

Brainwashing Future Generations. The American Nightmare

The Playbook Is at Least 170 Years Old: Saint Patrick's Battalion and the Repetition of American History

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Theme: [History](#)

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A threat to national security?

Imagine this scenario: A nation and its people are deemed by our U.S. government to be an existential threat to the United States of America. Massive propaganda campaigns are pushed upon a fearful American public by politicians and through all forms of the Mainstream Media (MSM). Little to no actual evidence is provided as justification for proposed "just" or "humanitarian" wars and that "evidence" which is hastily provided will eventually be shown to be based upon lies, false intelligence and false flag events. Large populations of peoples of foreign lands and their leaders will be stereotyped and demonized. Sound familiar?

Am I referring to North Korea? Syria? Russia and Eastern Ukraine? Venezuela? Iran? Iraq? Afghanistan? Libya? It could be any of these but not this time. How about Mexico 170 years ago? The United States had perfected its methods of drumming up support for and instigating pre-emptive wars of aggression by at least the time of the Mexican-American War.

After founding a nation upon the murder, genocide, enslavement and stolen land of millions of Africans and Native Americans, Uncle Sam turned his eyes toward his neighbor to the south, Mexico.

One vote – your vote counts!

If you first play the video below with your eyes closed you will hear what I and fellow Hoosiers heard in radio commercials that encouraged voter registration and election day participation beginning in 2014. When first I heard the commercial my mind tried to recall the land acquisition it referred to. Surely this cheery, positive commercial was not about the illegal war of aggression, the land grab of Mexican territory known as the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848.

The happy little message that "your vote counts" fails to find anything wrong with fabricating reasons for war and carrying it out against a nation that posed no threat to it. Quite the contrary, this ethos of Manifest Destiny is still promoted today. The video was released by the office of the Indiana Secretary of State and filed under "Education" when

our governor was Mike Pence, the conservative neoconservative and current Vice President of the United States. Fortunately it has few views. But the story is still prominently and proudly displayed on the Secretary of State of the state of Indiana website.[2]

These are the values high-ranking politicians hope to brainwash future generations into embracing without question, without thinking critically about the assumed rightness and legitimacy of American foreign policy actions. We doubled our country's size because of one vote. Your vote counts! That's the important message and it still applies today because you are encouraged to get behind all of our many war efforts and "support our troops" because if you question the military's actions or demonstrate against them, you are being unpatriotic, un-American (which of course is completely illogical and see Michael Parenti's *Superpatriotism*). [3] And do not bother thinking critically and asking questions like what are the real motivations for acts of military aggression? Who will really benefit from the next war, and WWII? Has it not been proven as indisputable fact that our politicians and the Corporate-owned media have repeatedly lied to us to get the public's approval for illegal wars of aggression? Don't worry. You can trust them this time. But be afraid. Because terrorists, ISIS, Russians, North Koreans, Chinese, Syrians, etc., are over there and dangerous and we must fight them over there so they don't come here because that's what they want because they hate our (evaporating and illusory) freedoms.

It is conceivable that millions of Americans voted for Trump under the logic that, based upon his campaign rhetoric, he would promote isolationism, make friends with Putin and Russia and stop escalating extant wars and starting new ones. NATO would be marginalized and no matter how disgusting and reprehensible his views and policy proposals are that will affect immigrants, women, homosexuals, Muslims, etc., at least WWII would be temporarily averted.

Because a vote for neoliberal neoconservative super-hawk Hillary Clinton would be a vote for WWII. It does not seem like much of a choice in our "democracy" but it would be possibly, the lesser of two evils.

Whatever you may think of Trump's policies, it is clear that he has been under an all-out assault from politicians, the intelligence community and led by the MSM, a slow-motion but relentless coup with the aim of getting him out of office. The only brief reprieve came when he ordered that Tomahawk missiles be lobbed upon a Syrian airfield in "retaliation" for a "chemical attack" the Syrian military and President Bashar al-Assad never committed.

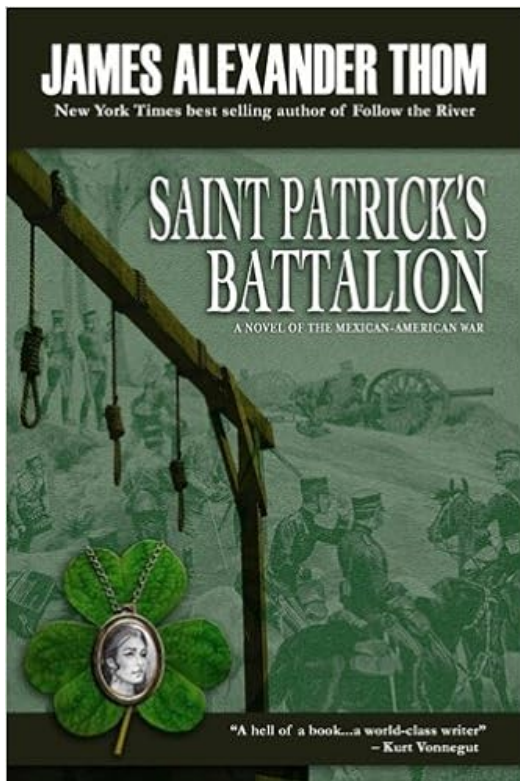
At that time politicians overwhelmingly praised this aggression and the press gushed over how presidential Trump was acting. Empire cheerleader for CNN Fareed Zakaria summed up the MSM consensus view nicely, "I think Donald Trump became president of the United States." [4]

Saint Patrick's Battalion

Praise be to tenacious historians who resurrect true events and real people from our past. If you believed the official story long promoted by the U.S. Army, St. Patrick's Battalion and one of its leaders, John Riley (also John O'Riley, Reilly, O'Reilly, Juan Riley, Sean O'Raghallaigh) never existed. This despite the extensive and venomous coverage they received from American newspapers of the day.

Hoosier author James Alexander Thom is a former Marine and taught journalism at Indiana

University. A friend of the late peoples' historian Howard Zinn and *The Slaughterhouse Five* author and Indianapolis native Kurt Vonnegut, he has written and continues to write historical fiction that describes the lives and expresses the views of all sides of historical events. Many of his great novels accurately portray the suffering brought upon Native Americans at the hands of European invaders such as *Panther In The Sky* (about the great shaman and warrior Tecumseh and the Shawnee struggle)[5]



Saint Patrick's Battalion[6] tells the truth in his fictional account about one of the “great accomplishments” of our new nation. Here is a short synopsis:

John Riley reluctantly left his sick wife and young son in Famine-stricken Galway, Ireland and took the only available work that would feed them, as a soldier in the hated British Army, but he soon grew disgusted about killing poor dark-skinned peoples in faraway lands. After completing his service, he mustered out in Canada and joined the American Army with the hope that the causes they may fight for would be noble. But he soon learned that Irish and other Catholic immigrants were brutally persecuted and tortured by West Point officers and native-born soldiers in the American Army. Regardless of their skill, hard work and bravery, there was no hope for advancement into the officer ranks. The mostly Irish Catholics endured constant ridicule and abuse and they were not even U.S. citizens.

A young Army camp boy, Padraic Quinn, found a friend and father-figure in John Riley and faithfully recorded his experiences and skillfully illustrated the Mexican-American War and its affected people in his journal.

Riley and his friends found they were being forced into an expansionist invasion of a nation of poor fellow Catholics. The American Army amassed over a disputed border with Mexico. Across the Rio Grande from Texas was the beautiful town of Matamoros. Another young boy, Agustin Juvero, lived with his mother, Gloria Estrella, in a house across the river in Mexico with a view of the growing American Army presence. The Mexican General Ampudia used Estrella's house as headquarters and recruited Agustin for a dangerous mission.

Young Agustin sneaked across the river at night and delivered pamphlets that enticed the Catholic immigrant soldiers to abandon their imperialistic aggression against fellow Catholics to join the Mexican Army and receive officerships, Mexican citizenship and land.

To the suffering immigrants from many nations of the American Army, the allure of Mexico's music, food, dancing and women across the Rio Grande was strong. Padraic recognized that the church bells may have been the clincher as nearly all of the immigrants were Catholic for which they were persecuted and prevented from freely practicing.

Despite the abuse Riley endured from officers, he kept his cool and professionalism and the admiration of his comrades. Then one day, John Riley was on a pass to visit a Church, and never returned. He was welcomed into the Mexican Army, made an officer who trained and led a "flying battery" of cannons.

And so began an exodus of Irish Catholic and other immigrant soldiers and former slaves to the Mexican Army and under the guidance of John Riley the *San Patricios* were born. The defection of men into Saint Patrick's Battalion and its success in wreaking havoc on the battlefield would be a constant scourge to the American Army for the duration of the Mexican War. The skill and fury with which the *San Patricios* fought exacted a heavy toll of casualties, especially officers.

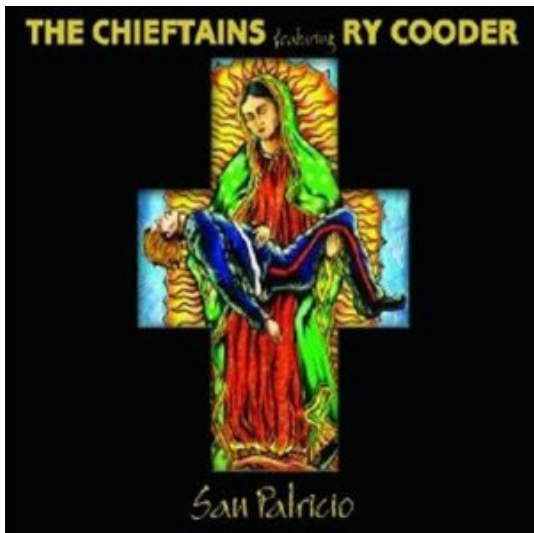


An American colonel went missing and soldiers found his remains but were then attacked and killed by Mexican ranchers. The incident was used as justification to start the war of aggression against Mexico. The fictional boys, Padraic and Agustin represent the millions of civilians who have suffered at the hands of American aggression in the Mexican-American and countless other wars. They were eyewitnesses to the horrors of war, the wounded and killed, the refugees who always suffer in great numbers though the veterans too on all sides were killed, maimed, abused and neglected upon return home.

St. Patrick's Battalion and the story of John Riley was not a white savior epic but a true instance of collaboration against a common enemy. Riley had superiors in the Mexican Army and he respected them. Mexicans, Irish, German, Polish, Italian, African Americans, and more all fought bravely and effectively.

Below is a short video from the BBC Radio documentary on the *San Patricios* arranged by YouTube channel MrOscarBueno:

And in 2010 *The Chieftains* and Ry Cooder teamed up with Mexican music artists to produce an album of beautifully blended traditional Irish and Mexican music that celebrates the efforts of Mexico and the *San Patricios* to prevent the U.S. landgrab; Linda Ronstadt and even Liam Neeson contributed, who has said if a movie was ever made that he would like to play the part of John Riley. [10]



In fact, when the history of Riley and the *San Patricios* was re-discovered by Americans, a film was made with Tom Berenger starring as John Riley. But this version of the story was largely whitewashed, with John Riley portrayed as being kidnapped by Mexican soldiers and forced to serve in their army.

Parallels between the Mexican-American War and American Imperialism today are clear: While Representative Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii tries to warn the public about and restrain the Executive and Legislative branches of our government from continuing its support for the very terrorists we are ostensibly fighting in Syria. She knows what she is talking about having fought in Iraq, twice. She has been one of the lone sane voices in Congress who has challenged the nearly unanimous bipartisan support for “regime change” in Syria.

Though she deserves much more support and praise for her courage, Gabbard was largely lambasted by politicians, public and press for having the audacity to try to bring peace by embarking on a fact-finding mission to Syria and when presented with the opportunity, meeting with democratically-elected and popular President Bashar al-Assad. In contrast, Senator John McCain’s illegal trip to Syria (Gabbard was invited) saw him yukking it up with the terrorist opposition and was roundly approved by the MSM.

Gabbard’s efforts are reminiscent of another young Congress member who was rewarded for his outspoken opposition to President Polk’s looming war against Mexico with a nickname. Abraham Lincoln was called “Spotty” for having the nerve to insist that the location of Mexico’s supposed aggressions be precisely pointed out on a map, the question being was blood first shed on American soil?[11]

Just the facts, man! Who? What? When? Where? But not Why? or How?

As an undergraduate journalism major I learned that every good story should, at minimum, answer or at least address and attempt to answer the following questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How? A cursory examination of MSM coverage of the gas “attack” in Syria and subsequent “retaliatory” bombing of a Syrian airfield by the U.S. reveals that MSM journalists are not doing their jobs or the jobs they are doing are not in anyone’s interests but those who profit from war.

They continually repeat what is a big lie: that Assad’s “regime” has used chemical weapons before “on its own people” most recently April 4 and 2013; it states this lie as if it is fact and what is the source of its intelligence? [12]

Seymour Hersh's investigation and article that refutes these claims is difficult to find as the MSM refused to publish it (Hersh's *New Syria Revelations Buried From View* By Jonathan Cook *Global Research*, June 28, 2017 *Counter Punch* 27 June 2017). [13]

The reality is that if the U.S. and its allies had not supported Al Qaeda, Al Nusra, ISIS and other terrorists in their illegal war on Syria that is led by the popular Bashar al Assad, the bombing would not have occurred and the terrorists' own chemicals would not have caused the tragic civilian deaths. The 2013 chemical attack, was concluded to be the work of "rebels" (terrorists) and could not have been done by Syrian forces according to the UN team that carried out investigations.

This is yet another example of what Dr. John McMurtry describes as "reverse projection". [14] Our ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley was telegraphing her pass in basketball parlance, telling us what is likely to happen: *someone* will launch a gas attack again and she was clear that Syria would pay a price for it. That someone is the U.S. but through our proxies.

So if there is no proof and it is reported as irrefutably fact, by everyone from CNN to Fox, from Sean Hannity to Diane Rehm, is that not "fake news"?

Nancy Pelosi supported the strikes, saying they were "proportional".

Tulsi Gabbard condemned it.

The possibility that "rebels" are housing chemicals is carefully ignored by the Trump Administration, the vast majority of Congress and the MSM.

Wake up! The American Dream is the world's nightmare

"Our way of life" should be carefully examined and adjusted when it infringes upon the ways of life for billions of fellow global citizens. While a large sector of the American population remains oblivious to, unaware there are reasons the "official" explanation for the tragic events of 9/11 cannot possibly be true, another sector is growing that has awakened to reality. What is required is a willingness to practice a degree of non-conformity, break with the mainstream and examine our own culture as anthropologists encourage and inspire us to do.

It is vital that we teach new generations that history has become a subjective practice, one in which elite actors dictate "official" explanations for events. We should recognize that just repeating the same lies over and over does not make them more true. History is ours. Despite having an unprecedented access to information in the history of the planet, the true history is often hidden in plain sight, or buried under misinformation and Google search engine algorithms.

Major General Smedley Butler who received a congressional medal of honor for the "capture of Vera Cruz, Mexico," in 1914 and another for the "capture of Ft. Riviere, Haiti" in 1917, wrote a short book called *War Is A Racket*. [15] From Chapter 1:



"War is a racket. It always has been.

It is possibly the oldest, easily the most profitable, surely the most vicious. It is the only one international in scope. It is the only one in which the profits are reckoned in dollars and the losses in lives.

A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of the people. Only a small 'inside' group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few, at the expense of the very many. Out of war a few people make huge fortunes.

...Out of war nations acquire additional territory, if they are victorious. They just take it. This newly acquired territory promptly is exploited by the few- the selfsame few who wrung dollars out of blood in the war. The general public shoulders the bill.

I spent 33 years and four months in active military service as a member of this country's most agile military force (the Marine Corps) and during that period I spent most of my time as a high class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism. I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in." [16]

And on and on he went about what he did in China, Central America, the Dominican Republic... Smedley Butler described the ways that war could be ended and one way would be to end its profitability. [17] The famous anthropologist Margaret Mead rightly pointed out that war was just another invention and not a biological necessity; it would reach obsolescence like dueling but importantly, something must replace it for it to end. [18]

The U.S. military and government is well aware of the vast mineral, energy, timber, water and other resources in the vast territories it has invaded and occupied or bullied into submission through threats of war, crippling economic sanctions, and a host of other weapons. We should all be aware of it. Wherever the U.S., its allies and proxies like the UN and NATO are advocating for peace, human rights, democracy, we are sure to find people in poverty and vast riches in resources: Haiti, Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo,

Iraq... Why does the U.S. military now have a presence in 53/54 African nations?

The MSM never mentions that Kim Jong Un always to my knowledge, qualifies his “threats” with “if attacked by the U.S., under attempted regime change, or imminent threat of attack”. The commemoration of the San Patricios demonstrates that it is possible to remember the truth when we are not bombarded by billion dollar propaganda campaigns. The people in North Korea remember how nearly every town and city was leveled by American bombs in the Korean War and about 30% of its population killed, likely more than 4 million people. Having seen what happened when Iraq and Libya gave up their WMD programs and shook hands with our devils, North Korea’s leaders have decided they will not be Corporate Capitalism’s puppets, its people miserable like those in Japan and South Korea.

North Korea is neither a threat to its neighbors or to the United States. It has reached out for peace for decades while the U.S. and South Korea conduct annual invasion drills and lately, nuclear bomb drop drills directed at North Korea. The idea that they are planning a first strike on America whether it be nuclear, cyber, or electromagnetic is ludicrous; it would be an act of suicide, if they even have the capability.

But the U.S. government continues to ratchet up hysterical claims and fabrications about North Korea, Russia, China, Iran and Venezuela. All want peace save for the U.S. who wants submission and world domination. Attempts to “neutralize” nuclear programs in North Korea and Iran would end disastrously with thousands if not millions dying in the Koreas and Japan and worst case scenario are the various mistakes, miscalculations and alliances that could unleash all-out WWII, nuclear apocalypse.

How different might things have turned out if the Americans had lost or if the Mexican-American War had never happened! Dreamers and DACA... How strange that immigrants to American states that used to be Mexico are now “illegal”. And after all, they are fleeing the crushing poverty brought by neoliberal policies, NAFTA, drug cartels and gangs that help feed American’s addictions.

Our consent is still mandatory

The American government continues to tout its goodness despite the evidence. The MSM is owned by Corporations, some defense contractors and others those who benefit from military adventures so it is up to us all to find out what is really happening and why. This is not to advocate that we all take up arms and take on the U.S. military like John Riley and the San Patricios but that we arm ourselves with knowledge, truth, wisdom and action to change the paradigm. It is a difficult path and even the Dalai Lama (however compromised he may be) has said that one should be peaceful but defend oneself if under attack. So where does one draw the line? It is clear that violence and war will beget more of the same.

It is also clear that the U.S. government uses the MSM to achieve our consent. They try extremely hard to make it look like they are justified in military actions. For some reason they still need our approval. If enough of us wake up, their machinations will fail.

Right now the U.S. and its allies are setting up more military bases all over the African continent, in Syria, Afghanistan... It has Iran and North Korea nearly completely surrounded. The buildup of military personnel, drills and armaments amassing across the border with North Korea in particular is particularly alarming and unprecedented. As James Alexander Thom’s character Paddy Quinn said in *Saint Patrick’s Battalion* when he witnessed

the loading and shipment of equipment and arms on ships in port in New Orleans that was bound for Texas: “You don’t do this much getting ready if you don’t really mean to do something.” [19]

Let us remember the San Patricios and after careful consideration, let our consciences guide us.

Philip Linder has an M.A. in international relations and has taught anthropology in universities since 2012. He also worked with resettling refugees for 5 years and met in person the people most affected by wars. He is adapting James Alexander Thom’s Saint Patrick’s Battalion into a screenplay and is hopeful that The Chieftains and Liam Neeson will take part and that producers and a director will have the courage to make the motion picture.

Notes

[1] Indiana Secretary of State “Your Vote Counts This Election Day 2015” September 29, 2015 YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqJK42quBOg>

[2] Indiana Secretary of State “Don’t Think Your Vote Counts? Think Again” 2017 IN.gov website <http://www.in.gov/sos/civics/2527.htm>

[3] Parenti, Michael *Superpatriotism* City Lights Publishers, later printing edition September 1, 2004.

[4] Naureckas, Jim The Essential Pundit Take: ‘Trump Became President’ by Bombing Syria *Common Dreams* April 8, 2017 <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2017/04/08/essential-pundit-take-trump-became-president-bombing-syria>

[5] Thom, James Alexander *Panther In The Sky* New York: Ballantine Books, 1990, first published 1989.

[6] Thom, James Alexander *Saint Patrick’s Battalion* Indianapolis: Blue River Publishing, 2005.

[7] *Saint Patrick’s Battalion*, Erin Go Braghflag, as described by John Patrick O’Riley, WikiMedia Commons, public domain, 1846.

[8] MrOscarBueno “The San Patricos on BBC Radio” YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7Ldi7cCzHU> November 16, 2011.

[10] *The Chieftains* featuring Ry Cooder *San Patricio* Audio CD, Hear Music, 2010.

[11] Mueller, Jean West and Wynell B. Schamel Lincoln’s Spot Resolutions *Social Education* Volume 52, Number 6, October, 1988, pgs. 455-457, 466.

[12] Bender, Bryan, Karni, Annie, with contributions from Michael Crowley, Tara Palmeri, Nahal Toosi and Rebecca Morin White House threatens Syria over possible chemical attack *Politico Magazine* June, 26, 2017.

[13] Cook, Jonathan Hersh’s New Syria Revelations Buried From View *Global Research*, June 28, 2017 *Counter Punch* 27 June 2017.

[14] McMurtry, Prof. John The Moral Decoding of 9-11: Beyond the U.S. Criminal State *Journal of 9/11 Studies*, Volume 35, February, 2013.

[15] Buter, Smedley *War Is A Racket* Warwick New York: Round Table Press, 1935.

[16] Ibid

[17] Ibid

[18] Mead, Margaret Warfare is Only an Invention – Not a Biological Necessity In *Dolphin Reader*, 2nd Edition, Edited by Douglas Hunt, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990, pgs. 415-421.

[19] Thom, James Alexander *Saint Patrick's Battalion* Indianapolis: Blue River Publishing, 2005.

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