



Bipartisan Bonesmen

Tim Russert: You both were members of Skull and Bones, a secret society at Yale. What does that tell us?

Senator Kerry: Not much, because it's a secret.

— *Meet the Press*, August 31, 2003

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President Bush: It's so secret we can't talk about it.

— *Meet the Press*, taped on February 7, 2004

Every politician, it is said, has skeletons in his closet, but this is ridiculous. In the cases of President George W. Bush and Senator John F. Kerry (D-Mass.), we have two politicians whose careers, literally, were launched in a crypt full of skeletons. The crypt we refer to is the hulking mausoleum on the Yale campus that houses The Order of the Skull and Bones, the infamous, occultic fraternity that both men joined in the 1960s during their senior year at the university. Both Bush and Kerry have been asked in recent interviews about their membership in this very old, super-secret club. Each has waved off the question with a laugh and refused to say anything further on the matter. And the Establishment media have politely dropped the subject.

For the first time in history the race for the U.S. presidency is shaping up to be completely a "Bonesman" affair. What are the odds that out of a population of nearly 300 million the two front-runners for the most powerful political office in the world would be "brothers" in a super-elite, secret society that numbers probably fewer than 800 living members? The odds are even slimmer than that, since only a handful of that already minuscule number actually hold political office and would, therefore, be potential candidates. Nevertheless, a pair of Bonesmen are poised to carry the Republican and Democrat banners in the forthcoming quadrennial contest. We'll leave the statistical computing to the mathematicians, but it's obvious even to those of us who are mathematically challenged that the Bush-Kerry match-up in the current White House run is a bizarre "coincidence" that strains the laws of probability.

Why So Secret?

In his autobiography, *A Charge to Keep*, then-Governor Bush disposed of his membership in the furtive Yale society with a single sentence. "My senior year I joined Skull and Bones," wrote Bush, "a secret society, so secret I can't say anything more."

He dealt with the issue similarly in a February 7, 2004 Oval Office interview that aired the next day on NBC's *Meet the Press*. NBC's interviewer, Tim Russert, broached the topic, noting that Senator Kerry is also a member of The Order. The very brief exchange that ensued may be more revealing than a voluble response would have been. Here's the text:

Russert: "You were both in Skull and Bones, the secret society."

President Bush: "It's so secret we can't talk about it."



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Russert: "What does that mean for America? The conspiracy theorists are going to go wild."

President Bush: "I'm sure they are. I don't know. I haven't seen Web pages yet." (Laughs)

Russert then said: "Number 322." President Bush ignored Russert's reference to the Bonesmen's secret code number and went in another direction, noting that Kerry has not yet been selected as the Democrats' candidate. Those familiar with Skull and Bones (S&B) know that "322" is the room number of the initiation room — the sanctum sanctorum or "holy of holies" — in the organization's forbidding structure on the Yale campus. That structure is commonly known to insiders and outsiders alike as "the Tomb," but is also referred to by members as "the Temple." The "322" also refers to the society itself; it is "Chapter 322" of an older German secret society.

However, when the president evaded the question, Russert, who has displayed a dogged persistence in other interviews (indeed, he had shown some of the same pointed tenacity in his earlier questions for the president), conspicuously dropped that line of questioning and accommodated Bush with cream-puff questions that allowed scripted responses about the president's vision and leadership.

Likewise, Senator Kerry has been given a free pass on his S&B membership. On August 31 of last year, Kerry was asked on *Meet the Press*: "You both were members of Skull and Bones, a secret society at Yale. What does that tell us?" His response: "Not much, because it's a secret."

The Mafia has its infamous oath of *omerta* (silence), by which initiates vow never to reveal any secrets of their criminal enterprise. The slightest violation, or suspicion of violation, of this oath can earn one a death sentence. We have no proof that Skull and Bones enforces its equivalent of *omerta* with similarly severe means, but there is no question that Bonesmen take it very seriously; members are instructed never to mention or discuss S&B with any "barbarian," which means all the rest of us outsiders — including Bonesmen's own spouses and biological family members. If barbarians ever broach the subject in their presence, Bonesmen are instructed to turn on their heels immediately and leave.

This kind of secrecy by men in positions of power should be a natural magnet to investigative reporters and members of the Fourth Estate who posture as the watchdogs of our political system. But it would seem that our media mavens, who insist on prying into every other private crevice of politicians' lives, have a curious lack of curiosity when it comes to The Order. Like NBC's Russert, the denizens of the controlled elite media tend to laugh off the S&B connection as something that would only concern paranoid "conspiracy theorists." Thus, Elizabeth Bumiller began her February 2 *New York Times* column on the Bonesmen election race with this opening line: "It will be a field day for conspiracy theorists."

Bones of Contention

After noting that a Kerry-Bush race would be "the first skull-to-skull match-up of Bonesmen in history," the *Times'* Bumiller asks: "Does this mean anything at all?"

What it means, the *Times* would have us believe, is that we will be fortunate if either of these elite Bonesmen helms our ship of state. "Historically, Yale's best and brightest — only 15 a year — were tapped for Skull and Bones," an approving Bumiller tells her readers. "The larger question is whether Skull and Bones inculcated values of leadership ... in Mr. Kerry and Mr. Bush, beyond what was already driven home by Yale." Then she follows a familiar pattern of quoting sympathetic sources who extol S&B as a training ground that transforms callow, shallow youth into men of caliber dedicated to higher purpose and the public good.



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Bumiller continues:

Skull and Bones has, after all, a particularly illustrious alumni roster: two previous presidents (Mr. Bush's father and William Howard Taft), Averell Harriman, McGeorge Bundy, Henry Luce, Potter Stewart, the writer John Hersey and numerous officials in the Central Intelligence Agency, a traditional career path for Bonesmen.

U.S. presidents, Supreme Court justices, senators, governors, university presidents, foundation presidents, business titans, banking barons, media moguls, CIA spooks. S&B's history indicates that it has long been a prime recruiting ground where candidates are "tapped" and groomed for future service to The Order. The organization uses its connections to advance its members into positions of power and influence to an inordinate degree. In addition to its high-profile members in government service, Skull and Bones is intimately tied to semi-secret globalist organizations such as the Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission, and the Bilderbergers, which have so come to dominate U.S. political and economic policy as to constitute a separate American government. Bonesmen have played prominent roles in leading these groups for the past several generations.

Yes, The Order boasts a membership roll that elicits oohs and ahs. Speaking of ahs, the most widely quoted so-called critic of the S&B likens the secret group to the beneficent and mysterious Wizard of Oz. In her highly praised 2002 "exposé," *Secrets of the Tomb*, Alexandra Robbins writes: "If the Wizard of Oz can represent Skull and Bones, then one must point out that, for a while, Oz *needed* its Wizard to provide balance and a constant current of reassurance." (Emphasis in the original.) You see, according to Robbins, we silly little Munchkin mortals *need* the paternalistic ministrations of The Order's superior Wizards.

Alexandra Robbins has been much quoted and interviewed as a leading authority on S&B. Her book's first chapter, "The Legend of Skull and Bones," begins with this description:

Sometime in the early 1830s, a Yale student named William H. Russell — the future valedictorian of the class of 1833 — traveled to Germany to study for a year. Russell came from an inordinately wealthy family that ran one of America's most despicable business organizations of the nineteenth century: Russell and Company, an opium empire.... While in Germany, Russell befriended the leader of an insidious German secret society that hailed the death's head as its logo. Russell soon became caught up in this group, itself a sinister outgrowth of the notorious eighteenth-century society the Illuminati.

According to Robbins, this is all lurid legend, much of it invented and spread by the Bonesmen themselves to enhance the sense of mystery and importance surrounding Skull and Bones. Robbins' opening chapter combines descriptions of The Order's bizarre initiation rituals with stories and rumors of the group's wealth and power in a way calculated to discredit the most serious concerns about the group. Sure, it's the ultimate "old boys network," with lots of juvenile mumbo-jumbo, but nothing to get worked up over.

Truth Behind the "Legend"

Much of what Robbins disingenuously dismisses as legend is verifiable fact, and much else is very probably fact, based on what can be determined from available evidence. Skull and Bones founder William H. Russell did indeed come from a wealthy opium-empire family. He did found S&B at Yale after spending 1831-32 studying in Germany. From S&B's own documents, it seems that The Order may be but a U.S. chapter of a German secret society. And it is quite possible that the German society was (is)



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directly connected to the infamous Order of the Illuminati, which was founded in Germany in 1776. The Illuminati, which played a central role in the French Revolution and in spreading subversion and revolution throughout Europe, actually sent agents to the United States to overthrow our republic while it was still in its infancy. In a 1798 letter to Rev. G. W. Snyder, President George Washington acknowledged that these agents were then active here, spreading the Illuminati's "diabolical tenets."*

That same year, 1798, Yale President Timothy Dwight warned that the Illuminati's conspiratorial schemes "strike at the root of all human happiness and virtue ... [seeking] the overthrow of religion, government, and human society civil and domestic." These conspirators, said Dwight, are so committed to their evil ends "that murder, butchery, and war, however extended and dreadful, are declared by them to be completely justifiable, if necessary for these great purposes."

A few years later, in 1805, John Wood, a prominent political writer, surveyor and cartographer, wrote an important work entitled *A Full Exposition of the Clintonian Faction, Society of the Columbian Illuminati*. Wood's exposé provided evidence that a number of prominent American individuals, including New York Governor DeWitt Clinton, were members of Illuminati lodges that had been established in this country.

So, it is not at all outlandish to suppose that there could have been a direct Illuminati link with the S&B founding, especially since the Illuminati and its subsidiaries were very active in Germany at the time Russell attended school there. The initiation methods of the Order of the Skull and Bones also closely parallel those of the Order of the Illuminati. Robbins' book records that S&B initiates must engage in self-criticism and group criticism sessions that are so harrowing that some initiates have near nervous breakdowns. Author and Bones watcher Ron Rosenbaum has written that this self-abasement includes lying in a coffin naked and revealing one's entire sexual history.

Ultimately, this "group therapy" helps bind the Bonesmen more closely than family. Robbins notes: "Eventually a member's self-perception is so intertwined with his secret-society identity ... that if he were to betray or leave Skull and Bones, he would lose what has become a major part of the way that he identifies himself."

If one reads the Illuminati's initiation rites and the diabolical purpose for them, as described by Illuminati founder Adam Weishaupt, the similarity to the Bonesmen's experience is striking. The purpose, according to Weishaupt, was not only to psychologically strip each initiate and create a powerful group identity through this shared experience; it also served an equally important objective of learning the weaknesses of each individual and any crimes or deeds of which he might be ashamed, for possible blackmail use in the future, should he decide to oppose or expose The Order. These same techniques were adopted and perfected by the Communists, and are used to varying degrees by the Mafia and other criminal conspiracies to maintain ironclad control over their members.

Secret societies are always inimical to a free society. It is impossible to judge whether elected and appointed officials are truly acting as public servants or are serving an agenda of hidden confederates, if membership in secret societies is permitted or winked at. Our constitutional republic is meant to function in an atmosphere of openness and transparency; it will not long survive if we allow those who fashion policies and legislation to operate in the shadowy corridors and chambers of secret societies. Members of Skull and Bones have occupied (and do today occupy) some of the most powerful positions in American public and private institutions. We should not allow the membership in this organization to be lightly dismissed, especially when it comes to candidates for the highest office in the land.

**Sidebar: Who Knew Whom, and When?**

by William F. Jasper

Did John Kerry (Bones 1966) and George W. Bush (Bones 1968) know each other at Yale? Kerry says they did while Bush says they didn't. But neither will talk about Skull and Bones.

In his televised February 9 White House interview with George W. Bush, Tim Russert quoted a derogatory statement by Senator John Kerry concerning President Bush's "lack of knowledge" and the heavy image management by the president's handlers. Kerry's quote ended with this gibe at Bush: "I know this guy. He was two years behind me at Yale. I knew him, and he's still the same guy."

After reading this quote Russert asked the president: "Did you know him at Yale?"

President Bush responded with a single word: "No."

It could be, of course, that Kerry is lying (or is the victim of a faulty memory) about knowing Bush at Yale. The *New York Times*' Elizabeth Bumiller treats their acquaintance at Yale as a matter of fact. "Did Mr. Kerry, class of '66, and Mr. Bush, class of '68, know each other at Yale?" she asks in her February 2 column. "More to the point, did they ever participate together in a Skull and Bones rite in the club's windowless crypt?" "The answer to the first question," she writes, "is yes, and the answer to the second question is no, at least not as far as anyone knows or admits." She does not reveal the provenance of her information; perhaps it was the same Kerry quote mentioned above, perhaps other sources, possibly a resident Bonesman at the *Times*.

Bumiller then quotes an interesting statement from David Wade, Senator Kerry's spokesman. "Rest assured," said Wade, "there are no pictures of them dancing together naked," a reference to S&B rituals of dancing and mud-wrestling naked. Note, he didn't say that such casual perversion didn't occur, just that there were no photos of such an event.

Based on what we know of the exclusive culture of Yale and the far more exclusive (and intimate!) S&B culture, Kerry's statement is more plausible than Bush's. The Order is closely integrated horizontally and vertically and it would seem highly unlikely that their paths would not have crossed. Did the president lie about this? If so, why? Was Kerry invited to the hush-hush Skull and Bones reunion that President Bush hosted at the White House in 2001? Which Bonesmen attended this ultra-exclusive soiree? These are fair questions that demand answers.

Sidebar: Bush-Bones Doctrine: "Deny Everything"

"There's three things to remember: claim everything, explain nothing, deny everything."

— Senator Prescott Bush (Bones 1917)

The Bush family patriarch made the above statement in a 1966 interview for Columbia University's oral history project on the Eisenhower administration. Prescott Bush said that political dictum had been explained to him by Claire Boothe Luce, congresswoman, ambassador and wife of Time-Life media magnate Henry Luce (Bones 1920).



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