

# Sifting the Wheat from the Chaff: The Value of Skepticism

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*“How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, **however improbable**, must be the truth?”*

– [Sherlock Holmes](#)



## Introduction

Sensationalism is the bane of the alternative media. Occasionally referred to as the [Carousel of Carnivores](#), this scourge of misinformation and disinformation is promulgated by “[celebritarians](#)” through the repeater effect. It is because of this that mean world syndrome is promulgated through the [news cycle](#).

Myth-busting has arisen as a reaction to sensationalism. Attempts to use the scientific method to either verify or debunk asserted claims may not be carried out perfectly all the time, yet, the whole exercise shows the value of rationality and empiricism. The success of web series such as [Game Theory](#) (as well as its spinoff, [Film Theory](#)) truly demonstrates the value that both debunking and verification can have for the audience, especially if it's presented in a flashy and attractive style.

As I've mentioned before, [skepticism is healthy](#); unfortunately, in my experience, most “activists” engage in magical thinking, and then they get upset when either they or someone else they know quickly becomes a political prisoner. Skepticism explains *why* wishful thinking is irrational, not to mention the fact that **mythology is the enemy of reason**. Therefore, if you want to lower the probability of individuals going to jail, then you ought to become less gullible.

Good science is *repeatable* and *falsifiable*. It's been said that [the 19<sup>th</sup> century was renowned for its great skepticism of state power and institutionalized religion alike](#); today's “activism,” by contrast, is mostly unscientific, and what portions of it that are usually tend to be routinely ignored or denigrated simply because they are not overly dramatic or sensationalistic. [Open-source intelligence](#) analysis relies on the scientific method, for without that, whatever

information is gathered by the alternative media becomes automatically discredited by rumors, conjecture, and gossip. Therefore, misinformation and disinformation as promulgated by too many “activists” hurts the practice of good security culture.

**Sophistry** is, by far, the most dangerous tool used by both reformists and their conspiracist allies in order to mask the truth. Typically, they claim that those who are more deontological (philosophically consistent) are merely “theorists,” and thus not concerned with the real world, yet, when their projects are openly revealed to be notorious failures that are then criticized, they accuse “us” of being cowards (or worse, government agents) for simply not being as foolhardy as they were in their enthusiasm to beg Leviathan for undue favors. I find it rather telling that those who claim their actions are very *practical* are exactly the same ones whose actions are later discovered to be very *impractical*, because they were unsound right from the beginning. They are either fools or liars, but either way, I want nothing to do with them, and in the interest of discovering the truth, I find that I must repeatedly oppose these charlatans. Briefly put, **sophistry is the enemy of the truth**.

Please keep in mind that I will use three **epistemological razors** as the “rules of engagement,” which I will observe in my attempt to guide myself to the truth. **Hitchens’ razor** says that the burden of proof lies solely with the claim maker; it is not incumbent upon skeptics to provide evidence disproving any claims. **Hanlon’s razor** says never attribute to malice that which can be adequately explained by stupidity. **Occam’s razor** says that the simplest explanation is usually the most accurate (put another way, convoluted explanations obscure the truth).

In addition, I will also be using other methods in order to evaluate the truthfulness of various assertions. Cogent reasoning is only possible if I assiduously refrain from committing **illogical fallacies**, even if only inadvertently. Normalcy bias is arguably parallel to confirmation bias, yet both are fallacious and irrational; I can only endeavor to be on the lookout for these and go by what the facts say as best as I can. As implied by the opening quote, the **process of elimination** is an indispensable tool for “**sifting the wheat from the chaff**,” as it were.

If anyone wants to provide rebuttals to my following critiques, then I welcome it. Whether it be due to fallacious analysis or unsound evidence on my part, I sincerely wish rebutters would bring them forward publicly for the edification of the rest of the class, so to speak; **but**, if the evidence is sound, and my reasoning is cogent, *then what I say stands*, which means that if I argue that specific claims are lies, then, most likely, that is the truth of the matter. I am always happy to accept criticism in good faith, but what I absolutely will not tolerate is sophistry from those with ulterior motives, especially if those vested special interests are carried on the winds of political expediency.

One other matter I wish to address before diving headfirst into the swath of claims – I will be assuming that you genuinely care about logic, rationality, and empiricism. If you only value emotive rhetoric and cheap talking points as your guides to what you think of as the truth, then please save yourselves some time by stopping, right now. **I really mean it**: should you be one of those people who puts way too much credence into “muh feels,” you can just piss off, quite frankly. Life is too short to waste precious time and effort on ingrates who shamelessly plop their feces everywhere like savage beasts.

### **A Brief Review of Patriot Mythology**

Last year, Gary Hunt and I did a five-part podcast series entitled, **Patriot Mythology**. Totalling almost six and a half hours, this series exposed and debunked some of the most pernicious lies circulating amongst the American patriot community. Referenced literature was listed and hyperlinked so that the listeners could follow along and verify exactly not only our source documents, but also judge whether our analysis fit the evidence he and I were using to determine the truth.

Simply defined, **patriot mythology** is the collection of unprovable or debunked assertions by constitutionalists about the nature of our political relationship with the several American governments. Although a few of them originally began as simple misunderstandings that were eventually corrected, the majority of these tall tales appealed to the

sensationalistic appetites of those who'd rather financially profit from spreading this folklore rather than restoring limited government, or simply perpetuate the error through lack of understanding. The magnitude of the time wasted by fruitlessly "[debating](#)" on such topics was time and effort *not* spent on more productive tasks.

Three examples ought to suffice for now. Paul Joseph Watson's 2010 article, [U.S. Postal Service Expands Construction of Secret Rooms](#), cried wolf by asserting that some leaked documents proved the existence of (wait for it)...**secret post office torture rooms!** Needless to say, this was complete bollocks, but then again, so is the corporate UNITED STATES myth, which is the bedrock foundation for the oxymoronic "[sovereign citizen](#)" ideology. As if that wasn't bad enough, there are those who still falsely believe that Americans never won the Revolutionary War for Independence, because America is still a British Colony. I know, I know...claims that the British monarchy is controlled by the Vatican is ass-backwards, but this is the nature of patriot mythology – people would rather believe false claims than follow up on the cited sources, even if the bibliography explicitly contradicts the very assertions being made!

Obviously, the importance of [falsifiability](#) cannot be underestimated. If there were to be the three hydras of the digital apocalypse (as illustrated by this article's picture), it would be misinformation, disinformation, and no information. Subsequently, the only way to pushback against these hydras is with the sword of truth, which can only be wielded by those who are being intellectually honest about the subject matter.

So, that concludes my brief review of patriot mythology. Should you desire to learn more, then be sure to listen to the whole podcast series, yet, what I would prefer to do now is to address other myths, which have not been addressed as much as I would have liked, yet are deeply embedded in both patriot and even libertarian circles. My intent by doing so is to, hopefully, enlighten you so that use your own discernment in order to avoid the traps laid by these charlatans.

## **Brothers-in-Arms?**

Groupies are rather annoying, for they insist that membership in their little clicks is all that matters, when in fact the opposite is true. Two of these within the patriot movement are known as the Oathkeepers and the Three Percenters. Oddly enough, they mutually reinforce each other, much like a duality such as yin and yang or male and female.

[Oathkeepers](#) is a nationwide organization composed of active-duty military and law enforcement, as well as first responders (such as fire fighters and paramedics) and veterans, who swore an oath to support the United States Constitution; the organization was founded by Stewart Rhodes in March of 2009. They are most famously known for their [Declaration of Orders We Will Not Obey](#), which outlines the basic tenants of the organization, namely, that they **not** do any of those wretched things on the list. Their assertion for this disobedience to unlawful orders is based upon the idea of the line in the sand.

Right off the bat, you should be able to tell that the main purpose of Oathkeepers, specifically, is to **not do anything!** In other words, American patriots ought to herald these keepers of their oath, so we are told, who remain *bravely neutral* while sitting down twiddling their thumbs. If neutrality were a virtue, then I guess most of the American populace would be composed of *de facto* "oathkeepers."

Additionally, [the line in the sand is a myth](#). Gary Hunt pointed out over two years ago in a stand-alone podcast entitled, [False Hopes: Oathkeepers, Constitutional Sheriffs, & Filming Cops](#), that the Oathkeepers do not care about the practical application of both the Search & Seizure Clause, as well as the Warrant Clause, within the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, so he found himself unceremoniously ostracized for testing their integrity. Given that the Oathkeepers do not care about the constitutional limitations found within the Fourth Amendment, do you really think any lines in the sand truly matter to them?

Then there is the issue of the oaths themselves, for which ones are we taking about here? On their "[About](#)"

webpage, the Oathkeepers invoke the Oaths Clause ([Art. VI cl. 3](#)) as the justification behind their whole organization:

*“The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution...”*

That’s rather interesting, isn’t it? For my purposes in making sense of Oathkeepers, this clause says that all *executive* Officers of the United States (that is, the federal government) and of the several States shall be bound by Oath to support this Constitution. I guess the question at law here is, **who is an executive officer?** I mean, surely Mr. Rhodes isn’t implying that active-duty military and law enforcement, first responders, and veterans are all executive officers of either the United States or of the several States, is he? For that matter, doesn’t Rhodes encourage that the entire federal Congress, plus the legislatures of the several states, as well as all of these judges, to disobey unlawful orders, does he?

Let’s give Rhodes and the Oathkeepers the benefit of the doubt, for perhaps there is another oath they meant to convey. Since two portions of their membership are active-duty military and veterans, it might be a good idea to peruse the [United States Armed Forces oath of enlistment](#), don’t you think? According to [Title 10 United States Code § 502\(a\)](#), it says:

*“Each person enlisting in an armed force shall take the following oath: ‘I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God.’”*

Ah-ha! I knew something was amiss. This enlistment oath establishes a **chain of obedience**, whether it be from the appointed officers or the President himself (pursuant to the [Commander-in-Chief Clause](#)), yet, this still only applies to the federal military, not the government police or anyone else. Also, I don’t see anything referencing “against all enemies, foreign and domestic,” so that must be in yet another oath, right? Well, there is the [Oath of Allegiance](#), which is found at [Title 8 Code of Federal Regulations § 331.1\(a\)](#), which says:

*“Except as otherwise provided in the Act and after receiving notice from the district director that such applicant is eligible for naturalization pursuant to § 335.3 of this chapter, an applicant for naturalization shall, before being admitted to citizenship, take in a public ceremony held within the United States the following oath of allegiance, to a copy of which the applicant shall affix his or her signature: ‘I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance*

*and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God.’”*

So, although this one too has the “bear true faith and allegiance” phrase just like the Armed Forces oath of enlistment, only this Oath of Allegiance, from what I can tell, mentions the phrase “against all enemies, foreign and domestic.” Man, I guess those naturalized immigrants must be pretty gung-ho on that all that Americana, maybe even more so than those natively-born enlisted men? In any case, I don’t think the Oathkeepers have met their burden of proof here, nevermind when it comes to law enforcement.

Between three different oaths to the federal government, I can’t tell which one is controlling for the Oathkeepers, whether it be the Oaths Clause, the Armed Forces oath of enlistment, or the Oath of Allegiance for naturalized immigrants. This is rather problematic because it’s even more foundational than their list of orders they’re more than happy to disobey, especially considering that keeping one’s oath is *the very purpose of the organization itself!* Not only should you be asking, “Which oath?,” but also the question, “[Which constitution do they support?](#),” especially considering [the Three Constitutions problem](#).

At the risk of further belaboring the point, since I was a former Boy Scout, does that mean that I, too, am an oath-keeper (that is, a keeper of my oath)? The [Boy Scout Oath](#) says:

*“On my honor, I will do my best, To do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; To help other people at all times; To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.”*

Given that I’ve been inactive with the BSA for over a decade now, does that mean I have kept my oath? I had to recite that oath at the beginning of every troop meeting, as well as at other times and events, all throughout my teenage years, while wearing the uniform. I’d like to think that being a content producer within the alternative media has served as a way for me to continue to remain “mentally awake and morally straight,” at the very least. You, the reader, should make the decision as to whether you think I’ve kept my oath, if oath-keeping is to have any meaning, or credibility, at all.

What have been the activities of Oathkeepers, other than **not** participating in tyranny? It would seem to be the case that one of them was their infamous cowardly retreat during the Cattle Unrustling at the Bundy Ranch due to what was later exposed as a fake drone attack. I remember watching the debrief report where one of Rhodes’ flunkies, Robert Casillas, [chewed out Ryan Payne](#) for leading the militiamen in a vote as to whether the Oathkeepers should be ostracized from the Bundy Ranch, [which they did](#). Is it really any wonder then that [Adam Kokesh cut up his Oathkeepers’ membership card](#) when Stewart Rhodes opposed his proposed armed march into the District of Criminals? Hell, [Oathkeepers specifically condemned Ammon Bundy’s sit-in](#) at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge earlier this year.



Whether it be Bundy Ranch, the July 4<sup>th</sup> armed march (that never happened), or the sit-in by the [Citizens for Constitutional Freedom](#), Oathkeepers does appear to have a habit of **not** participating in activities involving gun owners, so I will give them that. It is because of this opposition to patriots, and libertarians alike, that Oathkeepers have been derisively referred to as the “oath-breakers,” which is a moniker I think they’ve earned.

[Three Percenters](#), on the other hand, were supposed to be the more “hard-core” version of Oathkeepers. Mike Vanderboegh, the founder of the Three Percenter concept, [describes it thusly](#):

*“During the American Revolution, the active forces in the field against the King’s tyranny never amounted to more than 3% of the colonists. They were in turn actively supported by perhaps 10% of the population. In addition to these revolutionaries were perhaps another 20% who favored their cause but did little or nothing to support it. Another one-third of the population sided with the King (by the end of the war there were actually more Americans fighting FOR the King than there were in the field against him) and the final third took no side, blew with the wind and took what came.”*

This is a rather fascinating claim, especially considering that there are no source citations provided by him anywhere on his [Sipsey Street Irregulars](#) blog that I can find. Given that this is falsifiable, I decided to explore the historical validity, if any, behind Vanderboegh’s foundational assertion.

Both a modern historian and a Founding Father appear to be at odds with the historicity of Vanderboegh’s justification for the Three Percent. Robert Calhoun wrote in [his 2008 book on the American Revolution](#) that:

*“The loyalists were colonists who by some overt action, such as signing addresses, bearing arms, doing business with the British Army, seeking military protection, or going into exile, supported the Crown during the American Revolution. Historians’ best estimates put the proportion of adult white male loyalists somewhere between 15 and 20 percent. Approximately half the colonists of European ancestry tried to avoid involvement in the struggle – some of them deliberate pacifists, others recent emigrants, and many more simple apolitical folk. The patriots received active support from perhaps 40 to 45 percent of the white populace, and at most no more than a bare majority. Amerindians split into the same pro-British, pro-American, and neutralist alignments, with those tribes that British Indian Super-intendents since the 1740s proving most likely to support British arms.”*

If accurate, then I’m not sure why Vanderboegh would say that the Three Percent received assistance from the 10% of the populace whereas Calhoun said they received at least 40% from the other colonists; but hey, perhaps Calhoun and Vanderboegh are off base on their estimates? What better educated guess could be provided by anyone other than straight from John Adams? According to [the Little, Brown & Co.’s 1856 publication of his letters](#) (alongside a biography written by his grandson, Charles Adams), John Adams wrote the following to [Thomas McKean on August 31<sup>st</sup> of 1813](#):

*“Upon the whole, if we allow two thirds of the people to have been with us in the revolution, is not the allowance ample? Are not two thirds of the nation now with the administration? Divided we ever have been, and ever must be. **Two thirds had and will have more difficulty to struggle with the one third, than with all our foreign enemies.**” [emphasis added]*

Adams rightly admonished McKean for naïvely proselytizing that “the great mass of the people” were supportive of independence as early as 1765, because if that were true, then how do you explain the urgency of Thomas Paine’s arguments that he presented in his 1776 [Common Sense](#)? Besides, at best, this would only mean that ~ 33% of the colonists supported independence, not anything in terms of those proportions who served in combat versus logistics or some other supportive function, as Vanderboegh claimed. Furthermore, Adams wrote the following to [James Lloyd in January of 1815](#):

*“If I were called on to calculate the divisions among the people of America, as Mr. Burke did those of the people of England, I should say that full one third were averse to the revolution. These, retaining that overweening fondness, in which they had been educated, for the English, could not cordially like the French; indeed, they most heartily detest them. An opposite third conceived a hatred of the English, and gave themselves up to an enthusiastic gratitude to France. The middle third, composed principally of the yeomanry, to the soundest part of the nation, and always averse to war, were rather lukewarm both to England and France; and sometimes stragglers from them, and sometimes the whole body, united with the first or the last third, according to circumstances.”*

Of course, it is not the American Revolution that Adams is addressing here, but the *French* Revolution, since Americans were bellyaching over whether or not to support the [Jacobins](#). As Michael Schellhammer [wrote in his article on February 11<sup>th</sup> of 2013](#):

*“Truth is, Adams was not addressing America’s rebellion – he was writing about American attitudes towards the French Revolution, when Americans grappled with either supporting France or maintaining commercial ties with Britain. The mistake appears to stem from historian Sydney George Fisher, who misinterpreted Adams’ meaning in his 1908 book, *The Struggle for American Independence, Volume I*. Others, reading the quote without the full context of Adams’ letter, **have repeated the error ever since.**” [emphasis added]*

So, whether it stems from a misunderstanding of *whose* revolution we’re talking about, or from the simple inability to *do basic math*, Vanderboegh’s promotion of this Three Percent is outright mythical, just like “[the line in the sand](#)” or the “[corporate UNITED STATES](#).” History does not support Vanderboegh, which just might explain why he lacked any source citation for the foundational assertion of the Three Percenters in the first place.

Yet, the sheer lack of historicity isn't the only problem to deal with here, for there is the question of whether the Three Percenters are an organization. Vanderboegh himself wrote in both [2010](#) and [2014](#), respectively, that:

*“The Three Percent is NOT an organization. That would be too easy to kill, too simple to discredit. The Three Percent is an idea, a movement of like-minded people, and that is something that is far harder to kill. Almost impossible, really.”*

*“The Three Percent idea, the movement, the ideal, was designed to be a simple, powerful concept that could not be infiltrated or subjected to agents provocateurs like many organizations that I observed in the constitutional militia movement of the 90s.”*

This would seem to imply that the Three Percenters, as an abstract idea, is more along the lines of [leaderless resistance](#), but such is not the case in practice. To start with, there are websites and groups such as [Threepercenter.org](#), [Three Percenter Nation](#), [Three Percenters Club](#), [Oregon Three Percenters](#), and the [Idaho Three Percenters](#). Secondly, does it make sense for any Three Percenters to have “use permits” for [protesting](#)? As [Brandon Curtiss announced from the bed of a pickup truck](#):

*“The parade route...there will be people, like I said, placed at the stop lights, we have to observe all the traffic laws, that was the one request we had from the Boise police department. We do have a use permit for doing what we do, so we're all good to go. We just can't obstruct traffic.”*

I remember [Naomi Wolf](#), of all people, being against the whole idea of a “protest permit,” yet Brandon Curtiss seemed to have taken it as a matter of course. Last November, the Idaho Three Percenters held their “Idaho First!” rally in order to protest the [Syrian refugee crisis](#), which is indicative to me of [the neocon infiltration of the patriot movement](#). If accurate, then this would contradict Vanderboegh's claim that the Three Percenters were immune from infiltration.

Speaking of the Idaho Three Percenters, I think it would be relevant to mention the provocateuring in Harney County, Oregon as of late. First, a [“buffer zone” was originally promised by Brandon Curtiss](#), at least, until he and his crew left Oregon to go back to Idaho; this left one of the Final Four at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, [Sean Anderson](#), asking the question of [where is the buffer zone that was promised?](#) Secondly, it was none other than Brandon Curtiss who launched [“Operation Freedom Ride,”](#) which quickly became the now infamous dildo fundraiser, whose proceeds went directly to the Idaho Three Percenters (this is why the Three Percenters are now referred to derisively as the “Three Inchers”). Thirdly, it was [Brandon Curtiss and his thugs who harassed and tried to intimidate Gary Hunt](#) while he was in Burns, but this provocateur was thankfully scared off by at least two other American patriots in the vicinity.

A match was made in hell during the aftermath of last year's [Chattanooga shootings](#). Stewart Rhodes issued an Oathkeepers “national call to action,” which launched [Operation Protect the Protectors](#). This was an effort to guard the military recruitment stations from any further Islamic terrorism – an effort that was specifically rebuked by the U.S. Army, where they went so far as to say that [recruiters must treat armed citizens as a security threat](#).



Interestingly, some Three Percenters joined in this “operation” to guard the military recruitment stations.

So, it would seem to be the case that when the militiamen protecting the Bundy Ranch could use whatever help was available, the Oathkeepers fled. When the Final Four were holding out at the refuge, the Three Percenters fled. Yet, when a lone Islamist attacked the federal military, both the Oathkeepers and Three Percenters couldn’t stumble over themselves quickly enough in order to volunteer for guard duty. Why bother [protecting private property for profit](#) when it’s so much more acceptable to guard government property for free?

After observing their behavior and the foundational claims behind their respective organizations, I’d have to conclude that, yes, the Oathbreakers and the Three Inchers are certainly “brothers-in-arms” with each other, but certainly not with the American patriot movement, because whenever given a chance, not only would they rather commit desertion, but also actively lend support to the federal government, even when it’s repudiated by Leviathan itself.

Now, I ask you, how is this any different from what [Mark Kessler](#) did?

### **“Anti-Government” Government Agents?**

Speaking of Mark Kessler, there is a rather dangerous presumption made by most constitutionalists that for some inane reason, American patriots ought to collaborate with the government employees of the several state governments. The idea here is to use the several states of this highly overrated Union as a bulwark against the central government headquartered in the District of Criminals. Two distinct, yet overlapping, approaches to doing just this are what are known as “constitutional” sheriffs and state “nullification.”

Constitutional sheriffs are thought of as those county sheriffs who honor their oaths of office (sound familiar?). [Three years ago](#), this “constitutional sheriff-ing” was expressed by county sheriffs who professed to uphold the right to keep and bear arms by refusing to enforce unconstitutional gun control, particularly in the form of executive orders. As can be expected, nothing came of this, although there have been some recent concerns following [the President’s infamously weepy press conference](#) that perhaps he might try to make one final effort to push through some gun control during his last year in office.

What legal basis, if any, does this notion of “constitutional” sheriffs have in the government’s own laws, though? There is nothing enumerated in the federal Constitution about sheriffs, so the Tenth Amendment refers you to your most relevant state constitution. For me, this would be the [1876 Texas Constitution](#), which enumerates sheriffs only a few times I could find that I will list here for your delectation:

- Art. III § 52e: “Each county in the State of Texas is hereby authorized to pay all medical expenses, all doctor bills and all hospital bills for Sheriffs, Deputy Sheriffs, Constables, Deputy Constables and other county and precinct law enforcement officials who are injured in the course of their official duties...”
- Art. V § 23: “There shall be elected by the qualified voters of each county a Sheriff, who shall hold his office for the term of four years, whose duties, qualifications, perquisites, and fees of office, shall be prescribed by the Legislature, and vacancies in whose office shall be filled by the Commissioners Court until the next general election.”
- Art. VIII § 14(b): “In any county having a population of less than 10,000 inhabitants, as determined by the most recent [decennial census of the United States](#), the sheriff of the county, in addition to that officer’s other duties, shall be the assessor-collector of taxes, except that the [commissioners court](#) of such a county may submit to the qualified voters of the county at an election the question of electing an assessor-collector of taxes as a county officer separate from the office of sheriff. If a majority of the voters voting in such an election approve of electing an assessor-collector of taxes for the county, then such official shall be elected at the next general election for the constitutional term of office as is provided for other tax assessor-collectors in this state.”

- Art. XVI § 1(a): “All elected and appointed officers, before they enter upon the duties of their offices, shall take the following Oath or Affirmation: ‘I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear (or affirm), that I will faithfully execute the duties of the office of \_\_\_\_\_ of the State of Texas, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States and of this State, so help me God.’ ”
- Art. XVI § 1(b): “All elected or appointed officers, before taking the Oath or Affirmation of office prescribed by this section and entering upon the duties of office, shall subscribe to the following statement: ‘I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I have not directly or indirectly paid, offered, promised to pay, contributed, or promised to contribute any money or thing of value, or promised any public office or employment for the giving or withholding of a vote at the election at which I was elected or as a reward to secure my appointment or confirmation, whichever the case may be, so help me God.’ ”

What this seems to mean is that Texas county sheriffs are constitutionally enumerated to be elected for four-year terms by the electorate, to collect taxes in lower populated counties, to enjoy taxpayer-funded medical care, and to have sworn an oath to uphold federal laws. So, that is what a “constitutional” Texas county sheriff is – **a politician with a tin badge on his chest.**

Constitutionality aside, perhaps these county sheriffs can still serve as a bulwark against the federal government because their financial incentives lie with the Texas government? *Au contraire*, naïve patriot, for the phenomenon of “[greenmail](#)” ensures compliance with federal demands, as does the “[equitable sharing](#)” provisions integral to [civil asset forfeiture](#). I can’t imagine county sheriffs respecting your natural liberty as they engage in “[policing for profit](#)” while simultaneously receiving kickbacks from the federal government.

But wait, isn’t it possible for corrupt sheriffs to be unseated if a good citizen ran for sheriff and won the election? Ah, well, Anthony Bosworth tried doing that in Yakima County, Washington last year – although [Bosworth admitted he lost the election](#), he oddly bragged that he “broke records.” Naturally, Texan candidates for sheriff must be registered voters, so in light of the fact that I’m an “[ex-voter](#),” I am ineligible to run for [the office of any Texas county sheriff](#).

More significant than ulterior financial motives or the viability of [running for public office](#), though, is the constitutional [monopoly on policing](#) itself. Thankfully, [most cops are not constitutional](#) (municipal police, state highway patrol, and the federal alphabet soup boys are not enumerated in any American constitution I’ve ever read), but just because something is constitutional does not therefore mean it is ethical. [Monopolies have been authorized by the federal Constitution](#), so the promoters of “constitutional” sheriffs, such as the [Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association](#) (CSPOA), totally dodge any moral or economic criticisms about [the monopoly on the production of security services](#), simply because the state constitutions said so, and that’s all you need to know, according to them. Obviously, such avoidance by the CSPOA of these serious critiques to their constitutionally enumerated monopoly indicates their failure to bear the burden of proof.

Similar in spirit to the “constitutional” sheriffs is the purported method of state “nullification.” [Dr. Tom Woods](#) is the foremost academic on the subject; in brief, Dr. Woods spends the majority of ink on the page attempting to bear his historical burden of proof, which although I appreciate the effort, there was virtually no helpful information on how to practically make this technique work in the present. The best he can do is to tell you to write your legislator and to desperately plead for the legislature to “nullify” *unfunded* federal mandates, to repeal the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment (somehow), and to establish federal tax escrow accounts – this last item, ironically, violates the Appropriations Clause ([Art. I § 9 cl. 7](#)).

Ignorance of [the ratification period](#) by most constitutionalists might just explain why some of them advocate for state “nullification.” The Tenth Amendment was only possible because of the Anti-Federalists, which is particularly important when you consider that Alexander Hamilton staunchly opposed any bill of rights in [Federalist Paper #84](#), on the unbelievably lame excuse that Articles I – VII **were already** a bill of rights. Worse, there were [three and a half years between the ratification of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights](#); interestingly enough, the Whiskey Rebellion took place during this interim when the hated whiskey tax was passed into law during March of 1791. In light of these

facts, why these “Tentherers” revere the Constitution is beyond me.

State “nullification” inherently relies on a combination of [grassroots lobbying](#) and running for public office, besides [electoral voting](#). These methods are used to encourage a state legislator to introduce a bill into the legislature of which he is a member, and once that bill is signed into law by the governor, then this new statute is said to “nullify” the federal one, since they contradict each other; because of this, state “nullification” is inherently reformist, much like [jury nullification](#). No wonder [cancelling your voter registration](#) is such a threat to the false perception that [reformism](#) is effective and practical in restoring liberty.

Before perusing the efficacy of modern state “nullification” in Texas, I would like the Tentherers to answer two questions regarding this technique. They are:

1. Who has the power to use state nullification against the federal government?
2. What *exactly* is the motive for this actor to nullify unconstitutional federal actions?

When you consider that Art. XVI § 1(a) of the Texas Constitution applies to legislators as elected officers (presumably just the same as county sheriffs), then why should you expect these legislators to nullify federal laws that they have sworn in their oaths of office to uphold? I find it quite revealing that [Dr. Woods prefers to swat against baseless accusations](#) of racism, or of being a “neo-Confederate,” yet neglects to address these pivotal questions I’ve raised.

Empirically, there are three questions that should be answered in order to determine the usefulness of state “nullification.” Briefly, they are:

1. How successful has Michael Boldin’s Tenth Amendment Center (TAC) been in encouraging the use of state nullification?
2. How many federal laws have been successfully nullified by the several state legislatures?
3. How much time do Tom Woods and Michael Boldin need in order to fully test the viability of modern state nullification?

I’ll attempt to answer these questions in reverse order. First up, you must consider that the TAC was founded back in 2007; this means that Boldin has had 9 years to test the current viability of state nullification. To be fair, [FIJA has had 27 years](#) to test the efficacy of modern jury nullification, yet, I think nearly a decade of advocacy is plenty of time by which to gauge a method’s efficacy. Now, in order to address the sheer amount of federal laws nullified, I will limit myself to Texas, just for the sake of simplicity. According to the [“Tenther Action Center,”](#) the [2015 State of the Nullification Movement report](#), and the [TLO database](#) (which is the Texas legislature’s bill tracking system), I’m able to determine what legislative bills got passed into law. In summation, they are:

- “Right to try” experimental medications ([HB 21](#))
- [Texas Bullion Depository](#) ([HB 483](#))
- [Licensed open carry of “handguns”](#) ([HB 910](#))
- Common Core prohibition ([HB 642](#))
- Drone surveillance prohibition ([HB 912](#))
- Automatic license plate reader regulations ([SB 1286](#) & [HB 2876](#))

Of these, only the license plate ones died in committee, so all the rest were signed by the governor; however, was their success really attributable to state nullification? Although HB 21 is a pushback against *some* FDA “regulations,” they are only applicable to *terminal* patients. HB 642 and HB 912 are prohibitions against the use of the Common Whore “standards” in Texas [public schools](#) and the use of drone surveillance by the Texas police, respectively; I’m not quite sure what the federal government’s intervention is here, exactly. HB 483 just establishes another

government entity, so I'm not sure why the Texas Bullion Depository is a pushback against central banking. Finally, HB 910 is a pushback against Art. I § 23 of the Texas Constitution, [not the Second Amendment](#), so that one definitely doesn't count as state "nullification," unless Tenthers would have you believe that the legislature can "nullify" its own constitution.

This suggests to me that the TAC, while admirable in their attempt to try something creative, was at best, an experiment, or at worst, a false hope; either way, I think the results are pretty clear. Granted, I would encourage anyone who wants to replicate what I've outlined here to do so with where they live, and see whether or not they get similar results. If TAC is said to be "successful" regarding state "nullification," it would be in an **educational** context, but not in a practical sense by any means. In my not-so-humble opinion, state "nullification" is nothing other than a version of a theme of jury nullification trying to rear its ugly head once again in order to [rope political dissidents back into counter-productive reformism](#).

What can be learned from the folly of both "constitutional" sheriffs and state "nullification" is that you should not place so much faith in the efficacy of the Tenth Amendment, or "your" respective state constitution, for securing your liberties. From what I can tell, Art. XVI § 1(a) subjugates Texan government employees to the jurisdiction of the federal government; if accurate, then you cannot trust either county sheriffs or state legislators to restore your liberty for you. Needless to say, these two ideas are just more expressions of reformism, and it's really quite pathetic that constitutionalists and libertarians alike believed this tripe – maybe both of them were more gullible than I had initially presumed.

## Anarchist Mythology

Speaking of libertarians, they are not immune to their own mythologies, as some would have you falsely infer that only the American patriots were superstitious. Wishful thinking is a plague upon an individual's consciousness, for it mutates their sincere desires into fallacious nonsense. Two pernicious concepts that are quite popular amongst libertarians and anarchists are the Philadelphia Conspiracy and "peaceful" parenting.

Revisionist history is not a plight upon the truth *if* the facts are accurate. Simply put, this idea of the Philadelphia Conspiracy is traceable back to L. Neil Smith's 1980 novel, [The Probability Broach](#), which describes the "conspiracy" thusly:

*"The fiend responsible for this counter-revolutionary nastiness was Alexander Hamilton, a name Confederates hold in about the same esteem as the word 'spittoon.' He and his Federalists had shoved down the country's throat their 'Constitution,' a charter for a centralist superstate replacing the thirteen minigovernments that had been operating under the inefficient but tolerable Articles of Confederation. Adopted during an illegal and unrepresentative meeting in Philadelphia, originally authorized only to revise the Articles, this new document amounted to a bloodless coup d'état."*

Keeping in mind that this is [historical fiction](#), the ratification period is depicted in a rather sinister light. Had this black portrayal of the 1780s been left treated as harmless entertainment, then that would have been the end of it, but the problem here is that there were libertarians who thought they saw some truth in what Smith's characters were saying. Obviously, [I am no longer a fan of the United States Constitution](#), yet, I am compelled by my appreciation for intellectual honesty to debunk this alleged conspiracy, hopefully once and for all.

The basic assertion of the Philadelphia Conspiracy is that the Framers of the U.S. Constitution executed a [coup d'état](#) against the American colonists through deceit and guile. What's far scarier, I suspect, is the sheer horror of the fact that the Anti-Federalists *compromised* with the Federalists by persuading them to have the Bill of Rights ratified following the ratification of the Constitution; in other words, the Anti-Federalists sold out, hence why the Constitution is sometimes referred to as the Great Compromise. I can prove this with the very existence of the [The Anti-Federalist Papers](#) – it is a bit dishonest to claim, on the one hand, there was a “bloodless coup d'état,” yet on the other hand, there exists a record of public discourse about whether or not to ratify the Constitution that spans two years.

Conspiracists cannot have their cake and eat it, too. They cannot use a *fictional novel* against *historical documents*, and then claim that the assertions in the novel trump the documentation. To paraphrase a line from [V for Vendetta](#), artists use lies to tell the truth, whereas politicians use lies to cover the truth up. Again, [I've written some libertarian fiction myself](#), but I have no interest in covering up the truth (the mainstream media does that well enough without my help), so the promoters of the Philadelphia Conspiracy act more like oxymoronic “[anarchist politicians](#)” rather than libertarian artists.

Paralleling these conspiracists within libertarian circles are [the advocates of “peaceful” parenting](#). I've read their recommended literature, which includes Lloyd de Mause's [The Origins of War in Child Abuse](#), Dr. Murray Straus' [Beating the Devil Out of Them](#), and Drs. Neufeld and Maté's [Hold Onto Your Kids](#), and I must admit, I remain thoroughly *unconvinced* that [spanking is a form of child abuse](#). I have no reason to think that spanking violates the non-aggression principle, and I will remind my readership that the burden of proof lies squarely upon the shoulders of the “peaceful” parenting advocates to demonstrate that to be the case.

To me, it would seem that the “peaceful” parents violate Hanlon's razor by ascribing a malicious intent upon nearly all parents when much of their behavior and motives could be described as stupid (much like Leviathan, in some respects). For instance, deMause spends the majority of his book detailing grotesque acts of pedophilic rape and sexual torture, but then mentions that the evolution of childrearing psychogenic modalities has *improved* while overall human violence has dramatically *declined* over time. Spanking was only mentioned twice in passing, and deMause did *not* recommend *any* non-spanking forms of child-rearing *at all*, much like [the Lysander Spooner routine](#) of expressing a grievance without so much as offering an alternative solution, or option, to alleviate the suffering in question. This really makes me wonder as to why the “peaceful” parenting advocates recommended deMause's book to further their cause, since he had virtually nothing to say about spanking in the first place. Ulterior motives, much?

Meanwhile, there appears to be an implied unholy alliance between the “peaceful” parenting advocates and [Child “Protective” Services](#). Dr. Straus was very much in favor of the [infamous Swedish 1979 anti-spanking law](#), despite the fact that one of the unintended consequences was the police round-up of Aziz Raheem Awalludin and his wife, Shalwati Nurshal, who were arrested by the Swedish police over two years ago for slapping their then-12-year-old son's hands, under auspices of the anti-spanking law. I must ask, why aren't the “peaceful” parents not more outspoken against CPS? To my knowledge, only [Kal Molinet](#) and [Justus Ranvier](#) are the sole [voluntaryists](#) who've advocated on behalf of “peaceful” parenting *and* specifically repudiated the CPS.

[Adam Kokesh's comparison of parenthood to government tyranny](#) is hugely misplaced. To reiterate my criticism to his arguments, when people beget children, they hung around their own neck the obligation of raising them, simply because they directly participated in creating their very lives, to put it delicately. Parents are the *guardians*, not the owners, of their children, and as such must respect their individual self-ownership (just as libertarians do); however, until those children become adults, their exercise of free will must necessarily be curtailed since they typically lack the capacity for personal responsibility that comes along with individual liberty.

To illustrate but just one [non sequitur fallacy](#) commonly held by “peaceful” parenting advocates, just because parents chose to beget children does not therefore mean children are equal in status to adults. Yes, they are human, and yes, they enjoy the same natural liberty you and I do. Put another way, children, just like adults, only enjoy



*negative* liberty, that is, the freedom to *not* be arbitrarily punished, or otherwise interfered with. Thus, any housing, food, education, or any other goods or services bestowed on the child by the parent is simply little else than a debt incurred when the parent in question reproduced, yet even this is primarily limited to the nature of their relationship being a *temporary guardianship*. Once the child has demonstrated the maturity of an adult, regardless of whether his age be 12 or 25 years old, the two individuals in question now enjoy something resembling an “equal” relationship, particularly with regards to its voluntariness, even if they don’t like each other, in which case [ostracism becomes an option](#).

Although the involuntary position of the child with regards to his parents is blatantly obvious, the reciprocal obligations between parent and child (that is, a duty of upbringing and rearing in exchange for a duty of obedience within reason) is, all things considered, not entirely unreasonable or inequitable, especially on behalf of the child, in the absence of coercion by the parent. Obviously, this is not an exhaustive *a priori* reasoning of the parent-child relationship, but I hope it will suffice for now. Unfortunately, what is deceptively being pushed here by the not-so-peaceful parenting advocates is an “egalitarian” agenda to undermine parental rights, even if only unwittingly, yet I attribute that to stupidity on the part of the “peaceful” parenting advocates, not malice, especially considering that more than a few of them, oddly enough, are themselves childless.

Thankfully, there is now some pushback by libertarians against the diatribes of the “peaceful” parenting advocates. [Lenore Skenazy](#), an advocate for [free-range parenting](#), recently [said the following in response to an interview question by Shane Radliff](#) as to whether she thinks that spanking is a form of child abuse:

*“I think everybody knows the difference between a spanking and child abuse, it’s obvious. Abuse is cruelty, it’s just taking something out on a kid, whereas spanking, once in a while, if you have to spank a kid – I haven’t spanked my kids, but I remember being spanked a little bit, and I think that if the child knows that you love them and knows that you care about them – like I said, when we have to swoop in is when children are beaten, when they are starved, when they are given drugs, and when they are pimped out, and I think we all know the difference between true abuse and a difference in parenting styles...we’re all different, and it doesn’t make a difference if you’re showing your kid that you love them and you’re making sure that they get fed – from there on out, **let’s give everybody the benefit of the doubt**, that they are doing the best that they can.” [emphasis added]*

As you can tell, Skenazy takes the *opposite* position of the “peaceful” parents who froth at the mouth that child abuse is rampant. [Tilting at windmills](#) is what the “peaceful” parents seem best skilled at doing, alongside their “[doom porn](#)” [aficionado](#) counterparts. Both of them utterly fail at constructing rational models of security because they prefer to let their intuitive *feelings* about security distort the actual reality of security, which is exactly what Bruce Schneier warned against back in 2010.

From my vantage point, any collusion between the Philadelphia conspiracists and the anti-spanking advocates is really only indicative of the irrationality within libertarian circles that pops up occasionally. Neither of them have abided by Hitchens’ razor in bearing their burden of proof, and so I am left to conclude that the only reason either of them are given the time of day is because they feed the confirmation bias some libertarians vainly seek in their attempts to delegitimize the State. I fail to understand why some anarchists would be so willing to collectively demonize parents or spread misinformation about the Framers of the U.S. Constitution as part of their efforts towards abolishing the State, when there are far more reasonable and effective ways to do just that, such as the [strategic withdrawal strategy](#), which was first alluded to by [Étienne de La Boétie in 1576](#).

## Conclusion

After covering a swath of myths and half-truths permeating throughout the alternative media, it becomes pivotal to understand the popularity of these rumor mills, and who benefits from spreading such misinformation. The magnitude of the time and effort spent “debating” on such topics is time and effort *not* spent on more productive tasks. Lack of rationality, coupled with ulterior political motives, gives rise to a [society of the spectacle](#) where reality matters not.

Whether it be due to sensationalism or “[conspiratainment](#),” I regret to admit that the independent media is now slowly morphing into an Internet version of the corporate mainstream media. I still think, perhaps naïvely, it is possible for the remnants of the free press to turn that trend around, but to do so would require a serious all out effort to immediately reinvigorate that classically liberal value of **skepticism** before it’s too late and the irrational superstitious nonsense engulfs the whole [blogosphere](#). Occam’s razor is like holy water to the shameless promoters of all this claptrap, whether it be that [Antonin Scalia was murdered](#) or [the fake Muslim “invasion.”](#)

Gullibility *lowers* your capacity to exercise your freedom, because it skews your **security assessments** (which is composed of [threat modeling and risk analysis](#)) towards fallacious conclusions that, in turn, leads to terrible security culture, and ultimately, a *higher* likelihood of becoming a [political prisoner](#). Debunking myths is very much a game of “whack-a-mole,” albeit with the challenge being that nobody has enough time in the day to “put out (all the) fires” caused by sensationalists and conspiracists who seek to benefit from the resulting chaos, especially in some form of monetary compensation or just narcissistic self-aggrandizement. My intentions have been to present before you a wide variety of myths that, much like doom porn, only serve to increase your [opportunity costs](#).

Oathbreakers, Three Inchers, “constitutional” sheriffs, state “nullification,” the Philadelphia Conspiracy, and “peaceful” parenting *all* violate, both in difference of kind and of degree, some combination of the three epistemological razors I’ve measured them by – Hitchens, Hanlon’s, or Occam’s razors. None of these six myths pass my own “smell test,” and thus, I feel duty bound to maintain my integrity by specifically rebuking each of them, so that there can be intellectual honesty between the different kinds of people within the alternative media, including both content producers and the audience, regarding where the discovery of truth leads us in understanding this reality.

Naturally, I encourage all of you to take what I have offered here and subject it to your own reasoning and empiricism. It is my hope, and prayer, that once you possess this knowledge and new insight, that at least several, if not many, of you will act in your own best interests by not believing these mythologies as if they were true. Finally, [as The Anti-Terrorist so wonderfully explained back in 2010](#):

*“Your job is to recognize the real threats amongst the media distractions and irrelevant issues. Ultimately, you’re going to have to rely on your own discernment regarding how important these issues actually are, then make your own decisions and choices accordingly. I doubt many of you will see things exactly as I do, but hopefully you’ll learn from considering my point of view. Even the things that you disagree with will be helpful because it might get you to reassess your own view, then make the right decision for you in your own circumstances. Work hard at making sure that you’re correct in your views and always try to keep an open mind, so that the new or changing evidence isn’t going to be overlooked.”*