



# The Rough Guide to Conspiracy Theories (3rd)

*By James McConnachie, Robin Tudge*

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Fully revised and updated, *The Rough Guide to Conspiracy Theories* sorts the myths from the realities, the allegations from the explanations and the paranoid from the probable.

Who might be trying to convince us that climate change is or isn't real? What is the truth behind the death of Osama bin Laden and is he still alive? When did the CIA start experimenting with mind control? Where is the HAARP installation and did it have anything to do with the Japanese tsunami disaster? Why is surveillance in our cities and online so widespread and what are the real benefits? This definitive guide to the world's most controversial conspiracies wanders through a maze of sinister secrets, suspicious cover-ups, hidden agendas and clandestine operations to explore all these questions and many many more.

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### **Editorial Review**

#### **Review**

A succinct compilation of all the best in lunatic, eccentric and sometimes worryingly plausible schemes -- What's On in London

#### **About the Author**

James McConnachie was born and brought up in south London, and was a scholar at Jesus College, Oxford, where he studied English. Touring the Loire in the back seat of a Citroen DS, as a child, inspired an early love of travel, but his first trips for Rough Guides were to Spain and Italy - and he remains passionate about both countries. Then, in 2002, James joined Dave Reed as co-author of the Rough Guide to Nepal. As a student, he had spent nine months teaching in a village in the Everest foothills, but travelling all over the country, in the middle of a Maoist insurrection, really put his knowledge of Nepali culture and language to the test - and never more urgently than when persuading a local Maoist that he was not in fact a CIA spy. After Nepal, James returned to his Francophile roots. He was commissioned to rewrite the Rough Guide to Paris, alongside Ruth Blackmore, and then headed back to the Loire valley to write his own, new guidebook: the Rough Guide to the Loire. Meanwhile, travel-related TV and radio appearances, including stints on the sofa with Richard and Judy and guesting on Radio 4's Excess Baggage, led to presenting work on Italy Inside Out, a five-part BBC series on Italian language and culture, and Kirsty Wark's Tales from Paris. James has also taken photographs for Rough Guides in Rome, Florence, Venice and Hawaii. In recent years, James has turned to history. With Robin Tudge, he co-authored the bestselling Rough Guide to Conspiracy Theories, which exposes the truth behind over a hundred conspiracy canards, and explores whether there is a conspiracist version of history. Bevis Hillier, in the Spectator, called it "unusually intelligent and laced with black humour". In The Book of Love: In Search of the Kamasutra (Atlantic), James traced the secretive story of the world's most notorious sex book, focusing on its discovery and pirate publication by the nineteenth-century explorer Richard Burton and his scandal-mongering coterie. William Dalrymple, writing in The Times, called it "elegant and stylish", The Washington Post found it a "first-rate work of intellectual history", and it won him a shortlisting for Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year 2008. Scandalized by the shrill and shallow quality of most modern sex manuals, James then decided to write his own: a book that wouldn't only discuss "how to do it", but would bring in history, ethics, politics, science and culture as well. The Observer called his subsequent Rough Guide to Sex "a comprehensive, fearless book, part socio-history and part manual". The writer and feminist Jenny Diski found it "funny and thoughtful"; the book's "clarity and straightforwardness", she reckoned, "would make anyone who has been young and befuddled (or old and befuddled) weep with gratitude." James now lives in Winchester, Hampshire, with his young family, but makes regular trips to France and Nepal to keep his guidebooks up to date. He is passionate about singing, books, languages, walking and wildlife. He is represented by David Godwin and welcomes comments via his blog.

### **Users Review**

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