource, we atrophy.*

### Could This Lead to Dementia?

It sounds dramatic—but based on everything we know about brain reserve, it's not far-fetched.

The *Nun Study*, a landmark longitudinal study, showed that [early-life writing complexity predicted later-life cognitive health](#). The more effortful thinking and rich language in their youth, the less likely these women were to develop Alzheimer's—even when their brains showed pathology.

Now imagine a generation of students copy-pasting AI-generated content instead of struggling to write it themselves. What reserve are they building? What scaffolding are they losing?

**We don't need to wait 60 years to find out. The signs are already here: reduced motivation,**

**emotional blunting, weakened memory, passive learning.**

When ChatGPT becomes your first brain, your own brain becomes second-tier.

### Silicon Valley Parents Are Already Worried

Ironically, the people building these tools are not letting their kids near them. Many top tech executives have strict "no tech" nanny contracts. Zero screen time. No phones, tablets, or even TVs in view of the child. Some nannies are forbidden from using their own devices at all while on duty. Violations can mean termination. Why?

Because they know the truth.

They know attention is currency.

They know convenience dulls cognition.

And they don't want their kids seduced by the same tools they helped unleash. These same families also write detailed food rules into contracts — organic-only, no sugar, no processed snacks. Because what you feed the brain matters, too. They're guarding their kids like royalty. And maybe we should ask why.

### What We Risk Losing

Unchecked AI use could erode:

- Mental strength (less cognitive load = weaker neural circuits)
- Motivation and drive (dopamine systems require challenge)
- Deep learning and memory (no friction = no re-

## YouTube Summaries

tention)

- Resilience (brains grow through struggle, not shortcuts)
- Curiosity (instant answers kill wonder)

Creativity (why imagine when the bot will do it?)

**The result? A society of passive minds, dopamine-depleted students, fragile learners, and emotionally disconnected adults—many of whom never built the neural muscle needed to face complexity, failure, or challenge.**

And yes, in the long run, this may increase the risk of dementia, depression, and learned helplessness.

## So What Should We Do?

**I love AI. I use it. I teach with it.**

We read our brain SPECT scans with it. I believe it's the future.

**But it must serve our minds—not replace them.**

Here's how:

1. Use AI to amplify thinking—not avoid it.
2. Alternate between AI-assisted and brain-only tasks.
3. Teach kids to write with pencils first, bots later.
4. Track your own cognitive habits—how much are you really thinking?

Ask one daily question: “Is this good for my brain, or bad for it?”

I'm not against AI. I'm against passivity. Because when you lose the struggle, you lose the growth. And when you stop using your brain, it shrinks.

**This isn't fearmongering it's love. For children. For the future. For the minds we're still shaping. The horse is already out of the barn. Let's**

**not wait until it tramples what matters most.**

Let's build a future where technology expands cognition—not erases it.

**Where AI is the second brain—never the first.**

\* \* \*

*Views expressed in this article are opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times or ZeroHedge.*

End of Epoch Times Article

## IS JAPAN ENTERING INTO ANOTHER “SAKOKU” ERA?



JAPAN IS KICKING OUT TOURISTS – “We can’t take it anymore”

This YouTube video talks about recent events in Japan — about how people are protesting and demanding that the government tighten control over the flow of tourists and immigrants in the country. They're complaining about the problems some tourists have been causing, and new political parties with strong rhetoric on this issue have started to emerge.

Here is the synopsis of the video

Japan is experiencing growing anti-tourism and anti-immigration sentiment due to over-tourism, social problems attributed to foreigners, and the rise of nationalist political movements advocating for national identity, despite the country's economic need for foreign workers.

**Summary**

## YouTube Summaries

- Protests are growing in Japan against mass tourism and immigration, with locals complaining about problems from minor issues to crimes disrupting their lives. Incidents have changed how Japanese people view contact with outsiders, leading to debates on the limits of tourism and immigration.
- New political movements and parties are emerging with anti-immigration discourse, potentially marking a significant change for Japan.
- A major trigger for recent debate was the "African Hometown Cities" program, which caused a huge public uproar and protests against widespread immigration.
- Due to public pressure, the Japanese government publicly denied plans for widespread immigration or special visas for Africans.
- Prime Minister Shagaru Ishiba advocates for more foreign students and workers due to Japan's rapidly aging population and workforce needs, but nationalist groups strongly oppose this, fearing cultural identity loss.
- In 2024, Japan received a historical record of 360,000 new foreign entries, intensifying discussions.
- The Sansto party, led by conservative YouTuber Surka Mia, exploded in the 2024 elections, becoming the fourth-largest opposition force by criticizing globalism and immigration.
- Regardless of its ideological perception, the Sansto party has placed immigration at the center of Japanese political debate for the first time in decades, hardening the tone on immigration and tourism.
- Historically, Japan was a closed country for over 200 years (Sakoku period, 17th century) to protect against external influences and maintain cultural purity.
- Japan was forced to open its ports in 1853 by Commodore Perry, leading to modernization and increased interaction with the world, though with continued distrust of foreigners.
- After World War II, Japan adopted a pacifist constitution, embraced the West, and experienced incredible economic growth, becoming a symbol of technology and hospitality.
- Japan welcomed tourism and exported culture but remained very selective with permanent immigration, creating an imbalance.
- Around 2010, Japan's population began shrinking, leading to a severe workforce shortage in critical sectors.
- In 2019, Japan created the "specified skilled worker" visa to bring foreign labor into sectors like construction, agriculture, and elder care, opening a "small crack" in its borders.
- Post-pandemic, tourism exploded, with over 30 million

- tourists in 2024, breaking historical records.
- Foreign workers often ended up in low-paid jobs with little integration, while many tourists were seen as noisy invaders who disrespected rules and overcrowded cities.
- Over-tourism led to Kyoto becoming overcrowded with tourists taking selfies, leaving trash, and driving up prices; Mount Fuji required a gate and entrance fee to control crowds.
- Immigration was linked to increased crime (robberies, thefts by foreign groups), strained public healthcare, and skyrocketing rents in certain neighborhoods.
- Fake news, such as the false claim that Japan donated an entire city to Tanzania, fueled fears, leading to massive protests in 2025 with signs like "Protect Japan and invaders out."
- In the June 2025 elections, the Sensedo party, with a "Japan first" slogan, gained significant seats in the Senate, blaming immigrants for inflation, violence, and cultural loss.
- YouTube, TikTok, and other social networks became powerful tools for spreading viral videos, memes, and influencers inciting hatred against foreigners.
- A viral video of a foreign streamer assaulting an elderly Japanese man in 2025 triggered widespread social network outrage and massive protests.
- The government reacted with a "zero plan" to accelerate deportations, toughen visa rules, and increase capital requirements for foreign entrepreneurs, but this only increased tension.
- The economy suffered from labor shortages, but locals found relief in less housing and public service pressure. Xenophobia rose, and national identity became a daily debate.
- **The AHA Point:** The core dilemma is that Japan, while needing foreign workers for its aging economy, is simultaneously grappling with a strong public sentiment to protect its cultural identity and address social problems attributed to mass tourism and immigration, leading to a tense balance between opening up and closing off. Japan is at a crossroads, balancing security, economy, and identity, with the future of an open Japan uncertain.

### Conclusion

The video thoroughly explains the complex reasons behind Japan's shift towards restricting tourism and immigration. It effectively traces the historical context from the Sakoku period to post-WWII openness, highlighting the demographic and economic pressures that led to increased foreign entry. The video details the negative consequences of over-tourism and immigration, the rise of nationalist political parties like Sansto, and the government's reactive

## YouTube Summaries

measures, providing a comprehensive understanding of Japan's current dilemma.

### DNI DIRECTOR GABBARD ADMITS THE EXISTENCE OF ETs



The title of this Common Sense Show video tells it all. At a recent news conference, the Director of National Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, said she personally believes in the existence of aliens.

Hodges expressed shock at Gabbard's admission of believing in aliens, especially in light of her position and a historical Brookings Institute report advising against revealing such discoveries. He connects this to biblical concepts of fallen angels and the "great deception," suggesting that potential alien encounters could be demonic in nature. He also touches on the possibility of a superior alien culture posing a threat to humanity and encourages listeners to research the "great deception" from a scriptural perspective.

A direct transcript of Dave Hodges statements on that show is provided below for your consideration.

D. Miyoshi

"Hello America, Dave Hodge here, host of the Common Sense Show. We are the show that is freeing America one enslaved mind at a time. Thank you so much for joining us.

Well, we have an interesting revelation. I am totally 100% shocked. On one hand, you've got Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard coming out and making unbelievable, well, I think they're believable, but shocking charges against former senior administrative officials. The Clintons, Barack Obama. This is just incredible what we're witnessing here. On the other hand, Tulsi Gabbert's going off the deep end and talking about aliens. I find this to be stunning and shocking. It's one thing for me to speculate on the relationship between Sidonia region on Mars and the Giza pyramid plateau, the seven pyramids there. Talk about the underwater city off the coast of Cuba with clearly defined structures and pyramids. Average people can have license to do that. But Tulsi Gabbard is no longer an average person. She's the director of national intelligence and she has stepped out on the limb.

Now, let me remind you the guiding document for NASA and really for the intelligence agencies, unless they choose to start ignoring it, is a report from the Brookings Institute issued in the 1950s. And it said, "Now that we're going to form NASA and travel out to space, if we find anything, we need to make sure that we deny it and cover it up because it could wreck the societal beliefs of people on the planet Earth. Religions will go by the wayside. There'll be financial panic. People will become defensive and potentially violent. And this has been the guiding light for NASA. never a straight answer NASA where they won't reveal even the most obvious.

It's only been recently this happened and it's been opened through well if you look at congressional investigations of the tik tak situation and other sightings from military officials, revelations from intelligence officials. And I'm thinking, okay, well this is really interesting because this kind of flies in the face of Brookings. Well, now the director of national intelligence who is taking extremely bold steps against former prominent politicians on one hand and on the other hand she's going against the wishes of the Brookings Institute report. Tulsi Gabbert was appearing on Podcast with Miranda Divine, a good journalist, and she asked Tulsi directly, "Do you believe aliens and UFOs exist?" Tulsi said, "I have to be careful here to make sure that I'm presenting my personal view and not revealing any intelligence. To me, when you break that statement down, it says to me that her personal beliefs are what she knows from classified secret documents on the same, same topic. And then she went on to answer the question, yes, I believe aliens exist. I was stunned. Not that you'll hear that statement in public, but it came from the director of national intelligence trying to distance herself from reports on the subject. If the reports on the subject said very clearly, "Oh, this is a bunch of nonsense, bunch of hoie. People are seeing swamp gas and the planet Venus and they're having bad dreams about aliens, but none of it's real." That's not what she said. She believes.

## YouTube Summaries

Now you know my position. If you go to the Bible, Genesis 6:4, and "they were here afterward". Well, who are they? The fallen angels. Is this a demonic deception talked about in the Bible? The great deception. It could be. It very well could be. And I think this is what the answer is. I don't think they're little gray men from Alpha Centauri. I think they're demonic. And I think this could be part of Project Blue Beam and also to the end days great deception where there's the great falling away and people follow things other than Jesus.

It's interesting, isn't it? We're going to see where this goes. But when the director of national intelligence makes a statement like this, we have to sit up and take notice. One of the things I'm going to say about Tulsi Gabbard in her time in office as DNI, she's not pulling any punches. She's not clever with the rhetoric. She doesn't speak in double entendre. She pretty much says how it is, and she's communicating something to us very clearly. And for that topic to even come up, the interviewer Miranda would know Tulsi on a personal level. Tulsi was on Fox all the time. Miranda's a constant guest, sometimes a guest host. They know each other. They had to have had a mutual agreement that this topic was going to come up.

I think the average person can conclude that Tulsi absolutely believes they're here. I'm of the opinion when you look at Genesis 12 verse 4 "and they were here afterwards" Well, who's they? The fallen angels. What's afterward? The flood. Are we looking at the descendants of these beings that were cast to earth by the Lord when these one-third of the angels led by Lucifer rebelled against God's authority? Possibly. It's what I think is probably true. Pastor Paul Begley and other people of the faith have told me, when I talked about this at the Watchman Conference last year, that this is the hot topic in eschatology, and now Tulsa Gabbert just stirred the pot.

I did a piece that's worth repeating the conclusion of earlier in the week and I said, "You better hope there really aren't ETS coming here or that AMUAMUA is not an intelligently controlled vehicle taking an elliptical abnormal path to Earth coming in with most of the voyage being hidden by the other side of the sun. Because if these were indeed beings and they're coming here, they want something. If they were just looking to communicate, they could communicate across distances like Voyager 1 does now outside our solar system. It takes 48 hours to do a message and a return message. But nonetheless, that would have been the easiest way to open up communication lines if that was the intent. The fact that they're coming here and if AMUAMUA is what many scientists are saying including Harvard Aldi Loeb and Michio Kaku, the most prominent quantum physicist in the world, they're saying this is an artificial object and it's alien technology 7 miles wide. What could it be? It could be colonists. Now I don't personally subscribe to that view but you better hope that Tulsi is wrong that Michio Kaku and Aldi Loeb from Harvard they're wrong because when a superior culture encounters an inferior culture and the fact that they could get here and we couldn't get there, that speech and technology of travel that

would carry over to technology of military applications, we could be in for a very rough time. Something here they probably want. If this were a true story, I'd say your prayers and hope this is not real. But again, I would go and I would even search on the internet about the great deception. Stick to the scriptural references to get what the Bible says about it. But this could be the Great Following away where people follow other than what they should be following.

I'm Dave Hodges and this is the Common Sense Show."

## THE WHITE-COLLAR APOCALYPSE IS COMING



In this video hosted by AI expert Julia McCoy, the CEO of Anthropic, Dario Amadei, warns that AI advancements will likely lead to the displacement of a significant portion of entry-level white-collar jobs within 1-5 years, causing a surge in unemployment. This isn't a distant threat, but a rapidly approaching reality driven by AI's ability to perform complex tasks at a fraction of the cost of human labor.

The program emphasizes the unprecedented speed and scope of this technological shift compared to previous industrial revolutions. It is said that this revolution will cause more change and disruption in our society over the next 5 years than has occurred in the last 50 years.

The program advises individuals to adapt by acquiring skills that AI cannot replicate, such as complex strategy, emotional intelligence, and creative problem-solving, and to learn how to work alongside AI.

The program also stresses the need for policymakers to address the potential societal consequences of mass unemployment through measures like universal basic income and retraining programs.

The following summary outlines the key points of the program focusing on the potential impact of AI on the job market, as warned by Dario Amadei, CEO of Anthropic. I hope you find it informative.

D. Miyoshi

# YouTube Summaries

## The Stark Warning

Dario Amade, CEO of Anthropic (creator of Claude), predicts that half of all entry-level white-collar jobs could vanish within 1-5 years, potentially leading to 20% unemployment.

This isn't a distant future; it's happening now, driven by rapidly advancing AI language models (LLMs).

The warning is especially significant because Amade is actively building the technology he's warning about.

## The Driving Forces

**Rapid AI Improvement:** Companies like OpenAI, Google, and Anthropic are drastically improving AI's capabilities in coding, data analysis, and legal drafting.

**Economic Incentives:** Businesses are realizing AI can perform tasks at a fraction of the cost of human employees.

**Government Inaction:** Lawmakers are largely unprepared for the scale and speed of this shift.

**Sudden Displacement:** Companies will likely implement AI replacements quickly and quietly, leading to abrupt job losses.

## Why This Time is Different

**Speed:** Previous technological shifts took decades or generations; AI is progressing from experiment to job replacement in months.

**Scope:** AI is targeting knowledge work (requiring degrees and critical thinking), not just physical labor.

**Scale:** The impact spans numerous industries and job types, from finance to marketing to law.

**Absorption, not Automation:** Jobs are being absorbed into software that is always learning and improving.

## Jobs at Risk

### Immediate Risk (1-2 years):

Customer service representatives

Data entry clerks

Junior financial analysts

Basic content writers

Simple coding tasks

Administrative assistants

Basic research roles

### Medium Risk (2-5 years):

Marketing coordinators

Junior accountants

Paralegal assistants

Human resources coordinators

Basic graphic designers

Project coordinators

**Mid-Level Roles:** Companies like Meta and Microsoft are already considering AI replacements for mid-level engineers.

## What's Happening Behind Closed Doors

Companies are questioning every new hire, asking "Why can't AI do this job?"

The economics are compelling: AI agents cost significantly less than human employees.

Companies are building AI agents: autonomous systems that can handle complex tasks without human intervention.

This is leading to the concept of a digital workforce, managed by humans.

## Timeline of Disruption

**2025 (Tipping Point):** AI agents become reliable, early adopters replace workers, job postings disappear.

**2026-2027 (Acceleration):** Mainstream adoption, unemployment spikes, entry-level jobs vanish.

**2028-2030 (New Normal):** AI handles routine knowledge work, humans focus on strategy, economic policies struggle.

**Accelerated Timeline:** Sam Altman suggests AI agents will be viable in 2025, potentially speeding up the transformation.

## Counterarguments

**New jobs will be created:** Similar to past technological shifts.

**It's just hype:** AI adoption is slower than predicted.

**Humans are still needed:** AI can't handle complex decision-making, emotional intelligence, or creative problem-solving.

**Rebuttal:** AI is replacing human intelligence directly, which is unprecedented.

## What To Do

**For Students/Early Career:** Focus on skills AI can't replicate (strategy, emotional intelligence, creative problem-solving). Learn to work with AI.

**For Mid-Level Professionals:** Position yourself as an AI manager, develop skills in directing and quality controlling AI work.

**For Leaders:** Learn AI tools and integrate AI into your business strategy.

**For Everyone:** Adaptability is crucial; be prepared to reinvent yourself.

## Societal Implications

Potential for mass unemployment and a breakdown of the social contract.

## YouTube Summaries

Potential solutions: Universal basic income, massive retraining programs, rethinking wealth distribution.

These solutions require political will and public awareness.

### Key Takeaways

AI is coming for knowledge work, and it's coming fast.

Three actions to take today:

Start using AI tools in your current job.

Develop uniquely human skills.

Stay informed about AI developments.

Don't panic, but don't ignore the threat.

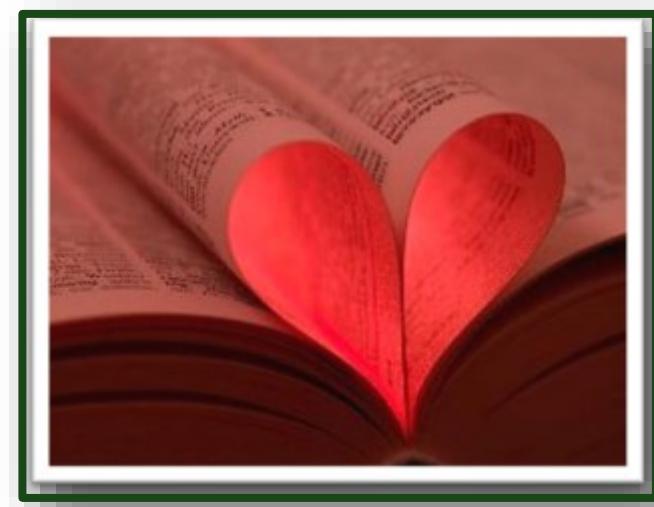
Adaptability is key to thriving in the AI age.

### End of Video Program

## From 'romantasy' to reality TV, why we love guilty pleasures so much

By Rachel Carlson

Published by NPR



Some people get obsessed with romance and fantasy novels. What's the science behind this kind of guilty pleasure?

proxyminder/Getty Images/E+

In the past few months, romance and fantasy books have taken the internet by storm. One of these is The Empyrean series by Rebecca Yarros. These books became a bit of an obsession for me. (What's not to love about a college full of love triangles and magic dragons?)

I devoured these books and many of my coworkers and friends did, too. A single mention of the series quickly prompted both gushing reviews and groans from the people around me.

Despite the fun I had reading, I noticed that I felt the need to add a disclaimer before recommending the series: "I mean, it's all kind of silly," I'd say.

I got curious about this need to separate myself from this thing that was bringing me joy. Of course, I decided to turn to science. What could it tell me about this experience of a guilty pleasure?

Maybe yours is romantasy books like mine, or maybe it's video games, reality TV or obscure corners of TikTok.

I spoke with neuroscientist Morten Kringelbach at the University of Oxford and several other researchers to get answers.

Kringelbach, who directs a center dedicated to studying human flourishing, pleasure and meaningfulness in the brain, says experiencing pleasure is critical to humanity's survival.

"We need to be able not just to survive for ourselves, but also survive as a species," he says. "Which means that the fundamental pleasures are the ones where we can have some food that gives us the energy to go on, but also sex that allows us to basically work as a species."

Here's what I learned about why and how we experience pleasure and what makes the guilty kind sooo good.

### Wanting and liking use different parts of our brains

Kent Berridge is a neuroscientist at the University of Michigan who has collaborated with Kringelbach in the past. He says for a long time he and other neuroscientists thought the thing we call

## YouTube Summaries

“pleasure” referred to a singular system in the brain and was related to dopamine. But as they studied pleasure, they saw that it is just part of a cycle that includes wanting and liking, each involving different neural pathways.

Kringelbach used the example of his morning cup of coffee to explain the first part of this cycle: wanting. When he gets up and starts thinking about coffee, his brain might be fixated on the idea of how it will taste, smell or feel. He says these things drive “wanting,” and ultimately motivate him to go to his coffee machine and make himself a cup each morning.

Once we start drinking our morning coffee, we enter the “liking” stage of the cycle, when we experience pleasure, Berridge says.

And while many people think about dopamine when it comes to pleasure in general, Berridge says it primarily drives this first part of the cycle, the wanting.

Liking or pleasure seems to be related to a different system in the brain.

In rodent brains researchers see signs of pleasure or “liking” – such as licking the lips after eating – when they stimulate tiny sites nestled right inside of a web of reward structures in the brain. They’re like cubic-millimeter-sized buttons, smaller than a grain of rice – Berridge and Kringelbach referred to them as “hedonic hotspots.”

Though researchers don’t know whether these structures exist in humans, Berridge says recent work suggests we may at least have something similar.

### The guilty part of pleasure may be an outlet

Of course, humans – and our motivations – are much more complex than rodents. And since there’s not a ton of neuroscience into guilty pleasures, I spoke to a behavioral researcher.

Kelly Goldsmith, a professor of marketing at Vanderbilt University, did a series of studies in 2012 testing people’s associations between guilt and pleasure. And she found experiencing guilt about something might make people enjoy that thing even more.

Goldsmith and her team got people to think about guilt without being consciously aware of it – by doing things like having them unscramble words related to the feeling. Then the participants tried different kinds of chocolate, and rated how much they’d be

willing to pay for the chocolate and how much they liked it.

The people who’d been primed to think about guilt reported liking the candy more, and said they’d pay more for it, than those who hadn’t been thinking about guilt.

Goldsmith says she thinks this finding could suggest that doing something we associate with guilt might give us a sense of agency in our often tightly-constrained lives.

“Most of us, most of the time, we show up for work, we eat breakfast, we get our kids to school. It’s like holding down a spring,” she says. “And when you just get a chance to let go...It can actually feel pretty excellent.”

### Our pleasure systems can get out of whack

So yes, sometimes, a reality-TV marathon may be just the outlet you need at the end of a long work-week. But Berridge and Kringelbach both caution it’s possible for the different stages of the pleasure cycle to fall out of balance.

For example, we may get stuck in the “wanting” stage, and become especially motivated to do something – even when it no longer brings us pleasure. While Berridge typically studies this in the context of addiction, he says many people experience it with things like smartphones and video games that trigger our reward system.

“In today’s modern world, we’ve got lots and lots more pleasures than our ancestors did readily available,” he says. “All kinds of things from foods to cultural things to all kinds of life enrichment. ...[That] means that we have a brain wired to seek rare pleasures and we are now pursuing frequent multiple pleasures. We can be caught up in that very easily.”

Kringelbach notes that his research found that some of the most meaningful pleasures in life are the ones that bring us together with others.

He says the key to finding balance with the things we love may be to focus on social pleasures – things like cooking with friends and family or being part of a community. “You should share the love,” he says.

### A ‘pleasure activist’ says embrace what gives you joy

## YouTube Summaries

One reason we may feel guilty about some of our pleasures is fear of how we'll be perceived, says pleasure activist and gender studies professor Sami Schalk. She says a lot of us feel particularly vulnerable about the things we love.

"I think there's an association with childhood too of it being childlike to really unabashedly love something," she says. "And as adults we're supposed to have restraint within our emotions, and that includes our joy."

Schalk says that, a lot of the time, feelings like guilt or shame can lead us to cut off potential connections with others – ones that could bring us pleasure.

Schalk also encourages people to consider why they feel guilty about certain things that bring them pleasure.

"Nobody says opera is my 'guilty pleasure' because that is something that we think of as very well respected and important and associated with whiteness and upper class," she says. "But often these other things that we refer to as guilty pleasures have these moral and social values to them that are often associated with marginalized people in our culture."

So when people say they love things like romance novels and reality TV, it feels like "you're not supposed to, quote unquote, like these things," she says. "But if you do, you have to signal that, you know, that it's not a good thing to like or indulge in by saying it's a guilty pleasure rather than just saying, I like this, I enjoy this, this is pleasurable for me."

Schalk writes and speaks about the value of embracing our pleasures — she also practices this in her own life. In 2019, she tweeted a video of herself dancing in a handmade silver cape saying she wanted to twerk with Lizzo. And... she did.

After talking to Schalk, I thought about all the times I've pretended not to like a TV show or book for fear of being "uncool," and all the potential conversations and experiences I may have missed with other people in my life who might enjoy those things, too. I decided when it comes to romantasy-induced pleasure, I'm ready to embrace the awkward moments and just share it with the world.

End of Article

## Plato's Truth About Democracy



From YouTube summary

This YouTube description gives a critical view of modern democracy, using many ideas from Plato's philosophy. It says that the freedom and choice we think we have in a democratic system can just be an illusion of control. It indicates that instead of being able to rule ourselves, we are often given limited, pre-selected options that are controlled by emotional appeals and algorithms, all in the name of a system that values control over real freedom and wisdom.

The main point is that people should think critically and be aware of themselves. The content tells people to question the stories they are told, put truth ahead of comfort, and take back their minds from others who want to control them. It says that real freedom doesn't come from voting or being part of the system, but from the independent and critical thinking that goes into those actions.

So whether we are under the leadership of Biden or Trump, the control we have ceded to them and their administration to preserve our welfare may be illusory.

D. Miyoshi

Here is a detailed summary that covers the main points, key arguments, and important details of the

## YouTube Summaries

YouTube video.

### Plato's Critique of Democracy

The content presents a critical view of democracy, drawing heavily on the philosophy of Plato.

It argues that the modern understanding of democracy as power to the people, choice, and freedom is an illusion.

Plato, having witnessed the collapse of democratic Athens, feared lawless liberty and the dangers of the "mob" silencing wisdom.

He believed that when everyone is equal in power but not wisdom, the loudest win, leading to a "tyranny disguised as freedom"

The content questions whether voters truly choose leaders or merely select between pre-selected options offered by a controlling "machine"

### Democracy as a Performance

Democracy is portrayed as a "performance of freedom," a costume that obscures a deeper lack of genuine control.

The content claims that the crowd seeks comfort and reassurance, leading to the election of performers and influencers rather than wise leaders.

This is amplified by modern technology, where fears are tracked, outrage is farmed, and votes are modeled, all before they are even cast

Plato's metaphor of a ship at sea 05:03 illustrates democracy as a vessel where the crew (the people) fight over control without knowledge of navigation, while the true navigator (the philosopher) is ignored.

### The Path to Tyranny

The content argues that democracy, exhausted by too much freedom, can lead to tyranny.

The tyrant rises through flattery, telling people what

they want to hear, blaming elites, and speaking in simple terms that resonate emotionally.

The crowd, once demanding freedom, will then kneel for protection, allowing democracy to devour itself.

Plato saw democracy as a "psychological trap" where mass emotion becomes mass control.

### The Illusion of Choice

Plato believed that people choose what "feels good" rather than what is best, selecting leaders who flatter them rather than those who are most capable.

Politics becomes theater, and elections become contests of performance, where the goal is to seduce rather than to serve.

Democracy becomes a mirror reflecting the crowd's desires, making people dependent on those who sell them the illusion of power.

Truth becomes irrelevant, and emotion becomes law, creating an echo chamber where people only want to be validated

### Emotional and Informational Control

The system is built on two pillars: emotional control and informational control.

Emotional control involves stirring up anger and outrage, keeping people busy while real decisions are made elsewhere.

Informational control involves flooding people with noise and clickbait, burying the truth in a sea of distractions.

The goal is not to silence people but to overwhelm them with meaningless choices, hijacking their attention and directing their actions.

### Plato's Solution: Philosopher Kings

Plato proposed the idea of philosopher kings: leaders trained in logic, ethics, and discipline, who don't crave power but accept it as a burden.

## YouTube Summaries

He believed that only those who don't crave power can be trusted with it, as the masses are easily moved by emotion rather than reason.

A society must stop rewarding illusion and start cultivating wisdom to survive.

This requires citizens who value discipline over dopamine, clarity over comfort, and responsibility over rage.

### Reclaiming the Mind

The solution lies in individuals reclaiming their minds, stopping the consumption of headlines, and wrestling with first principles.

Freedom is not about the vote but about the mind that casts it.

One must choose to see through the script, refuse to clap for the actors, and ask real questions.

True freedom begins when the system no longer lives within you.

### Choosing Clarity Over Comfort

The content concludes by urging viewers to choose clarity over comfort, to refuse to let the system define what's real for them.

The ballot is not your mind, the system is not your soul, and the crowd is not your compass.

The call to action is to reclaim your mind and walk out of the illusion quietly, powerfully, and unapologetically.

## Countdown to the Apocalypse From the Dead Sea Scrolls



By Grace Digital Network

This YouTube program by Grace Digital Network explores the Dead Sea Scrolls and their potential relevance to our current prophetic timeline. It focuses on the discovery of the scrolls in 1947, just before the re-establishment of Israel, and the Essenes, the group believed to have hidden them. The Essenes had a unique calendar system based on Jubilee cycles, which they believed revealed God's plan for human history, dividing it into four ages.

The program suggests that the Essenes' calendar might point to 2026 as the beginning of the final Jubilee cycle, potentially leading to Christ's return. The content highlights the Essenes' accurate prediction of Jesus's first coming during a Jubilee year and proposes that their calendar could also be relevant for understanding the timing of his second coming. It also discusses the prophecy of the physical restoration of Israel followed by a spiritual awakening, aligning with the timeline suggested by the scrolls. The content emphasizes that it is not setting dates, but rather discerning patterns and recognizing the convergence of prophetic signs.

### Summary of the Dead Sea Scroll Prophetic Timeline

This video explores the potential prophetic significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls and their connection to current events, particularly focusing on the Essenes' calendar and its implications for the timing of the Messiah's return.

## YouTube Summaries

### 1. Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls

In 1947, a Bedouin shepherd discovered ancient scrolls in caves near the Dead Sea.

These scrolls were written by the Essenes, a Jewish sect that lived in the wilderness and believed they were living in the end times.

The timing of the discovery, just one year before Israel's rebirth in 1948, is seen as significant.

The Essenes hid these scrolls in 68 AD, before the destruction of Jerusalem, preserving their prophetic calendar for future generations.

### 2. The Essen Prophetic Clock

The Essenes used a solar calendar of 364 days, rejecting the traditional lunar Jewish calendar.

They believed this calendar was a prophetic clock for understanding the timeline of human history.

They used Schmita cycles (7-year periods) and Jubilee cycles (50-year periods) to mark significant events.

The Essenes divided history into four ages: the age of chaos, the age of Torah, the age of grace, and the age of the kingdom.

They believed each age was 2,000 years long, except for the final 1,000-year kingdom age.

Some interpretations suggest that 2025 could be the final year before the last Jubilee cycle begins, marking the transition to the final countdown to Christ's return.

### 3. The Jubilee That Welcomed the Messiah

The scroll 11Q Melkisedc describes the Messiah arriving during a specific Jubilee year.

It connects messianic promises from Isaiah 61:1-2 to the Jubilee system.

Jesus began his ministry in a Jubilee year, fulfilling the prophecies by proclaiming liberty to the captives and the acceptable year of the Lord.

Biblical chronologists confirm that Jesus' ministry began during a Jubilee year according to the Essen calendar.

### 4. The Pattern and the Prophecy

The Essenes believed human history unfolds over 7,000 years, mirroring the seven days of creation.

Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8 state that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years.

Each day of creation represents a 1,000-year epoch of human history.

The timeline is structured as follows:

Day 1: Adam to Noah (years 1-1000)

Day 2: Noah to Abraham (years 1001-2000)

Day 3: Abraham to Moses (years 2001-3000)

Day 4: Moses to Christ (years 3001-4000)

Day 5: Early Church Age (years 4001-5000)

Day 6: Completion of the Church Age (years 5001-6000) - Present Time

Day 7: Millennial Kingdom (years 6001-7000)

### 5. The Final Year Before the Last Jubilee

2026 could mark the beginning of the final Jubilee period, lasting from 2026 to 2075.

This period culminates in the second coming of Christ and the establishment of his 1,000-year kingdom in 2076.

The conditions described by Jesus in Matthew 24:6-8 (wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes) are present in 2025.

If the Essen calendar is accurate, current events are the "final setup" before the last prophetic cycle begins.

### 6. Dry Bones, Israel, and Spiritual Awakening

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, just before Israel's rebirth in 1948, is seen as divinely orchestrated.

Ezekiel 37 describes a vision of dry bones coming together, representing Israel's physical restoration before spiritual revival.

Israel returned in unbelief, fulfilling the prophecy of physical restoration before spiritual awakening.

Zechariah 12:10 describes Israel's spiritual awaken-

## YouTube Summaries



**What's Really Happening in America and the World**



**Financial Crisis Report II**



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He is Managing Attorney of Miyoshi Law, an International Law Firm where he approaches legal issues through a commercial lens and is a trusted legal and business advisor to his corporate and estate clients. In military service in Vietnam, he led a Combined Action Platoon as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps and received the Naval Commendation Medal with "Combat V".

He appears in 14 Who's Who publications throughout the world and is listed as a specialist in international business, real estate and estate planning.

ing, a national recognition of Jesus as the Messiah.

Romans 11:25-26 states that Israel's spiritual blindness will continue until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

The Essen calendar may be pointing towards the events surrounding Israel's spiritual awakening.

### Conclusion

The video emphasizes that it is not setting dates but discerning patterns.

It suggests that the Essen calendar timeline provides a framework for understanding the potential significance of the time period we may be entering.

2026 to 2067 could represent the countdown years, a period of increasing intensity and global crisis.

The final 7-year period, potentially the tribulation, is expected to happen at the end of the final Jubilee cycle.

I found this very interesting. I hope you did too.

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## Trust and Estate Corner



My clients are always inquiring about wills, trusts and estates. Each publication of *Financial Crisis Report II* (Reporting What's Really Happening in America and the World) will feature a simple factoid on Trusts and Estate Planning. For more information you may consult my website at [www.miyoshilaw.com](http://www.miyoshilaw.com)

### A trust provides privacy.

Much of the estate probate process is recorded in the public record. A living trust is private. Upon your death, there does not need to be announcements in the paper to invite creditors to file claims, to contest your will or to notify disgruntled relatives. Your beneficiaries do not need to be made public.