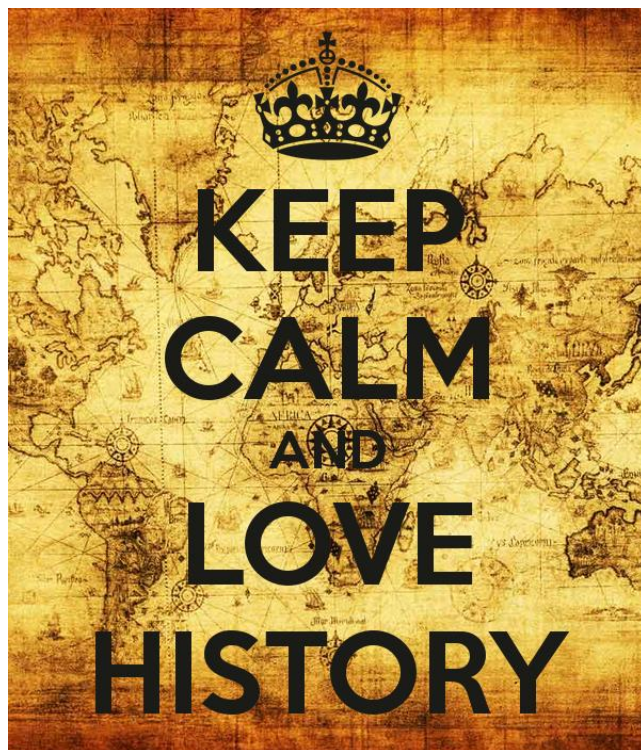


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Trump's sexual misconduct - does it matter?

By Owen Henney

Sexual misconduct is bad. And nowhere is the scourge of such crimes found greater than in the secret places where the rich and powerful hide. And nowhere are the rich and powerful better installed than in the place most associated with freedom, righteousness and the spirit of all good things than the White House in Washington DC. At least 22 women have come against Trump in accusing him of sexual misconduct and assault. Now, I'm not here to call Trump overtly a rapist and in no way will I make this article an investigation into such claims. That is neither right nor the point of the article. I will, however, look into whether those claims matter to his presidency.



“You've got to deny, deny, deny and push back on these women. if you admit anything and any culpability, then your dead”

“just grab ‘em by the p**sy”

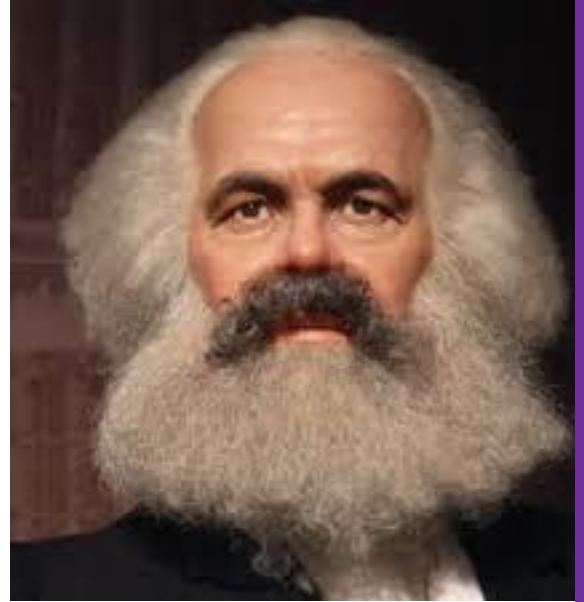
“All the women on my show flirted with me, consciously or unconsciously they couldn't help” it”

Sexual assault crimes matter and if it's done by the president of America then there is no doubt that it is even more important. One could argue that it doesn't matter that it's the president; any sexual misconduct or accused sexual misconduct matters because it's a crime and the power of the person and status of the person should be completely irrelevant. Why must these claims get so caught up in politics? It matters because sexual assault attacks a very person's livelihood. So, of course, it matters as it would matter for anyone even if it's a president. As well as that politically it does matter, and there is no doubt about that, we can't have the president, arguably the most important man in the world who is meant to be a role model that people respect, being someone who sexually assaults young women. It is entirely wrong. What would it mean if his crimes were ignored because he is the president?

However, some could say that it doesn't matter, he was elected in, it doesn't matter that he's the president, people knew what they were voting for, knowing of these claims and voted for him anyway, to the American people it didn't matter so shouldn't be relevant to his presidency, therefore, he's the right man for the job. Those views are not the views of the author of this article.

Did Marx Get it all wrong?

By Owen Henney



There is no doubt that Marxism is fascinating. And my fascination cannot be described as anything less than obsessive, so far that it caused me to read the damn book by Marx himself entitled 'The Communist Manifesto'. In the bulk of this article I will be focusing on the idea of communism as a utopian final destination; later on, inspecting the idea that the two historians did not get it all wrong. So here goes.

To use the structure of a famous Churchill quote: capitalism is not perfect but it's sure the best worst system I know. However a rise in a communist idealism has given me the urge to write this. The idea of communism is flawed in every way:

For example you see a lack of progress.

The idea of communism is about a collective and not an individual and that's my main problem. It's all about being as productive and practical as possible which means that when you're not working on something for material gain like farming wheat you're simply a liability and therefore you have no time or resources given by the government for writing books or research, and there's simply no companies to house that, hence depleting the number of joys in the world and progression in beautiful and knowledge bringing work. As well as that because it eradicates competition of business (as I touched briefly on earlier) but also between people you get no growth in technology and you see a dumbing down of society this is famously seen in the time when in a communist society knowledge was seen as the enemy and even people in society with glasses were killed. This lack of progress leaves devastation in its wake.

You also see a gross idealism that doesn't work. It betrays psychology and makes very little sense. People are naturally competitive - you can't avoid it. We form natural hierarchies but in communism, if you do that, you get killed and that's where you find millions killed in cold blood.

However although the idea of communism as a Utopia may be flawed, in the Communist manifesto it states a universal timeline that goes like this: it starts off with the feudal phase, moving into the capitalist phase then to the socialist phase ending up at the 'utopian' final destination of communism. We've obviously seen throughout history the revolutions from a feudal phase into a capitalistic phase which many countries were in. We can see many countries becoming more socialist. This can be shown in some countries: for instance Cuba where there was a push towards the Socialist phase. This is built upon as in the Communist manifesto it states that countries coming out of the capitalistic phase are often to become more nationalistic this can be shown as in policies around the world becoming much more nationalistic, for example, Britain's famed Brexit and Americas move from all nationalistic policies.

By Ludo Benney

Should we leave Earth or preserve it?

It is inevitable that the world will end, within 7 billion years the sun will have expanded so much to the extent that it will engulf earth and the planet will be no more. However the likelihood of humans going extinct before then is extremely possible. These life threatening events could be from our own mistakes or from a natural disaster. So, should we as a race be going to all possible extents to prevent this from happening or should we merely disregard earth as a stepping stone planet from which the human race will disperse and find somewhere new to live.



The sun is growing and we can't stop it, however it will be many years before it will do any harm to our planet and therefore it is the least of our planet's worries. The biggest threat to our planet is global warming. The effects of global warming have been present for quite some time yet humanity has chosen to ignore it, which is ironic because it poses a great threat to society. Whilst we have been pumping out fossil fuels we have been slowing heating the earth's atmosphere creating the greenhouse effect. This has caused the ice caps to melt and massive effects to our environment. So what can we do to prevent earth overheating?

Well the answer is 'not that much'. With the rate at which we have already affected the planet it would require lots of money and lots of manpower. Scientists have said that within 50 years global warming could be producing a lethal threat and in order to stop that we would need to build huge amounts of renewable energy supplies and remove all fossil fuels such as oil and coal. However starting wouldn't hurt anyone, even if we were to start replacing some forms of energy it would give us more time to focus on space exploration. Also other natural events such as a super nova or meteor hitting earth can still propose deadly situations. Also such events as the Cuban missile crisis have portrayed the ideas of nuclear war which as stockpiles increase and global tensions rise is becoming ever more likely. This is exacerbated by the leaders who rule the leading diplomatic states such as Donald Trump and the whisperings of a nuclear apocalyptic future has become much less subtle.

This therefore gives us one option. Find a habitable planet before ours isn't.

Although space exploration may seem like the obvious thing to be doing to combat earth's demise it isn't as simple as it would appear. Before we would even attempt to find another home we would have to create the technology which could travel at such a speed that it would be a beneficial process. For example, our nearest star Proxima Centauri is 4.2 light years away. If we were to travel there at the speed of a space shuttle used in the Apollo mission it would take 50,000 years. There the speed to travel at is the speed of light which take 4.2 years to reach the star but such technology doesn't exist and won't for a very long time. This makes things such as interstellar travel impossible due to extensive amount of time it would take to get any star. However, even if we were to find such habitable planet we would then have to civilise it to the extent that the how population, or most of, could live there. This would require humongous ships to transport materials etc.

Thus the most effective way to start a civilisation would be start “create” a planet such as terraforming mars into a habitable place. This would elongate the humans lifespan significantly because it gives us a fresh start.

Therefore as a planet we should try and preserve for as long as it is possible and whilst doing so work on space exploration to maximise the time we have to save ourselves.

The Mexican-American war

By Angus Fenton

The Mexican-American war was fought from 1846-1848 and was fought across California and Texas and the North of Mexico. The war helped to fulfill Americans manifest destiny, by gaining more territory across the North-American continent, and was the first American war chiefly fought on foreign soil.



In 1836 the Texans fought a war with the Mexicans, so they could gain independence from them. Texas then

declared its independence after the war had ended. When 1845 began, Texas was facing economic and military problems, furthermore, many American immigrants and slave owners began to surface in Texas. This was enough reason for the U.S. to annex Texas in December 1845, and for the Texan government to accept and sign the annexation bill in December of 1845.

From June to July of 1846 the Bear flag revolt occurred, where the American settlers in California revolted against the Mexicans and declared California an independent state. But California's independence was short lived as the U.S. military began to occupy California and fully annexed it in 1848, at the end of the war.

The war began on April 25th 1846 when Mexican cavalry charged at American troops in the disputed zone, who were under the command of Zachary Taylor and around a dozen American soldiers were killed. The Mexicans then laid siege to a fort along the Rio-Grande. Taylor was able to call in more reinforcements and was able to defeat the Mexicans, at the Battle of Palo Alto. On May 13 of 1846 the U.S. declared war on Mexico.

U.S. forces led by Col. Stephen W. Kearny and Commodore Robert F. Stockton invaded the Rio Grande and were able to capture it, to little resistance. By December the Americans had advanced further into Mexico, and had captured Monterrey in September. At the Battle of Buena Vista, in February 1847, the Mexicans suffered heavy casualties under Lopez Santa Anna, but he then became president of Mexico. The U.S. won a large victory at Cerro Gordo and began to move towards Mexico City.

In 1848 the war was all but won. There were still small guerilla attacks upon American supply lines but the war had essentially ended. Santa Anna resigned, and on February 2nd 1848 the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed. It changed the U.S. Mexican border to the Rio Grande not the Nueces River, it also forced the Mexicans to recognise the American annexation of Mexico, and they agreed to sell their territory of California and North of the Rio Grande to the U.S. for 15 million dollars.

The Codex Gigas

By Rory Sheppard

In the earlier half of the Thirteenth century, an unknown monk in the now-known country of the Czech Republic, supposedly sold his soul to the Devil, in order of completing the task of writing all human knowledge down into a single book, in a single night. This contained both the Old and New testament, save for the book of revelations, Flavius Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews*, The "Etymologies of Isidore of Seville" (a very popular encyclopedic-style reference book at the time), a series of medical texts grouped under the *Ars Medicinae*, a confession of sins, a set of conjurations, a chronicle of Bohemian history, and a list of people attached the monastery at which it was written as well as a calendar of feasts. However, other Monks at the Monastery he lived in found out about his pact with Lucifer, and then as punishment, sealed him alive behind a brick wall until he died of dehydration.



This eerie religious legend has spread through Europe over the course of centuries, and still captivates people today, due to the strangely chilling supernatural credibility to the tale itself. Many things still captivate history scholars and text analytics to the Modern Age, and in this article, I shall record and explain what's so interesting about the *Codex Gigas*, or what is now-known in England as the Devil's bible.

Why Is it called the Devil's Bible?

In the middle of the book, there is a giant, 19 inch drawing of the Devil himself; Wearing nothing but loincloth, with two tongues. appearing to taunt the reader. Also, the popular legend around it that it was, in fact, written by, or at least helped to be written by, the Devil.

What exactly is so strange about the Devil's Bible?

Well, two things, really. The first and foremost, being the shockingly pristine condition the books in, despite it's material and age. See, the book was written on **Parchment**, at the very latest finished by **1250**. Now, the material the book was written on, (Tanned donkey hide,) strictly makes it parchment. (Parchment: a stiff, flat, thin material made from the prepared skin of an animal, usually a sheep or goat, and used as a durable writing surface in ancient and medieval times.) However, parchment can only last for an average of two hundred years, and if written in 1250, that means that the Devil's bible has outlived its supposed lifetime over three times. That itself is miraculous. However, the fact that the scripture is practically in the same condition as it was when first written, with all its words legible and unfaded, makes its mere existence impossible. Now, if it were made out of vellum, (tanned cow skin,) its surprising condition can be explained, as vellum has a guarantee of at least 250 years, and can last 5000. However, vellum is strictly cow skin, and the book itself has been proven to be made from donkey hide. (An interesting fact, is

that due to the size of the book, (36 inches tall, 20 inches wide, and 8.7 inches thick, weighing an unbelievable 165 KG,) it would of taken the skin of at least 160 donkey's to create the book. That means, 160 animals were sacrificed supposedly to Lucifer, for the World's largest known Medieval scripture. Rather ironically due to the fact that despite the Pious times, it was about the Devil, not God.) Meaning that there is no possible way for the book to have survived this long.

And the second strange thing about the book, is the suggestions about how long it took to write it. Sure, legend has it that the monk only took a day to write it, but that's just superstition, right?

Well, wrong. Multiple studies by analytics have shown no evidence that the writer of the book ever changed pace, and that the writing at the front few pages of the book today is in roughly the same condition as the writing on the last few pages, meaning that it had to be written in a short time span.

(We can also say that it was written by only one man, due to the fact the handwriting stays consistent throughout.)

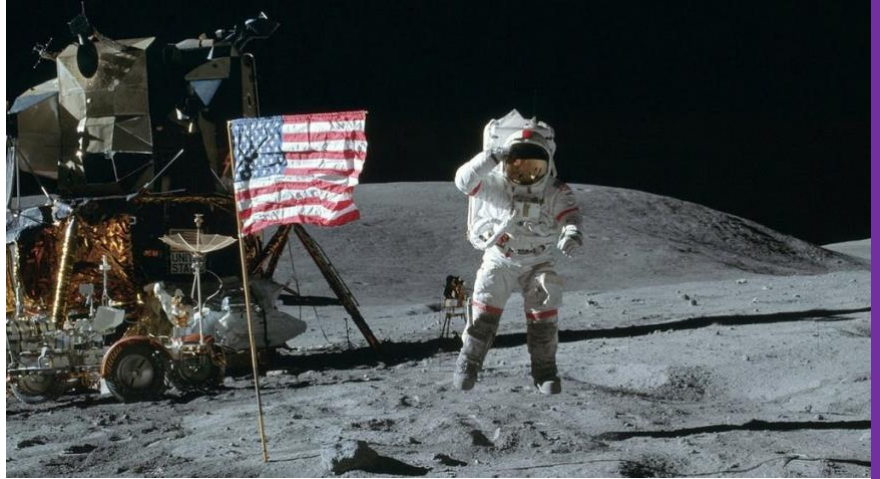
Here's where the interesting part comes in.: the amount of words in the Devil's Bible is huge. So huge in fact, that an average person today, writing an average of eight hours a day, would be estimated to take upwards of twenty-five years to complete the whole book. Someone working non-stop would take at least five years, according to literature scholars. But how can that be, if the book itself was written indisputably in less time than that? (At most a year, according to some sources.)

Well, that exactly is what makes it such a mystery, and has caused hundreds of scholars to investigate throughout time, but to little avail. However, once again, there is an answer that has been around since its very creation, one that seemed all too credible to so many people. One that helped give it its infamous name: The devil himself.

Why the moon landings weren't faked

By Cameron Eilbeck

Search up 'why the moon landing were faked' on the internet, and you'll find pages on pages of websites claiming to have final, definite evidence on why the apollo missions never made it to the moon. However, there are some explanations for the evidence these people present, and flaws in their argument.



One major chunk of evidence that the conspiracy theorists cite are the Van Allen belts: two huge belts of radiation that surround the earth, pulled into shape by earth's magnetic field. It's been claimed that humans couldn't have passed through these belts without being fried with lethal doses of radiation. In fact, the international scientific community was aware of the Van Allen belts thanks to the Explorer, Pioneer, and Luna missions in the 1950s. Luckily, the timings of the Apollo launches were such that the Van Allen belts were at their lowest intensity, which fluctuates with the sun's activity. Because the Apollo 11 crew were in the Van Allen belts for less than two hours on their journey to the moon, they were only exposed to around 18 rads of radiation, which was reduced even more to about 0.18 rads due to the protective radiation cladding on the apollo craft. To contrast, radiation sickness occurs when you are exposed to around 200-1000 rads in a couple of hours.

There are a few other things moon landing conspiracy theorists like to deploy as evidence which are actually inaccurate. For example, in the photos of the American flag being planted on the moon, it looks like it is fluttering in the wind. However, there is obviously no wind on the moon, so this must be fake, or so the conspiracy theorists say. In reality, the flag was was disturbed as it was planted into the ground and kept this bent shape because of the lack of strong gravity on the moon. Another problem is the supposed lack of stars in the background of the photos of the apollo- this is actually common in photographs of space, where the contrast between bright and dark is extreme. The sunlight bounces off the moon's surface and makes it seem very bright, drowning out the relatively dim light of the stars. The human eye can pick out the stars, but it is very hard to pick them out with a camera, as a camera struggles with the contrast. This is also the case for the astronauts of the international space station, and it is why if you look at most photos of earth from space you won't be able to pick any stars out in the background.

Why the moon landings weren't faked (in case you were not already convinced...)

Part II

By Cameron Eilbeck

As well as these traditional responses to the claim, there are more modern pieces of evidence that prove that the moon landings did in fact happen. One quite direct proof that shows without doubt that the moon landings did happen is that we can see the astronauts' footprints and vehicles. Obviously we can't use something like the hubble telescope, as it is not designed to focus on such small objects, but we can use a closer spacecraft, NASA's lunar



reconnaissance orbiter, which as the name suggests, orbits the moon. It has captured images of the apollo landing sites, and we can clearly see the paths and landing modules that the apollo astronauts used. These landing sites have also been independently spotted by a variety of other spacecraft from China, India, and Japan.

There is a final piece of evidence showing that the moon landings were not faked, and it's right here on earth. We have loads of moon rocks kicking about on earth, brought back by the apollo missions, and when we brought back these rocks we found a lot of tiny glass spherules among them, which are produced in two key ways; explosive volcanic activity or high speed meteorite impacts. In either case, the rock needs time to cool and crystallise slowly. On Earth, the elements quickly break down any volcanically-produced glass. But in space, glass spherules survive nearly pristine, and we have found them in meteorites and of course among the rocks the apollo astronauts brought back, proving that they were in fact space travellers. In the modern world, while it is much easier to come across so-called evidence that the moon landings were faked, it is also much easier to disprove this evidence.

The Frankfurt School

By Johnnie Willis Bund

The Frankfurt School is a group of intellectuals who fled Germany before WWII, well versed in the study of culture. They were students of the theories of Karl Marx; however, they didn't believe in communist praxis. Instead they were more interested in applying Marxist theoretical framework to existing policies and, specifically, popular culture. They were the original Cultural Marxists. When confronted with the rise of Fascism in Germany they asked themselves how a liberal democracy could fall to such great depths. Most placed the blame for the disenfranchisement of the people and the unfairness of the treaty of Versailles. However these plucky people had other ideas. The German people's fall to the Nazis coincided with the rise of cinema.



“From Caligari to Hitler” is a groundbreaking book by film critic and one of the founding members of the Frankfurt school, Siegfried Kracauer, published in 1947. It is so influential that it defines what we think of as film criticism today. Without it Truffaut's Auteur theory or Mulvey's feminist theory would not exist. In it he outlined how he believes that popular German films between WWI and WWII indirectly led to the rise of fascism. He reasoned that a film takes a lot of people to agree to put a lot of money into a project that would only be a success if a lot of people watch it - the ultimate collaborative process. Therefore a film possessed a unique insight into the collective mindset of the population. And this mindset could be swung by films.

Now, of course, Kracauer didn't wish to suggest that these artists were fascists. Indeed, German giants in the world of filmmaking such as Fritz Lang, F W Murnau and of course Billy Wilder also fled Germany upon Hitler's rise. But, many of their classics flirt with the idea of power. And when you look at these films you can see Nazi influenced subtext. “M Murderer Among Us” has a social degenerate and cereal killer being caught by identifying him with a white “M” on his back. It wouldn't be to great a leap to compare a degenerate with a white “M” and a white Star of David. However the murderer among us from the title is often interpreted to be a stand in for Hitler. This brings me to my main quarrel with the Frankfurt school. They are very selective about what subtext they read. And if a film reflects the mood of the time that doesn't mean that it caused the mood of the time.

Overall, however, I believe the Frankfurt school provide a vital alternative perspective and recommend you research them more.

The dancing plague of 1518

By Rory Sheppard

In the rise of summer, July, 1518, a woman known as Frau Troffea took to the streets of Strasbourg dancing for six days in a row. In that short period, two horrifying facts were discovered. Firstly, the condition was fatal. At the end of the six days, Troffea had died from exhaustion, after passing out and coming to multiple times. Secondly, It was also contagious. Whatever happened to Troffea wasn't a mere bodily malfunction. Something had caused it, as a week after she had started dancing, thirty people had been sighted dancing in the streets, and at the end of the month, four hundred people were infected with the dancing plague. So, what do we know about this strange affliction, that infected so many people, and cemented Frau's name in a historical spotlight even until today?



Description

The plague, as said, caused the victim to dance, until it was physically impossible to continue. Unfortunately, due to the durability of the human body, this usually meant dancing until the feet were raw and bleeding. If the victim was extremely unlucky, it could even lead to death, after fainting from exhaustion and coming to multiple times. In total, the plague infected over four hundred people, and it is guessed that at its most deadly phase, fifteen people a day were killed from exhaustion.

Notable facts

- The plague has no known cause; there have been plenty of theories as to what had caused the event, but none have been confirmed.
- It wasn't just the one event: Throughout the 14th to 17th century, there have been reports of people dancing until death, sometimes thousands dancing, with hundreds dying at a time.
- One "cure," at the time was known as the binding cure: tie a rope or an equivalent around the afflicted casualty until it was so tight they couldn't move.
- According to some historical scholars, Troffea should have been dead from dehydration in three days at most, however she lasted twice that time. Stranger still, a few scholars say that she was most likely dead in her final two days of dancing, and it was her corpse that continued to twitch.
- Most of the infected were women.

Theories

As previously stated, the particular incident had no known cause. However, that hasn't stopped many people from speculating.

Theories of the time ranged from demons, Divine punishment, to imagination and sexual frustration. However, more recent and likely theories suggest that stress induced seizures are to blame, due to the fact that a famine was ravaging the city at the time, causing an increasingly stressful environment, or alternatively tarantula bites, seeing as the creatures were common in mainland Europe at the time. Their bites could be fatal, and cause spasms.

Conclusion: A raggedly thrown together explanation of what *might* of happened.

What I find most likely to have happened, is that at the time Strasbourg was enveloped in a dangerously stressful environment. (At the time, famines and diseases were ravaging the city, also bringing evangelical punishment and witch hunts from the extremely religious. This would understandably make anyone stressed.) This would explain why most of the victims were women as, firstly, women were treated horribly in the Middle Ages, thought of second place and weak. And secondly, scientific studies done by the American Psychology association have found that naturally, women are more prone to stress anyhow (this is the author's research only).

(We can most likely forget a Tarantula's fault to the plague, due to the fact that it seems a bit too coincidental that nearly all the infected were female, and that so many people who *might* have a fatal allergy to spider bites were all crowded into a single city.)

Furthermore, research in the fields of stress, epilepsy, and stress-related diseases, have shown that stress can be held accountable to a worryingly high amount of afflictions, such as heart disease, epilepsy, and seizures.

Most likely, this is what the unfortunate dancers were facing: stress induced seizures, in the form of convulsive status epilepticus. This form of seizure is defined by being over five minutes in length, and repetitive. Coincidentally, it is also potentially fatal.

Now, assuming that a seizure that is recorded to last more than five minutes is the same seizure that made people dance hours upon hours, days upon days does sound like a bit of a stretch. However, what we must note is that firstly; The fact that convulsive status epilepticus is potentially lethal does explain why only a portion of those infected died, and also how Frau's body continued to twitch even after death. Secondly, we must also note how in the middle ages, a lot of things were over-exaggerated. Komodo-Dragons turned into Giant fire-breathing monsters, Manatees to Mermaids, and small harmless garden snails into gigantic flesh eating demons. Is it too unreasonable to state that it was likely that the people at the time, delusional by stress, decided to overstretch the amount of time people were dancing for?

So, in summary: the unfortunate city of Strasbourg was driven into a dancing frenzy by a stress induced seizure; convulsive status epilepticus, by culture at the time, and ravaging famines. The increasing terror over the city and superstitions, made more and more people dance, and those who decided to record the events were delusional by terror, and so over-exaggerated the effects of the plague.

And that is one among many theories as to what happened in the Summer of 1518, an event so odd, it was cemented in history.

Is Democracy fair?

By Jack Tilley

Democracy, throughout the generations this ideal has been viewed as the pinnacle of fairness. The Athenians ran a democratic state from the 5th to the 4th century BC and prior to that there are writings of a democracy is the 6th century BC in parts of the now India. But how effective truly is democracy?

One great example of a failing democracy is our own government. In the 2015 election UKIP gained 3,881,099 votes and 1 chair in parliament. On the other hand the SNP gained 1,454,436 votes and 56 seats.

Clearly this is because the whole of Scotland, in effect, voted for the SNP but it does highlight an issue that the number of votes doesn't actually matter, but rather where those votes are. Of course the opposite is also true. If chairs were assigned by number of votes only the SNP would be unfairly represented as would Scotland as a whole so it is an impossible situation. A system with this sort of flaw can hardly be called a fair democracy.

But let's not be so quick to condemn the ballot and pick up our communist flags, first we must consider the alternatives. Throughout history another key form of mass control was dictatorship, be it a king and his dynasty or a war general declaring himself divine ruler, take Julius Caesar, self proclaimed 'dictator perpetuo', they have been around for thousands of years, but are they fair? The obvious answer is no, after all only one person's views are represented and often the poorest are depressed and have all their wealth seized from them, but this isn't always the case. Take Ramón Castilla, president of Peru who overthrew Pres. Echenique in 1855 and kept ruling till 1862. Not only did he free the black population from slavery but he also built schools and infrastructure while taxing the rich. Of course, there are so many negative examples such as Stalin, who is believed to have killed 11-12 million civilians, more than the holocaust and Hitler, perpetrator of said event and the list goes on. The negatives very definitely outweigh the positives when it comes to dictatorships especially in regards to fairness.

When it comes down to it though, what choice do we really have? No other governmental system come even close to a fair government. And while not everyone is equal in a democracy they certainly are more represented than in a dictatorship. As Winston Churchill once said "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others."

