Beliefs In Contradictory Conspiracy Theories

Conspiracy theory is defined as a proposed drama plotted by power people or organizations or even by the government to work together secretly to accomplish a task (Michael, Karen & Robbie). A task is meant to accomplish in a certain way to achieve the hidden benefits. Usually, these tasks are difficult to execute so here conspiracy steps forward to help. Once an organization believes that conspiracy could be implemented, secrecy suggests that multiple plots are possible. Conspiracy theories are recognized as intrinsic psychological interests. Conspiracy theories have always been with humans and are driven by powerful groups. A conspiracy theory is considered to be a suspicion that a team of actors worked together in an underground secret agreement to plan an evil act (Sayre). So, it is assumed that conspiracy always consists of multiple actors that act together to perform an evil act. When more than one actor is involved, they can conspire in a better way than a lone actor. Most citizens believe that conspiracies are usually plotted by their government. This mindset refrains them from fully accepting a certain project launched by the government (Goertzel). In the United States of America, Republicans may believe in conspiracy theories led by the government, when a Democratic administration is in office and vice versa.

Particularly in the past few years, conspiracy theories have been omnipresent on the internet and in social media. These modern forms of communication allow conspiracy theories to spread faster than ever and make it easy for like-minded people to connect and form online echo chambers. Conspiracy theories date back to millennia ago when human history was at the beginner level. All human beings lived as hunters. For centuries, these theories have attempted to draw back the curtain on important world events that put human wisdom into doubt, as the conspiracy theorist came with a controversial statement. This statement must have some valid points that lead the human mind in that direction in which theorist wants to mold. At that time there were no print, electronic or social media to conspire a plot against them. Today the internet and social media have made the dissemination of conspiracy theories easier as compared to the past (Baker & Maggie). In the past, tribes had rivalries and lethal conflicts. They used to bury their enemies alive. They put their enemies to death in a violent way, archeological remains and fossilized mummies reveal the evidence of violent deaths. Hostile coalitions were the reason for those acts of violence. Mankind has a long history of conspiracy theories, many of them were just based on false rumors but some of them turned out to be true.

Here are some historical events that lead to the formation of conspiracy theories. It’s been five decades since Neil Armstrong put his first step on mood land. Several things made the USA claim to conquer the moon in doubt. Doubters say the United States government was competing with Russia in the term of space supremacy battle. The USA was desperate to beat Russia. To claim their supremacy in the space race, they faked the lunar landings. Neil Armstrong and his space companion Buzz Aldrin were merely actors to perform the drama. All of this happened in the hilly area under the producers of Hollywood. The dissemination of this conspiracy theory was well heard as the theorists came with questions that are not yet been answered satisfactorily. The U.S flag was seen waving in the film which is not possible in a vacuum as there is no wind. NASA answered this question that Buzz Aldrin was twisting the flag pole in the moon's surface so which caused the flag to wave, but theorists and their believers cannot be satisfied with this answer. But, we should not forget that Neil Armstrong brought lunar

rock samples which were verified geologically and those samples were moon rocks.

A conspiracy theory arouse when Rome was on fire. Nero was the ruler of Rome at that time, he took control in 54 C.E at the age of 17. Ten years later in 64 C.E, a fire broke out. The fire destroyed 3 districts of Rome and severely damaged 7 others. Theorists said that Nero set his kingdom on fire. They said that Nero wanted to bypass the senate. He also wanted to build Rome to his liking. So, he set up the fire while Nero blamed Christians for the fire. A famous Rome Historian, Tacitus claimed that Nero burned Rome, and he merrily played his fiddle while Rome was in flames. Although the fiddle was not invented yet at that time, these things have not stopped the suspicions that Nero was a bit of a firebug.

A funny and weird conspiracy theory evolved about Queen Elizabeth I who ruled England from 1558 to 16303. She defeated Spanish Armada and became everyone's loved queen. She didn't marry. She refused every proposal of matrimony and gained the nickname Virgin Queen. Theorists discovered a thing out of nothing, Bram Stoker the author of Dracula suspected that she might have been a man. Stoker once visited the town of Bisley where a boy was dressing as Queen Elizabeth I. Stoker came with a fascinated fiction theory that Queen visited Bisley in her childhood, where she died. The governess feared Queen's father, she found a boy who resembles Queen Elizabeth. Her father couldn't identify her daughter, so a boy raised in King’s Palace, ruled England for 44 years. The believers in this theory argue that why she didn’t marry and why she was always wearing something around her neck. They thought she/he was afraid of revealing the truth. This sounds like a ridiculous story, yet many believe in it.

Despite overwhelming evidence and an admission and apology from Germany decades ago, revisionists continue to claim that nearly 6 million Jews were not killed by Nazis during the Holocaust. President of Iran Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, for one, has called the Holocaust a 'myth' and suggested that Germany and other European countries, rather than Palestine, provide land for a Jewish state. This happens that the land was provided to Jews after the holocaust. Israel grabbed the land of Palestine, this event strengthens the theory presented by Ahmadinejad. Besides these famous events that account for conspiracy theories, history is full of such theories, e.g., HIV was created by the CIA to wipe out homosexuality and African Americans (Bogart, Laura & Thorburn). President of South Africa Thabo Mbeki is one of the believers of this theory. 9/11 was an inside job of the USA to get an excuse to attack Iraq and Afghanistan because they wanted oil.

Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre happened in Newtown Connecticut, the United States of America on December 12, 2012, in which a gunman killed 20 first grade students and six staff members of the school (Levine, Phillip & Mcknight). Total causalities were 28 including the perpetrator and his mother. The gunman used a Bushmaster XM15-E2S rifle, Glock 20SF handgun. The shooting happened between 9:35 am to 9:40 am. This incident was a major shock to the families whose kids died in this tragic incident.

Weeks after the Sandy Hook School shooting, a small publishing house named Moon Rock Books published 455 page's volumes arguing that Sandy Hook Elementary School Shooting was a hoax ad it never happened. They published a book named “Nobody Died At Sandy Hook” written by James Fetzer and Mike Palecek. They claimed that the whole drama was scripted and children were mere actors who performed the act of dying (Jackson). Claimers were off that the U.S government wanted to promote gun control laws, and this is a brilliant idea to apply these laws. The conspiracy theorists were having a genuine point that could trick the

readers to believe that it was a hoax. In this book, the writers defamed the father of the youngest victim of the Sandy Hook tragedy Noah Pozner. Book claimed that his father Leonard Pozner faked the death of his 6 year's old child. Son of Mr. Pozner, Noah Pozner went to school in a batman shirt that morning and never returned home. Noah's funeral ceremonies were not over yet when online speculations added grief to Pozner's family and the families of other victims that Sandy Hook was merely a drama staged by The Federal Emergency Management Agency. The Federal Emergency Management Agency was trying to implement gun control laws but it was facing challenges in the implementation (Koenig, Christoph & Schindler). So, a tragedy like Sandy Hook could pass any bill in parliament regarding gun control measures. So, the whole shooting was scripted by FEMA, and it was seen that gun control laws were made after that incident in the United States. It reinforced the idea presented by Alex Jones. Alex Jones founded InfoWars.com. This website spread the rumor of the incident as a hoax. InfoWars is the website that labeled 9/11 as an inside job, so it was already a controversial website. This thing infuriated the victims' families.

Believers in conspiracy theories led by Jones insulted Mr. Pozner, as they were asking how much Mr. Pozner got paid to play his role in this FEMA-sponsored hoax. Social media is a good thing for getting knowledge but it has dark sides too, as there is no verification of news on social media, as one spreads a rumor and blind followers step forward to share the rumor without verification. A similar thing happened to Mr. Pozner. This thing didn't stop here, they used the photos of Noah and made fun of it by calling a brilliant actor. These are the things that were enough to mentally disturb Pozner and the families of the other 25 victims. This event was the stuff of madness. The actual tragedy was turned into a political ploy, videos were reflecting fabrication, Pozner determined to fight against the people behind the computer. He tried to prove that his son lived once and then killed in the massacre. Just imagine how painful it would be for Pozner to prove his son's death. The smallest coffin was the heaviest to lift.

Theorist came up saying that Noah was not the son of Mr. Pozner. Alex Jones presented this controversial theory based on the report presented by Uniform Crime Report showed no murders in Newtown Conn., in 2012 and the victims of Sandy Hook were child actors and six years old victim was seen with Barack Obama after the incident in a picture. The reason was Connecticut State Police was leading the investigation of the Sandy Hook School shooting. So, the victims and murderers statistics were included under the Connecticut record rather than Newtown statistics.

4 years later in November 2016, Erica L. Lafferty wrote an open letter to U.S President Donald Trump to denounce Jones. Erica L. Lafferty is the daughter of Dawn Lafferty Hochsprung the principal of Sandy Hook School who was killed in the shooting. Trump appeared on Jones' Infowars website during his presidential campaign. Trump praised Alex Jones for his amazing reputation. Trump also pledged not to let down the conspiracy theorist. Trump again received a letter from Sandy Hook School board stating not to support the theorist who claimed the tragedy a hoax. Trump didn't respond to that letter too.

Uniform Crime Report and Trump's response reinforced the Alex Jones conspiracy theory. He was backed by many believers. This stuff maddened the grieved families. Six families including Noah Pozner's family as well as an FBI agent who responded to that attack filed a case against Jones for defamation in March 2018. They were off the view that Jones was the main culprit to spread false news. Parents of two victims joined the case in April 2018 and sued Jones for $1 million each. They also demanded laws for the control of guns used by the culprit (Bennett).

The publisher of Moon Rocks Books was also included in the case, but the principal officer Dave Gahary settled the case, he met with Mr. Pozner and has a face to face conversations. Gahary listened to Pozner and said in a statement, 'My face-to-face talk with Mr. Pozner has led me to believe that Mr. Leonard Pozner is telling the truth about the death of his son. I extend my most heartfelt and sincere apology to the Mr. Pozner family," Gahary then agreed to stop selling and publishing the further edition of the book. The lawsuit focused on checking whether Leonard Pozner was the father of Noah or not, in the examination, the limited DNA matter of Noah was used. It was matched with Mr. Pozner's DNA, it was proven that Mr. Leonard Pozner was the biological father of the youngest victim Noah Pozner.

Jones asserted for years that the Newtown, Connecticut, tragedy was a giant hoax and the whole thing was fake, later, Jones acknowledged that the shooting occurred. In a March deposition, Jones blamed his baseless opinion on 'a form of psychosis' he claimed he had in the past 'where I assumed everything was staged, even though I am now learning a lot of things aren't staged,' Mr. Pozner won the case against Alex Jones and James Fetzer. Parents were awarded $450,000 for defamation. Alex Jones said people believed in what I said, which motivated me to do more. Possible motives of Alex Jones could be the rating of his show and this conspiracy theory enhanced the rating of his show. Moreover, this conspiracy theory that made the tragic incident in doubt could also be an obstacle in the way of gun control measures by The Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Later on, Google, YouTube, Facebook, and Apple removed the videos and photos posted by Alex Jones (Berkowitz, Dan & Liu). Wordpress.com is considered to be the Internet's best and biggest blogging platform run by a company called Automattic. They said, 'Posting conspiracy theories or untrue content is not banned from WordPress.com, and unfortunately, this is one of those situations,' Automattic said in a statement. 'It is a truly awful situation, and we are sympathetic to the Pozner family.

A professor of conspiracy theory named James Tracy at Florida Atlantic University claimed that either shooting didn't happen or it was different from mainstream reports. He also claimed that political motives were behind the cover-up of the incident. The professor was later dismissed from the Florida Atlantic University. University president, Mary Jane said that Tracy's views were not shared by the university. Later, it revealed that the professor wanted to be famous by creating controversy. What Tracy did, it was for a publicity stunt. Professor Tracy later conceded that a shooting occurred.

Republican Party Candidate Tom ready was accused by Sal Pace in a political debate. When Ready was questioned about Sandy Hook, he responded that there were still questions about the authenticity of the Sandy Hook School Shooting whether it happened or not. Ready was heavily criticized by general public and victim families. Ready apologized for his remarks. Most likely, ready said it but his purpose was not to conspire, but he said it what he believed in after hearing the controversies. So, his remarks were non-conspiratorial but added grief to victims' families. Some conspiracy theorists related the event with 'The Hunger Games Book' a serial in which 22 children were brutally killed, so they thought that Sandy Hook drama was inspired by that serial.

Alex Jones and writers of the book 'Nobody Died at Sandy Hook' James Fetzer and MikePalecek was the main conspiracy theorist among all other theorists in Sandy Hook School Incident as they stuck to their point and were unwilling to accept the opponents' point of view.

Their stubborn nature and conspiracy theory added pain to the families. Now, it is confirmed that the shooting occurred and all the conspiracy theorists are agreed to it. Social media misuse was the main reason for the dissemination of false news. This event was not freedom of speech to talk about such a critical tragedy. There should be a proper check and balance for the news circulating on websites and social media control cells should ban such websites like InfoWars without a second warning.

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