

“Historical Facts” from Dan Brown’s novel, The Da Vinci Code

Choose which of the 25 statements below are true facts and which are untrue.
(clue: they are all distortions of the truth, they are all false)

1. Emperor Constantine was a lifelong pagan who was converted on his deathbed. p. 232
2. Constantine was baptized near death, too weak to object. p.232
3. Constantine converted the world from matriarchal paganism to patriarchal Christianity. p.124
4. Before Constantine, Christians viewed Jesus as a mere man. P.233
5. The Priory of Sion was a factual secret society that was founded in Jerusalem in the year 1099.
6. Constantine decided that Jesus should be made into a deity and so he embellished the gospels. p. 234
7. Constantine eliminated about 80 other gospels & thousands of documents from the Bible. p.231, 234
8. Constantine moved worship from Saturday to Sunday. p.232-233
9. The Council of Nicea, on a “relatively close vote”, endorsed Jesus’ deity. p. 233
10. It’s a matter of historical record that Mary Magdalene was married to Jesus Christ. p. 244
11. The apocryphal *Gospel of Philip*, & the *Gospel of Mary Magdalene* are to be taken as true accounts. p. 246
12. There are countless references to Jesus and Mary Magdalene’s marriage union.” p. 247
13. Constantine lived four centuries after Jesus death. p. 234
14. In *The Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci, the figure on Jesus’ right is Mary Magdalene. p. 244
15. Gothic architecture has female sexual symbolism throughout. p. 326
16. “Noah was himself an albino.” p. 166
17. Early Jewish tradition involved ritualistic sex in the Holy of Holies of the Temple. p. 309
18. The Jewish YHWH (Jehovah) shows physical union between the masculine *Jab* and Eve. p. 309
19. “The Bible ... has evolved through countless translations, additions, and revisions.” p. 231
20. “As a tribute to ... Venus, the Greeks used her eight-year cycle to organize their Olympic Games.” p. 36
21. “Tarot (cards) had been devised as a secret means to pass along ideologies banned by the Church.” p. 92
22. Some of the apocryphal gospels managed to survive in The Dead Sea Scrolls. p. 234
23. “The Vatican...tried very hard to suppress the release of these Scrolls.” p. 234
24. “The Merovingians founded Paris.” p. 257
25. During 300 years of witch-hunts, the Church burned five million women at the stake. p. 125

What Is The Effect Of Dan Brown’s Book On The Reader?

- It messes with our view secular history.
- It messes with our view of some famous people of the past.
- It messes with our view of some famous works of art (paintings).
- It messes with our view of some famous works of literature.
- It messes with our view of some famous musical compositions.
- It messes with our view of the origin of architectural forms.
- It messes with our view Scriptural accuracy.
- It messes with our faith in Jesus as Savior, Lord, and God.

Conclusion

It messes with our mind.

I’m not suggesting you do - but if plan to read the book or see the movie, then abide by the old adage, “Being forewarned is being forearmed.”

Critique of The Da Vinci Code

**You dare not attack any of the world's religious systems – unless it's Christianity.
The *Da Vinci Code* meets this criterion very well.**

The Da Vinci Code – novel by Dan Brown that characterizes the New Testament Gospels as “fabrications” and the deity of Christ as a fable.

Worldwide, more than 40 million hardcover copies were sold to date (Spring 2006)

Now it has been released (2006) in paperback and 500,000 copies sold in the first week

Translated into 40 languages

Through April 2006, continues to be on the bestseller list for 160 weeks

A Columbia Pictures film, starring Tom Hanks & directed by Ron Howard, release date - May 19, 2006

Other popular books that have attacked Christianity over the last 50 years:

The Passover Plot by Hugh Schonfield, 1966

The Last Temptation of Christ by Nikos Kazantzakis, 1960

Jesus and the Zealots by G.F. Brandon, 1967

The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross by John M. Allegro, 1970

The Secret Gospel by Morton Smith, 1973

The Jesus Scroll by Donovan Joyce, 1974

Holy Blood, Holy Grail by M. Brigent, R. Leigh, & H. Lincoln, 1980's

The Historical Jesus by John Dominic Crossan, 1993

Television attacks on Christianity:

ABC Special with Peter Jennings, “In Search of Jesus”

Dateline NBC, February 2004

The Jesus Seminar

Started in 1985, the Seminar is composed of about 200 liberal scholars that meet twice a year to review each of fifteen hundred items related to Jesus as found in the Bible and determine which of them could be ascribed, with a high degree of probability, to Jesus. To date, they conclude that only 16% of the Gospels are historically accurate. Under attack are: the incarnation of Jesus, the virgin birth, Jesus' death on the cross, the resurrection, and every other critically important tenet of the Christian faith.

Liberal critics' attacks on a very factual film account of Jesus, “The Passion of the Christ”

The New Republic: “a repulsive, masochistic fantasy ... anti-Semitic movie.”

The New York Times: “courting bigotry in the name of sanctity.”

Andy Rooney of 60 Minutes: “a real nut case.”

Some reviews of Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*:

Library Journal: “a compelling blend of history and page-turning suspense ... a masterpiece.”

Publisher's Weekly: “an exhaustively researched page turner.”

Best-selling author, Nelson DeMille: “pure genius.”

The Danger of *The Da Vinci Code*:

Dan Brown states on the first page under “FACT,” statements that the “theories” he presents in the *The Da Vinci Code* are actually true. The readers, unbelievers or even many Christians, will be led to believe that all the information in the context of the novel is actually true even though the main characters may be fictional.

Errors, Errors, Errors in *The Da Vinci Code*

The Priory of Sion

Dan Brown states as fact that the Priory of Sion, was a secret society, founded in Jerusalem in the year 1099 by the French king named Godefroi de Bouillon. The purpose of the Society was to preserve the “great secret” that had been handed down from generation to generation. The “great secret” was that Jesus died but there was no resurrection (the Easter story was fiction), Jesus had married Mary Magdalene, she was pregnant, she moved to France, and she had a daughter named Sarah. Jesus’ bloodline supposedly continued through the Merovingian dynasty of French kings and survives today. The truth is that the Priory of Sion society did exist but it was founded in the year 1956. The secret documents that claimed to be authentic were actually forgeries made by a person named Pierre Plantard and this was exposed in a series of French books and a BBC documentary in 1996.

Messing With The Emperor Constantine (The First Christian Roman Emperor)

Statements by Dan Brown in his *The Da Vinci Code* (B) and what is fact (F):

(B) Emperor Constantine was a lifelong pagan who was converted on his deathbed. p. 232

(F) Became a Christian convert (not on deathbed), built churches, favored clergy, convened council at Nicea.

(B) Constantine was baptized near death, too weak to object. p.232

(F) It was a custom at the time to delay baptism until the end of life – wiped your slate clean of preceding sins.

(B) Constantine converted the world from matriarchal paganism to patriarchal Christianity. p.124

(F) No basis for this statement.

(B) Before Constantine, Christians viewed Jesus as a mere man. p.233

(F) Many NT passages attest to Jesus deity as well as all the early church fathers.

(B) Constantine collated the Bible.

(F) Almost all of the NT Canon was already well-established two centuries before Constantine.

(B) Constantine decided that Jesus should be made into a deity and so embellished the gospels. p. 234

(F) The New Testament makes it clear Jesus is divine without adding a word.

(B) Constantine eliminated about 80 other gospels & thousands of documents that spoke of Christ’s human traits. p.231, 234

(F) Only several dozen documents exist that tell not only of his humanity but his divinity as well.

(B) Dan Brown mentions “The Sangreal documents” that include tens of thousands of pages of information found in four enormous trunks that the Knights Templar found under Solomon’s Temple.” p. 256

(F) No such find.

(B) Constantine moved worship from Saturday to Sunday. p.232-233

(F) Christian day of worship was established, “the Lord’s Day,” as recorded in Acts 20:7; I Cor 16:2; Rev 1:10.

(B) The Council of Nicea, on a “relatively close vote” endorsed Jesus’ deity. p. 233

(F) Council of Nicea endorsed Jesus deity by a vote of 300 to 2

Did Jesus Wed Mary Magdalene?

“One particular troubling earthly theme kept recurring in the gospels (not the Four Gospels of the NT) – Mary Magdalene...More specifically, her marriage to Jesus Christ...It’s a matter of historical record.” p. 244

“Proofs” given by Dan Brown (B) and the real facts (F)

(B) Jewish men were expected to marry.

(F) Bachelorhood was granted to rabbis, the Essenes practiced celibacy, neither Jeremiah nor John the Baptist married.

(B) The book *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* is a basis of many of the theories presented in his book.

(F) This book’s statements are not backed by facts.

(B) From the apocryphal *Gospel of Philip*, in one passage Jesus supposedly kisses Mary as his “companion,” which Brown translates as “spouse or wife in Aramaic.” p. 246

(F) The *Gospel of Philip* was not written in Aramaic, as he claims, but in Greek. The *Gospel of Philip* dates from the third century, a very late arrival among the apocryphal books.

(B) Brown also references the apocryphal *Gospel of Mary Magdalene*.

(F) The *Gospel of Mary Magdalene*, also too late for credibility, doesn’t actually say Jesus was married.

(B) “I shan’t bore you with the countless references to Jesus and Magdalene’s union.” p. 247

(F) There are only two; both are late, and even they do not explicitly report any “union” of Jesus and Mary.

(B) Jesus marriage is “a matter of historical record.” p. 244

(F) No history. No record.

Dan Brown’s Venture into the Arts A Crusade on Behalf of the Sacred Feminine

Painting

The Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci

(B) The figure on Jesus’ right is not the apostle John but Mary Magdalene p. 244

(F) The artist Leonardo had a habit of painting a younger man with a feminine look. If the figure was Mary, then where was John?

Music

The opera *Parsifal* by Richard Wagner

(B) “...was a tribute to Mary Magdalene and the bloodline of Jesus Christ...” p. 390

(F) The opera is about the quest for the traditional Holy Grail - not the one in Dan Brown’s novel.

Architecture

Gothic architecture

(B) According to Brown there is female sexual symbolism throughout. The “cathedral’s long hollow nave” is “a secret tribute to a woman’s womb ... complete with receding labial ridges and a nice little cinquefoil clitoris above the doorway.” p. 326

(F) The Gothic and the earlier Romanesque structures derived their long hollow nave from the public basilicas of the ancient Greco-Roman world.

Other Fabrications and Distortions

Statements by Dan Brown (B) and what is fact (F):

(B) “Noah was himself an albino.” p. 166

(F) There is no canonical evidence for this.

(B) “The early Jewish tradition involved ritualistic sex. In the Temple... the Holy of Holies in Solomon’s Temple housed not only God but also His powerful female equal, Shekinah” p. 309

(F) The foundational belief of the Hebrews was there was *one* God. “Shekinah” refers to the glory of God present in his indwelling.

(B) “The Jewish tetragrammaton YHWH – the sacred name of God (Jehovah) ... (shows) physical union between masculine *Jab* and the pre-Hebraic name for Eve, *Havah*” p. 309

(F) “YHWH the original name for God, reflects the Hebrew word “to be.” The word “Jehovah” is derived from adding the vowels “a,o,a” from “Adonai” (“Lord”) between the consonants YHWH (YaHoWaH = Jehovah).

(B) “The Bible ... has evolved through countless translations, additions, and revisions.” p. 231

(F) Original Hebrew and Greek texts render faithful accounts and translations without any additions.

(B) “As a tribute to ... Venus, the Greeks used her eight-year cycle to organize their Olympic Games.” p. 36

(F) Olympic games were dedicated to Zeus, not Venus, and they were every four years.

(B) “Constantine... four centuries after Jesus death.” p. 234

(F) Constantine lived almost three (not four) centuries after Jesus death.

(B) “Some of the (apocryphal) gospels managed to survive. The Dead Sea Scrolls were found in the 1950s...” p. 234

(F) The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947 and they did not contain any gospels or references to Jesus.

(B) “The Vatican... tried very hard to suppress the release of these Scrolls.” p. 234

(F) The Vatican regards The Dead Sea Scrolls very congenial to the faith, not antagonistic.

(B) “The Merovingians founded Paris.” p. 257

(F) Paris was well established about seven centuries before they arrived.

(B) “During 300 years of witch hunts, the Church burned at the stake an astonishing five million women.” p. 125

(F) There were between 30,000 and 50,000 victims and not all were women.

(B) “Tarot had been devised as a secret means to pass along ideologies banned by the Church.” p. 92

(F) Tarot was a 15th century card game that did not take on occult connotations until the late 18th century.

Information for this Bible class came from the book *The Da Vinci Code: Fact of Fiction?* by Hank Hanegraaff and Paul Maier, Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, IL, 2004

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