Over the last few decades, I doubt that any American political organization has received greater negative attention in our national news and entertainment media than the Ku Klux Klan, or KKK. For example, although white activist David Duke left that group over 35 years ago, the media still often identifies him as one of its former leaders, and partly as a consequence Duke’s support for Donald Trump’s presidential campaign has regularly been treated as headline news.

Such massive coverage may be objectively demonstrated. Googling “KKK” yields over 72 million results, considerably more than the joint total for “Communist” and “Communists,” and well over twice what you get for “Communism.” Such prominence seems rather excessive, given that throughout most of the 20th century, Communism controlled some one-third of the world’s population, and the resulting political conflict periodically threatened to unleash global thermonuclear war. Even today, a self-described Communist Party governs China, a nation 1.4 billion strong, which by some measures has now passed the U.S. to become the world’s largest economy. Meanwhile, the last time the KKK held any significant political power was almost 100 years ago, during its Midwestern heyday of the 1920s.

And if we focus on the sanguinary consequences of the two movements, the imbalance is even greater. The famous *Black Book of Communism*[1], published in 1991, claimed that across the 20th century, Communist regimes had racked up a peacetime total of roughly 100 million human fatalities, and although that latter figure has been widely disputed as a considerable exaggeration, the true number is surely in the many tens of millions, with merely the famine deaths induced by Mao’s disastrous Great Leap Forward of 1959-1961 usually pegged at 35 million or more.
Meanwhile, the victims of the notorious KKK seem rather fewer in number. The Wikipedia entry[2] for the KKK is over twice as long as that for Communism, and hardly seeks to airbrush the misdeeds of that violent organization, but only manages to provide some 15 murder victims, all listed by name, drawn from the combined decades of the 1950s and 1960s, which represented the height of the Klan's modern power. This apparent gap between 15 deaths and perhaps 70,000,000 or so seems rather wide.

Not only does the KKK total pale in comparison with Stalin and his considerable body-count, but during its two decades of greatest infamy all those hundreds or thousands of armed Klansmen accounted for fewer victims than the number sometimes sent to the Chicago city morgue over a long holiday weekend[3] these days, let alone what various half-forgotten teenage spree-killers produced during their individual short rampages. For example, a decade ago disgruntled Virginia Tech student Seung-Hui Cho killed 33 people within a couple of hours, and he hardly remains a household name these days. Meanwhile, the last of those infamous 15 KKK racial killings took place a full half-century ago.

A considerable disproportionality between media attention and actual activity seems undeniable.

However, there are obviously some mitigating factors in this critique. Communism never came to America in serious form, while the ideological foundations of our culture these days tend to regard racial killings by organized groups as particularly heinous offenses, especially when these are aimed at inflicting terror. By contrast, lunatics attacking their classmates or drug-dealers disputing their business transactions are committing much more mundane offenses. So under this particular victimological standard, the 15 victims of the KKK over the two decades from 1950 more reasonably justify the massive attention they have received.

Furthermore, America has always been fascinated with killings that take place over an extended period of months or years, especially if they involve some sort of unusual pattern, with the monikers of strange serial killers often resonating for decades. There was Richard Ramirez, the Los Angeles Night Stalker, an avowed Satanist who slaughtered at least fourteen victims, mostly in the Los Angeles area during 1985. And who can forget Jeffrey Dahmer, the Milwaukee Cannibal, who killed and devoured some 17 young men in a career spanning a dozen years? So the unusual circumstances or motivation of such murders can easily compensate for the relative lack of raw numbers, and surely this helps to explain the enormous attention paid to the KKK’s rather meager list of actual victims.

As an extreme example of the importance of murder quality over murder quantity, there was the famed Zodiac Killer[4] who prowled Northern California during the late 1960s and early 1970s, but was never caught. Although he may have accounted for as few as five actual victims, the sensational nature of the case inspired several movies and many dozens of books, while the fictionalized plotline of a serial killer who sends taunting letters to the newspapers has probably been repeated in scores of television crime episodes and films. As a child growing up in Southern California, the phrase “Zodiac Killer” was certainly familiar to me.

But oddly enough, another long series of killings centered in that same time and place has received far less attention. When I first encountered mention of the “Zebra killings” some years...
ago, the term was completely unfamiliar to me, and due to the similarities in name and location, I initially wondered whether it might be an alternate designation for the Zodiac attacks. But despite the chronological and geographical overlap, the Zebra case was actually quite different, and given its explosive details the almost total absence of any subsequent media attention is really quite curious.

Indeed, one advantage of exploring the Zebra killings is there exists only one detailed, somewhat contemporaneous account, and a couple of years ago with my curiosity getting the better of me, I finally ordered the book from Amazon. Zebra was published in 1979 by Clark Howard, an award-winning crime writer, who drew extensively on newspaper archives, court testimony, and personal interviews, with his text running over 400 pages.

The story of the Zebra killers almost sounds like something out of a movie, although no movie was ever made. For decades, the Nation of Islam—the so-called “Black Muslims”—had been preaching that whites were “devils,” the product of a mad scientist’s controlled-breeding experiment, and that killing such “devils” was a virtuous religious act. Then, some time in 1972, certain elements of the sect decided to transform religious dogma into actual practice, and began an organized campaign to randomly kill as many white men, women, and children as they could, with the attacks occurring throughout California but especially centered in the Bay Area and the city of San Francisco. One of the alleged motives was to terrorize the local whites into eventually fleeing that city, thereby allowing the establishment of a black-dominated metropolis.

The black attackers typically went out alone or in pairs to commit the killings, usually selecting any seemingly vulnerable victims on the streets at dusk or in the dark, with their weapons of choice being guns, hatchets, or machetes. Sometimes, victims were kidnapped and brought back to safe-houses to be tortured and killed by the entire group, with their bodies afterward dismembered and discarded.

According to the later court testimony, black participants each needed to kill a total of nine white men to be awarded the coveted title of “Death Angel,” earning them the right to have their photos displayed in the Black Muslim meeting halls, while roughly double points were awarded for slaughtering white women or children, on the grounds that such killings were more psychologically difficult. Based on the number of such distinctive homicides—well-dressed black men randomly attacking whites on the street—police officials estimated that there were over 70 such killings throughout California, though based on his extensive research Howard himself believed that the true statewide total may have been close to 270 dead victims.

The period of the killings lasted for almost half a year, and once the newspapers and public grew aware of the situation, the city of San Francisco became gripped by a sense of terror, with public officials desperate to crack the case. Sometimes even politically-connected individuals fell victim, with future mayor Art Agnos barely surviving a random gunshot attack. In desperation, Mayor Joseph Alioto, a staunch liberal, initiated stop-and-search patrols that targeted a majority of the local population of adult black males as possible killers. Eventually, eight of the suspects were arrested with the aid of an informant, with four of these being
convicted and sentenced to life, at which point the attacks ceased. But it appears that the majority of the participants were never caught, let alone punished.

_Zebra_ may be purchased for as little as $4 on Amazon[6], shipping included, and also found online both as a PDF [7] and in various other formats[8] at Archive.org. But for those too busy to read it, a much shorter summary of the story may be found in an article entitled "Remembering the Zebra Killing"[9] published in 2001 by conservative writer James Lubinskas, with his presentation closely matching the book’s facts, while the San Francisco Chronicle also ran a short retrospective[10] around the time of the 2002 DC Sniper Attacks. There are also a handful of other small websites here and there, discussing the case and republishing some newspaper articles, including coverage of the Zebra killings in other cities[11].

Meanwhile, the events themselves have almost totally disappeared from public memory. When noted author David Talbot published his widely-praised 2012 book _Season of the Witch_[12] covering that general era of San Francisco history, he included a discussion of the Zebra killings, and some knowledgeable San Francisco natives mentioned that it was the first time they had ever heard of the story[13]. Indeed, the complete absence of any subsequent media coverage or investigation forced Talbot, a mainstream liberal, to cite an obscure white racialist blogsite devoted to the Zebra case as one of his only sources of documentary information on the wave of murders.

Not only did the Zebra killings represent the greatest instance of racially-motivated killings in modern American history, but the number of victims was quite possibly greater than the combined total for all other such examples over nearly the last 100 years of our history. Based on that reality, the near-absolute media blackout has been quite remarkably Orwellian and deeply disturbing. Prior to the development of the Internet, neither I nor almost anyone else would have ever encountered this important history, and I suspect that if anyone had presented us with the true facts back then, his claims might easily have been dismissed as the ravings of a lunatic.

We naively tend to assume that our media accurately reflects the events of our world and its history, but instead what we all too often see are only the tremendously distorted images of a circus fun-house mirror, with small items sometimes transformed into large ones, and large ones into small. The contours of historical reality may be warped into almost unrecognizable shapes, with some important elements completely disappearing from the record and others appearing out of nowhere. I’ve often suggested that the media creates our reality, but given such glaring omissions and distortions, the reality produced is often largely fictional. Our standard histories have always criticized the ludicrous Soviet propaganda during the height of Stalin’s purges or the Ukrainian famine, but in its own way, our own media organs sometimes seem just as dishonest and absurd in their own reporting. And until the availability of the Internet, it was difficult for most of us to ever recognize the enormity of this problem.

Just a couple of weeks ago it was discovered that an attractive white teenage girl had been kidnapped by a group of black men in Florida[14], held captive and gang-raped for days, then
finally killed and discarded, with her body fed to alligators. I found no mention of this
grotesque tale in any of my major national newspapers, even as The New York Times reported
that Hollywood was in the planning stages of three different major movies about the
infamous Emmett Till murder case from 60 years ago. By hiding certain events and heavily
emphasizing others, our media apparatus can create any desired picture of the world, and until
recently almost none of us would have been the wiser.

The Black Lives Matter movement has increasingly dominated our political discourse for the
last couple of years, and its protests have led to major shifts in policing policy, with some
critics claiming that these changes have been responsible for a large, unexpected spike in urban
homicides in some heavily black cities. But as near as I can tell, many of the major
incidents sparking that movement were more or less complete media hoaxes, and quickly
revealed as such to anyone who even casually consulted the unfiltered information available on
the Internet, thereby avoiding the dishonest MSM gatekeepers.

For example, Trayvon Martin seems to have been a violent young thug and his antagonist,
George Zimmerman, a half-Hispanic Dudley-Do-Right, whose main offense was attempting to
defend himself while at risk of being beaten to death after he was attacked late at night without
provocation in his own community. Similarly, Michael Brown of Ferguson fame was a gigantic,
thuggish criminal, who casually committed the strong-arm robbery of a convenience store
at night, then suddenly attacked the local police officer who attempted to stop and question
him soon afterward.

These and many of the other BLM incidents would hardly seem likely to inspire mass public
outrage, whether among blacks or anyone else, except that our dishonest media successfully
transformed them into things they were not, thereby agitating the ignorant and the gullible,
with prominent media pundits sometimes themselves stunned at the total avoidance of the
true facts. I have little doubt that during the 1930s Soviet Pravda managed to instill boiling
outrage among ordinary Russians when it fabricated all the monstrous crimes and horrific
treacheries purportedly committed by the Trotskyite wreckers and other political deviationists.

In fact, the evidence suggests that the overwhelming majority of all racially-motivated violent
attacks in America each year are committed by blacks, usually against whites, though
sometimes against Asians or Hispanics. But these attacks are almost always ignored by the
media, while the newscasters and politicians seem almost desperate to shine a spotlight on any
that occur in the opposite direction, even if they are almost nowhere to be found. Indeed, a few
years ago I pointed out that for decades the statistical correlation across all our urban centers
between the prevalence of blacks and the prevalence of serious crime has been among the
highest found anywhere in the social sciences, strongly suggesting that marginal urban crime is
essentially a black phenomenon. But individuals who form their view of the world primarily
from our mainstream media would probably remain unaware of these important facts. Before
the Internet, only gossip and rumor might have challenged media-endorsed falsehoods.

A pattern of blatant dishonesty that is too large and continues for too long produces obvious
consequences. On a whole range of issues, certainly including racial ones, the American media
may be fast approaching the point of possessing negative credibility, with increasing numbers
of people tending to assume that the facts may be exactly opposite to what the media claims.
This is hardly unprecedented. During the 1970s I read Edgar Snow’s fascinating books on Maoist China, wherein a shrewd peasant once told the author how easy it was to disentangle reality from official news reports: if the media launched a huge propaganda campaign emphasizing the tremendous safety of Chinese railways, then surely some horrific train wreck must have recently occurred. It’s sad to consider that many Americans may be beginning to follow similar rules.

Consider a biological metaphor. When soft flesh suffers a serious wound, scar tissue protectively forms, and the eventual result is a new skin integument usually tougher and more resistant than the original. Thus, long after the damage has been repaired, left behind is a permanent, telltale marker of defensive overcompensation. Media narratives aimed at hiding unpleasant facts sometimes seem to follow that same pattern of overcompensation, producing an inverted reality that may provide a useful clue to the suppressed truth.

For example, last year I published an article examining the considerable evidence that John McCain’s true wartime record in Vietnam may have been one of a notorious enemy collaborator, but that the dishonest effort to obscure or excuse the reality of his treachery took on a life of its own, and growing enormously over time, eventually established him in the mind of the public as one of America’s most patriotic war-heroes.

Or consider the fascinating historical case of Emmett Till, mentioned earlier, whose murder in 1955 became the archetypal case of an innocent black youngster lynched by murderous Southern whites, perhaps even lending some inspiration to Harper Lee’s public school classic *To Kill a Mockingbird*. There was enormous national media coverage of the Till murder, which uniformly reported that the black fourteen-year-old child had merely made rude and provocative remarks to the young wife of a white shopkeeper—a “Wolf whistle”—leading to his abduction and brutal killing. Yet oddly enough, only long afterward did it emerge out that his father, a violent criminal, had been executed for multiple rapes and murder, and that Till himself, weighing 150 pounds and quite large and muscular for his age, also had a violent history. Indeed, these facts had remained totally unknown to me until quite recently.

When we discover that the media has shamelessly concealed certain potentially significant details, we may naturally wonder what else might have remained permanently hidden in those pre-Internet days. I’ve sometimes wondered whether Till’s actions may have been far more substantial than merely a harmless “wolf whistle,” perhaps even amounting to some sort of sexual assault, with his killing therefore being the sort of rough justice not uncommon in backward rural communities. Under such a hypothetical scenario, the husband of his victim would surely have made every effort to conceal from public knowledge the terrible indignity of the actual attack his wife had suffered. Perhaps such disturbing speculation is mistaken, but given the revealed pattern of deception, I do not think it is entirely unwarranted. In pre-Internet days, Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown might have easily joined Till in the roster of tragically martyred youngsters.

A long history of overwhelming media dishonesty may produce broader consequences that many may find distressing. The public remarks of Donald Trump often seem quite ignorant or even ridiculous, and surely no presidential candidate in the last one hundred years has been subjected to such strong and uniformly hostile media coverage. Yet the insular members of the
Fourth Estate have been stunned that their endless attacks and denunciations have had so little impact upon public opinion, with Trump having recently regained the national lead in several presidential polls. Surely journalists must realize that decades of deceit have stretched their credibility past the breaking point on a whole range of sensitive issues, with huge numbers of voters simply disregarding anything said about Trump in what they consider “the lying press.”

Once Americans conclude that our supposedly objective media functions merely as a corrupt propaganda machine, why should the statements of prominent establishment pundits or reporters count for anything more than the sarcastic Tweets of some angry, anonymous blogger? Those who have allowed the currency of journalistic integrity to become totally debased have only themselves to blame when they discover it is no longer accepted by the general public.

For Further Reading:

- Our American Pravda[24]
- Race and Crime in America[25]
- John McCain: When “Tokyo Rose” Ran for President[26]

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