

INSIDE KEEP TALKING

**THE CONSPIRACY THEORY GROUP
UNITING THE FAR LEFT AND FAR RIGHT**



ABOUT CST

Community Security Trust (CST) is a charity that works to protect British Jews from antisemitism, terrorism, hate crime and related threats. CST provides security advice and assistance across the UK Jewish community, assists people who experience antisemitic hatred, harassment or bias, and promotes research into antisemitism, racism and extremism.



ABOUT HOPE NOT HATE CHARITABLE TRUST

HOPE not hate Charitable Trust uses research, education and public engagement to challenge mistrust and racism, and helps to build communities that are inclusive, celebrate shared identities and are resilient to hate. The charity monitors far-right extremism and produces in-depth analysis of the threat of the politics of hate in the UK and abroad.

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INTRODUCTION

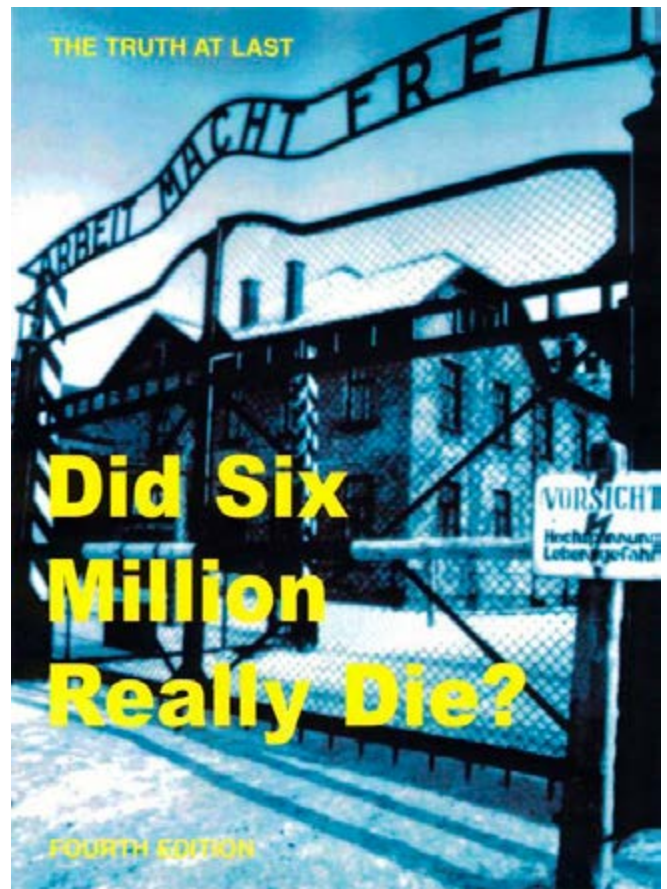
BY JOE MULHALL AND DAVE RICH

Conspiracy theories are no laughing matter. They are the lifeblood of hateful extremism: a way of explaining the world that involves identifying an evil enemy that is responsible for all the bad things that are happening.

For much of the last two hundred years, many of the most dangerous and common conspiracy theories have identified Jews as this enemy. In Nazi Germany, an entire society was organised around the belief that there was a global Jewish conspiracy that needed to be eradicated, even if this involved murdering every living Jewish man, woman and child. It was so powerful it led to genocide and a world war that killed millions.

While the Holocaust was built on a vast conspiracy theory about Jews, Holocaust denial is its own conspiracy theory, which claims that Jews have fooled the entire world with a scam based on guilt for a Holocaust that never happened. Current conspiracy theories that massacres of Syrian civilians by their own government aren't really happening, or are "false flag" massacres orchestrated by the volunteers dedicated to saving their lives, do a similar job to Holocaust denial, albeit in real time and on a smaller scale. The cruelty of these lies is unimaginable; their political purpose is depraved. Perhaps, of all the conspiracy theories covered in this report, the one that claims climate change isn't really happening is the most dangerous of all for the future of humanity.

Once it was possible to be reassured that all of this was the sole preserve of cranks and fascists who nobody listened to. This is no longer the case; and if you can deny the Holocaust, despite all the evidence that it happened, then you can deny anything. Today, conspiracy theories have taken on a life of their own with the help of the internet. Theories that the moon landings were faked, that the 9/11 terrorist attacks were an inside job and that Elvis is still alive can all be found with a few clicks. Some of these might seem funny and relatively harmless, but even the most frivolous conspiracy theory can be a door



into a world that quickly fills with hate. Thirty years ago you had to be a member of a secretive extremist organisation to be exposed to theories of global Jewish conspiracies and Islamic plots to take over Britain; today, you just have to be on Facebook or YouTube.

As this report shows, hateful conspiracy theories have permeated the far left as well as the far right, and have brought both together. The deeper we looked into the Keep Talking group, the harder it became to know whether it was far right, far left, a mixture of the two, or something else entirely. The old political labels no longer apply when you have a shared belief in a hidden hand that secretly runs the world. This disorientating rejection of the basic notions of "truth" and "facts" bleeds into social media, online fake news, propaganda websites and even into respectable academia. That is why this report is so important. The people in the Keep Talking group who we tracked over a period of three years may seem like ridiculous cranks: but even ridiculous cranks have influence and connections today that were unimaginable just a few years ago. Their conspiracy theories spread across ideologies, connect political movements that were previously opposed to one another, and embed the view that the world is shaped and controlled by hidden hands. And more often than not, just as it always was, that hidden hand is identified as Jewish.



Photo: Michael / flickr.com/photos/msvg/

INSIDE KEEP TALKING

“The archives from the listening posts show no evidence that they heard anything about deaths in Auschwitz, we didn’t know that this was going on ... because it wasn’t. These camps were work camps, they were there to help in the war effort, if they wanted to kill the Jews they wouldn’t have taken them all the way across Europe and put them in a camp and paid for their food and everything.”

This comment by veteran far-right figure James Thring was secretly recorded by us at a small gathering of conspiracy theorists in London on the 5th of March 2019. It is just one clip from dozens of hours of undercover recordings, made during an infiltration of the conspiracy theory organisation, Keep Talking, starting in early 2017 and lasting three years.

The group had gathered in a café on Grafton Road in Kentish Town, North London. That evening’s guest speaker was Peter Gregson, discussing “The Loss of Freedom of Speech on Israel, thanks to bogus anti-Semitism claims”.

Earlier that day Gregson, a lifelong member of the Labour Party (though at the time suspended), was informed that his appeal against the earlier decision by his trade union, the GMB, to expel him had been unsuccessful. He was expelled after it was revealed he had claimed that the “Holocaust was exaggerated”. Outside the GMB offices on Stephenson Way, a narrow back street near Euston Station, a small group of five people gathered to show their support. In addition to a “Labour Against the Witchhunt” banner was a second banner, depicting a cartoon of Jeremy Corbyn, addressing a crowd from a lectern emblazoned with a Palestinian flag, under attack from a fighter jet flown by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. A rocket heading for Corbyn reads “Defamation” and a speech bubble says “Anti-Semite”. Later that year, the same banner was displayed outside the Labour Party Conference in Brighton before the Police removed it and it was condemned as antisemitic by Corbyn himself.

THE ATTENDEES

Amongst the small group of supporters outside the GMB that day was Ian Fantom, co-founder of the Keep Talking group. After the hearing they headed to North London where Gregson, still a member of the Labour Party, spent the evening addressing a crowd of antisemitic conspiracy theorists at a Keep Talking meeting.

The undercover footage we captured that evening revealed open and unchallenged Holocaust denial and antisemitic conspiracy theories about Mossad and the Rothschild banking family. Gregson himself denied the existence of antisemitism in the Labour Party, and argued that we have “given up our free speech for Israel” because of “Holocaust guilt”.

The footage also reveals that in the room that evening was Gill Kaffash, former secretary of the Camden Branch of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, whose membership application was rejected by the Labour Party in 2016 because she had promoted Holocaust revisionism. Also present was Elleanne Green, who was suspended by Labour after a Facebook group she founded – Palestine Live – was revealed to contain Holocaust denial. Jeremy Corbyn himself was a member of Palestine Live from 2014 to 2015, though left after he was elected leader of the Labour Party.

Some of the other faces present that night were much more recognisable to those familiar with the UK Holocaust denial scene. Nick Kollerstrom, co-founder of Keep Talking, is a long-time conspiracy theorist whose career in academia came to an end after he was exposed as a Holocaust denier. Kollerstrom has since referred to “storybook gas chambers” when describing the death camp Auschwitz.

Perhaps most notorious amongst the crowd was James Thring, the elderly bearded man recorded openly denying the Holocaust at this very meeting. Thring is a constant presence in the world of both left and right wing antisemitism. Unlike Kaffash and Green, who are clearly left wing activists, Thring has a clear history of consorting with the far right, having previously spoken at a meeting of the far right London



James Thring and
Nick Kollerstrom

Forum and recently having appeared as a guest on former Klu Klux Klan Grand Wizard David Duke's radio show to talk about Jeremy Corbyn. In addition to his far-right connections Thring has been interviewed on Iranian propaganda channel Press TV, where he has compared Israel's actions against Palestinians to genocide. He openly supported former Libyan dictator Muammar Ghaddafi, and travelled to Libya to meet him several times. He also travelled to Iraq to meet with Saddam Hussein in the 1990s.

This was just one meeting of many we infiltrated over a period of three years, gaining an unprecedented look behind the curtain of an often racist, always strange conspiracy theory group. The information we discovered gives important insights into the contemporary conspiracy scene in the UK, reveals the troubling links between racist and non-racist conspiracy theories, and shows how some elements of the far left are working with some elements of the far right to propagate antisemitic conspiracy theories.

THE KEEP TALKING GROUP

The Keep Talking group usually meets on the first Thursday of every month in the heart of London to discuss conspiracy theories ranging from the faking of the 9/11 and 7/7 terrorist attacks, to world domination by the Rothschilds. Whilst the earliest reference to Keep Talking is from Ian Fantom's blog in 2010, it appears the group was already up and running at that point. From the beginning, it served as a rallying point for various members of the 9/11 truther community

to maintain links with one another and engage in conspiracy theorising in person.

The earliest meeting we have details for was dated October 2014 and billed as Nick Kollerstrom speaking about his attempt to hand himself in to officers at Scotland Yard for being a "nonviolent extremist", in a convoluted attempt to criticise then Prime Minister David Cameron's speech at the UN, in which he disparaged 9/11 and 7/7 conspiracy theorists. He carried out the stunt alongside Ian Fantom and with a Press TV camera crew in tow. It was fitting that Kollerstrom was with the Iranian propaganda channel Press TV, having previously published an article on the Iranian news website that claimed the gas chambers at Auschwitz were fake.

After losing his academic credentials in 2008, Kollerstrom was not put off from engaging with the far right. He was for several years a regular attendee of the far right group London Forum, and one of the Forum's organisers, Stead Steadman, has for periods been in regular attendance as the dedicated videographer of Keep Talking meetings. Kollerstrom has since written books, appeared on YouTube channels and spoken in any venue that will host him to push his Holocaust denial claims. In his book *Breaking the Spell: the Holocaust Myth and Reality* Kollerstrom wrote that inmates of Auschwitz "sunbathed by the swimming pool", refers to the Nazi use of "hygienic gas chambers" to "fight typhus" and argues a "complete absence of corroborating evidence" to prove that the Holocaust ever happened. He does not limit his

wild theorising to the Holocaust, and has also written extensively on terror attacks, which, for him, are merely more evidence of a shadow cabal of people who secretly rule the world.

Nick Kollerstrom insists he is not a neo-Nazi or of far-right sympathies: he has previously stood as a Green Party council candidate in the 1980s, and claims to have been a supporter of the Respect Party and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

There are few people who can bring fascists and other far-right activists and pro-Palestine Labour activists into the same group, but Kollerstrom and Fantom have made it a regular occurrence. Antisemitic jazz musician Gilad Atzmon addressed Keep Talking in November 2017 with a speech titled “History Concealment and the Balfour Declaration”. In the speech he argued that the Balfour Declaration came about to “conceal a century of Jewish political hegemony in Britain”. Atzmon has a long history of antisemitic conspiracy theories: in his most recent book, *Being In Time*, he wrote that “Jewish power is the most effective and forceful power in America and beyond” and that “Jews have become a dominant element in Western society.” His book claimed that the American social order has undergone “Jewification” and promoted the far-right theory that “cultural Marxism” is a Jewish conspiracy to undermine Western culture. Atzmon even wrote that Jews promote mass immigration because it “diverts attention from the Jews and also weakens the cohesiveness of ‘White’ working people” – a staple conspiracy theory of today’s far right.

Atzmon’s theories of Jewish power fell on fertile ground to this audience, with one member even shouting out a comment about Jewish DNA. During his speech Atzmon said “I’m sure some of you think Israel did 9/11”, to which there were audible murmurs of agreement. Atzmon disagreed, saying “there are no Jewish conspiracies, they do it out in the open”. He added: “I don’t know if Israel did 9/11 or not but if they did they would brag about it for a week”, the audience laughed. In contrast, when Gregson dared to say in his talk that the Holocaust actually happened (even though elsewhere he has suggested it was exaggerated), he was ridiculed.

Tony Gratrex, who previously headed the Bracknell Palestine Solidarity Campaign, and Irish nationalist campaigner Jim Curran, both attended meetings consistently over the period we were monitoring the group, as did Elleanne Green. At the same time James Thring and

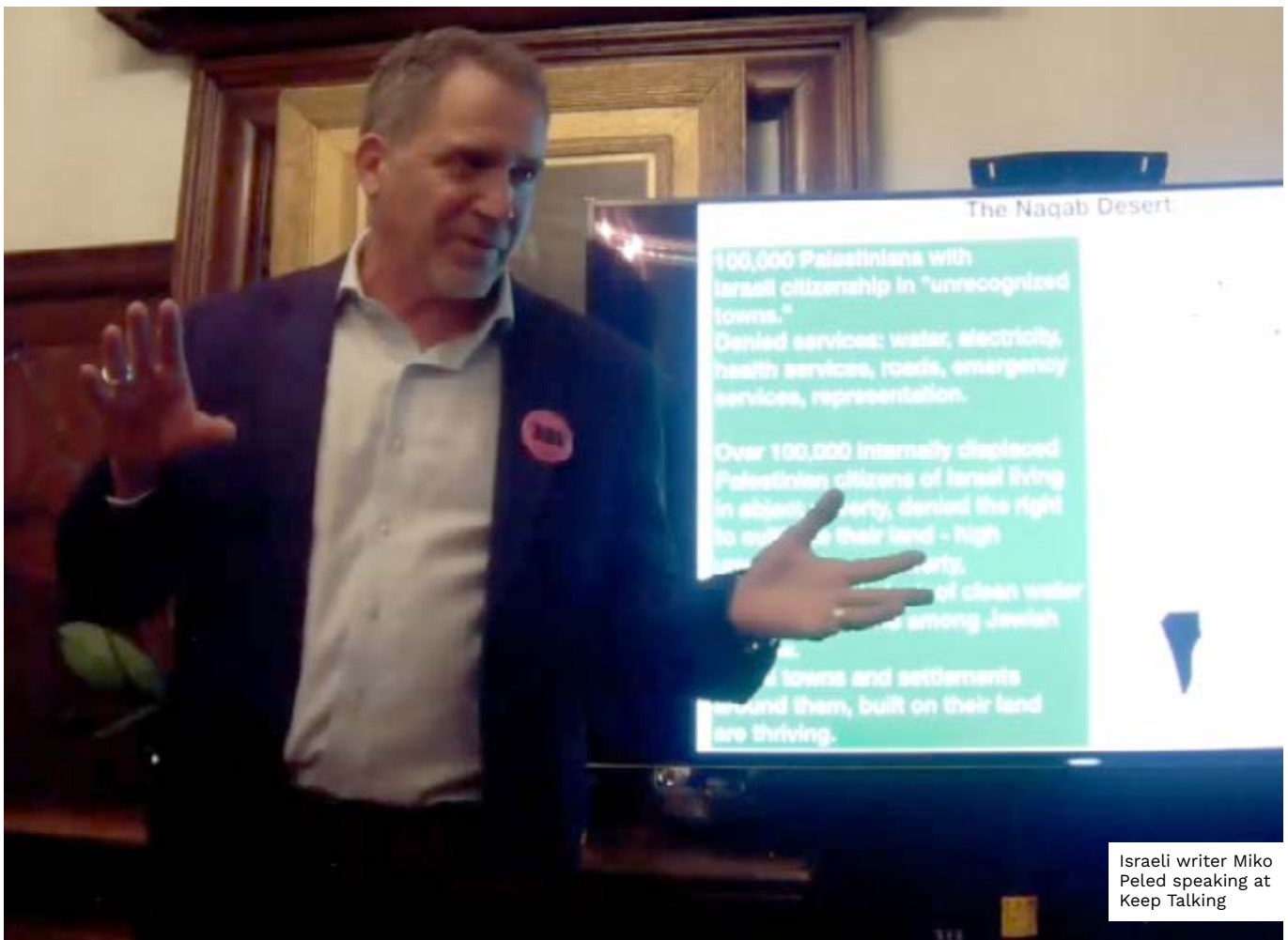


Chabloz, pictured performing the antisemitic quenelle gesture

Alison Chabloz, convicted for publishing videos of herself singing antisemitic songs denying the Holocaust at a London Forum meeting, sat side by side. Green was suspended from the Labour Party over issues relating to antisemitism well over a year ago, while Chabloz was found to have attended Labour Party events in her local constituency prior to her conviction for Holocaust denial.

Another speaker at Keep Talking was Israeli writer Miko Peled, who addressed a meeting of the group after appearing at an event coinciding with the Labour Party conference in Brighton in 2019. This was part of a speaker tour to promote Peled’s book that also included two talks at branches of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign on the South coast. In his talk to Keep Talking, Peled dismissed any notion of antisemitism in the Labour Party as “ridiculous”, and then moved directly into conspiratorial speech in answering a question about the US pro-Israel lobby group AIPAC. Peled first referred to the “zionist lobby” having “tentacles everywhere” before saying:

“The real power of the Zionist lobby has been for over 100 years [Israel was founded



Israeli writer Miko Peled speaking at Keep Talking

71 years ago] working in communities working small, and in small communities, working with educators, working with people in the media, working with people who make movies. I mean doing it that way, doing it grassroots and doing a very very good job."

As well as regulars like Green, Thring, Kollerstrom and convicted Holocaust denier Alison Chabloz, the audience for Peled's talk included retired Church of England vicar Stephen Sizer, who in 2015 was disciplined by the Church after posting an antisemitic conspiracy theory about 9/11 on Facebook.

After Peled's appearance at Keep Talking was exposed by Hope Not Hate, the church where the meeting took place apologised and promised to donate the room booking fee to CST. Members of Green's Facebook group Palestine Live, of which Peled was a member since 2013, were outraged. Green complained that Peled was "being defamed"; other members of the group posted that the Church was "on their knees to the lobby" and that they were being punished for "daring to question the unquestionable".

Keep Talking allows Kollerstrom and others from various backgrounds to engage with his entire range of conspiracy theories, and it was a strange environment for our infiltrator to operate in. At one point they were given a USB stick containing documents alleging a paedophile ring at the heart of high society, and another time they had a banal conversation about pets.

It is not just Kollerstrom and Fantom's personal ties across the political spectrum that joins together this eclectic group of people. The speeches heard at Keep Talking meetings over the years highlight how antisemitic conspiracy theories are also central in uniting people whose world views otherwise seem to contradict each other. Many Keep Talking meetings have centred on an alleged Jewish conspiracy of one sort or another: either explicitly, as in the case of Holocaust denial, or implicitly, as in the case of theories outlining Jewish influence as underlying reasons for terror and murder. At these meetings, conspiratorial antisemitic ideas allow both those on the left and right to converge under the guise of seeking supposedly hidden truths.

CONSPIRACY THEORIES: THE DANGER AND THE APPEAL

It is tempting to dismiss conspiracy theorists as harmless eccentrics, gathering in dingy pubs and online forums to discuss peculiar, but ultimately ineffective, ideas.

However, the tendency to mock and to minimise the threat posed by conspiracy beliefs gives them the space to spread, despite the fact that this dangerous mode of propaganda can be used to scapegoat and to justify attacks on particular groups. In an age in which conspiracy theories continue to flourish, it is only by understanding both the allure and the threats posed by this widespread and persistent form of false belief that we can begin to tackle it in a meaningful way.

WHAT ARE CONSPIRACY THEORIES, AND WHY ARE THEY ATTRACTIVE?

As Michael Barkun outlines in his work *A Culture of Conspiracy: Apocalyptic Visions in Contemporary America*, a “conspiracy belief is the belief that an organisation made up of individuals or groups was or is acting covertly to achieve some malevolent end”. Believers in conspiracy theories tend to reject official versions of the truth, to read intention into seemingly random events, and to view unrelated events as interconnected.

As such, conspiracy theories provide a framework for interpreting unpredictable and bewildering events across the world, tending to spike in popularity during times of turmoil, crisis and upheaval. In the 21st century, the UK has experienced unpopular wars, terror attacks, a financial crash, a decade of austerity and years of divisive and painful Brexit proceedings. In relation to the surge of conspiracy thinking in the US, Anna Merlan, author of *Republic of Lies: American Conspiracy Theorists and Their Surprising Rise to Power*, points to the hardening class structure, increasing disenfranchisement, disappearing social safety net and complex healthcare system as contributing factors. Circumstances on both sides of the Atlantic have

led many people to feel that they lack agency in their own lives, and some have sought a strange form of solace in conspiracy theories. This way of thinking personifies the hardship and danger in people’s day to day experience, and therefore enables blame.

There is a frisson that accompanies uncovering supposedly forbidden information, and the sense that one is unravelling some hidden scheme can be addictive. David Aaronovitch, author of *Voodoo Histories: The Role of Conspiracy Theory in Shaping Modern History*, also highlights a narcissistic element, as conspiracy theories enable believers to inhabit the role of selfless “truth-seekers”, heroically struggling against shadowy forces, and superior to supposedly sheep-like, brainwashed public that accept the false official versions of events. In our era of “fake news”, where hostility to authorities and traditional gatekeepers is widespread, the feeling of empowerment arising from the belief that one possesses the “real” truth can be highly attractive.

The automatic mistrust of information provided by governments, the media, universities and other institutions means that conspiracy beliefs can be exceedingly difficult to tackle. As Barkun notes, conspiracy theorists have the recourse to accuse mainstream accounts of being fabricated false reports, rendering their beliefs impervious to contrary evidence. Moreover, the messianic self-stylings of conspiracy theorists such as David Icke means that efforts to limit the spread of their ideas, be it through negative press coverage or other forms of perceived “censorship”, often simply reaffirm the belief that they are the victims of a conspiracy to silence them. This in turn can nourish martyr complexes, and further entrench the beliefs of their followers.

This is a cause for genuine concern in light of the negative impact conspiracy beliefs can have in society. For example, misdiagnosing the root cause of genuine social injustices can mean that the energy of dedicated, potentially progressive activists are directed into worthless causes, derailing opportunities for manifesting real change. Additionally, in

David Icke Speaking at the Bilderberg Fringe Festival 2013
Photo: Tyler Merbler / flickr.com



the social media age, key events, debates and votes are reliably accompanied by a swirl of misinformation and conjecture which obscures truth. This can mislead or even paralyse action through sheer confusion.

Most worrying, however, is the use of conspiracy theories as a tool to attack minority groups. Of course, belief in a conspiracy theory naturally entails belief in sinister conspirators, often portrayed as possessing an almost superhuman degree of cunning. Whilst the identity of these alleged conspirators varies according to the theorist, there is one group in particular that has, for centuries, faced blame for an enormous variety of upheavals, tragedies and calamities, both historical and mythic. Jew-hatred has deep roots within the tradition of alternative conspiracy thinking, and whilst the so-called “Jewish Question” is hotly debated amongst conspiracy theory communities, antisemitic tropes are rarely far removed

from a diverse array of conspiratorial notions, concerning, for example, 9/11, the refugee crisis or even climate change.

The persistence of antisemitism within the 21st century conspiracy scene partly stems from its status as a “taboo”. As Barkun writes, for many conspiracy theorists “the greater the stigma, the more attractive the source becomes, for the intensity of rejection is its truthfulness”. Therefore, if speaking about a notion carries threats of social ostracization, media condemnation or even legal penalties, this only reaffirms its truth, as these consequences are interpreted as elite attempts to suppress forbidden knowledge. As such, susceptibility to conspiracy thinking can be a gateway into darker territories, and the path from ostensibly non-antisemitic conspiracy theories to flirtation with, or open endorsement of, conspiratorial antisemitism and even Holocaust denial, is well trodden.

CONSPIRACY THEORIES ONLINE

In December 2016 a man with an assault rifle barged into a small pizza restaurant outside of Washington DC called Comet Ping Pong.

He fired three shots, but fortunately only hit walls and furniture. According to his account, he had driven to Washington DC from North Carolina, motivated by his conviction that the restaurant was being used by a child sex-trafficking ring led by Hillary Clinton. The conspiracy theory had spread on Twitter and imageboards (anonymous internet forums) 4chan and 8chan.

In October 2019, a man in Halle, Germany attacked a synagogue and killed two people in the surrounding area using weapons he had built himself and tested over the previous year. In a livestreamed video, he claimed he thought “the Holocaust never happened”, and blamed feminism and “mass immigration” on “the Jew”. Although the investigation is ongoing, the shooter also showed many signs of having spent significant time on far-right imageboards.

These are just two examples of how conspiracy theories can cause real-world harm and death. It is also increasingly clear that online platforms play an important role in forming, spreading, and amplifying these ideas.

INFORMATION POLLUTION

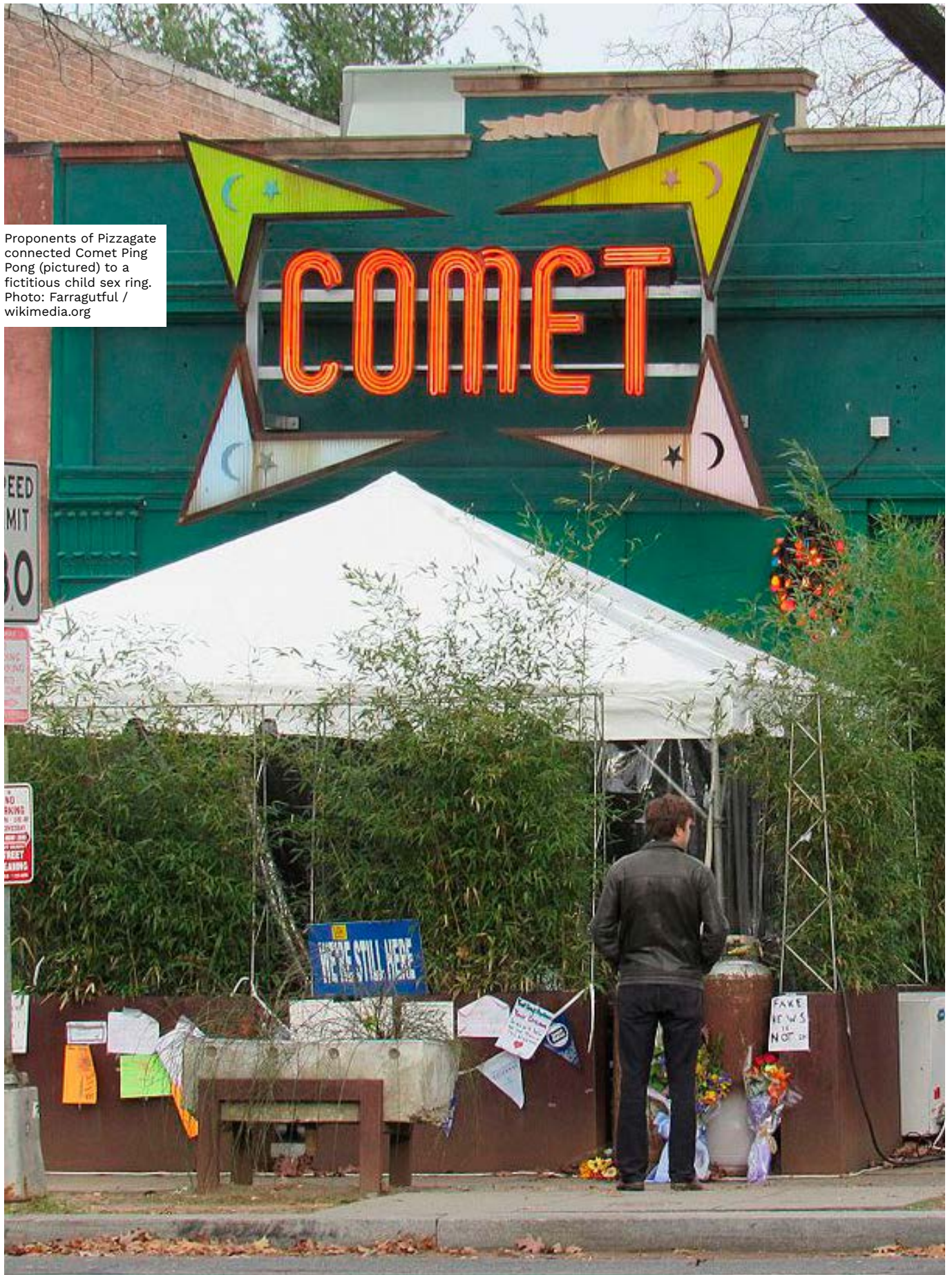
Of course, the internet by itself is not solely to blame for the existence of conspiracy theories, nor is it the only driver that makes people take action on older theories, such as the idea of an international Jewish conspiracy. One contributing factor is that, world leaders regularly make claims that are verifiably false, as well as lend explicit or implicit credibility to conspiracy theories. For example, the attacks of US President Donald Trump on the press as liars, “fake news” and “enemies of the people” has made it more difficult to agree on a common set of facts and falsehoods.

However, it has long been recognised that the internet is playing a key role in the modern

development and dissemination of conspiracy theories, and is particularly well-suited in this regard. It is not only the scale, speed, accessibility and ubiquity of the internet that sets it apart from other communication technologies. As the free-to-use model has been established as the norm, advertising is the main source of income for all of the large social media networks. Advertising revenue, in turn, depends on the amount of time users spend on the platform, leading techno-sociologist Zeynep Tufekci to conclude that attention is “the crucial resource of the digital economy”. Algorithms mediate our communication on social media platforms and premier the content that is attention-grabbing, which is often in direct conflict with accuracy. While YouTube, for example, has made some attempts to limit the spread of conspiracy theories through attempting to avoid recommending its most extreme videos and by supplying links with accurate information from Wikipedia, the videos often remain on the platform. The attention-grabbing aspects of conspiracy ideas mean they are shared extensively in comments and on other sites.

Whitney Phillips argues that the huge amount of information of varying quality, be it true or false, results in a “polluted information” environment online. When so many actors, from individuals to multinational corporations and states, struggle to gain attention in an ever-faster and more crowded information environment, the line between trolling, honest opinion and well-researched opinions starts to blur. At a glance it can be hard to distinguish between conversations around conspiracy theories, the news of the day, and discussions around political issues. Because social media sites like Twitter and Facebook expose us (and encourage us to react) to information in areas we have little insight into every day, we also are often blind to the intent of the account arguing a position.

It is also easy to overestimate our capacity to differentiate between fact and opinion. The latest PISA survey from December 2019, which tests the abilities of students in 79 countries, found that only 11.5 percent of 15-year-old children in



Proponents of Pizzagate connected Comet Ping Pong (pictured) to a fictitious child sex ring. Photo: Farragutful / wikimedia.org

Detail from White House photo of Vice-President Mike Pence posing with members of the Broward County, Florida SWAT team, showing the patch of the “QAnon” far-Right conspiratorist movement worn by one of the officers
Photo: wikimedia.org

the UK can accurately determine texts stating a biased opinion (such as a PR release by a special interest group) from arguments based on journalistic or scientific research.

The danger of information pollution, according to Philips, is that we lose trust in many institutions and basic facts, and turn to conspiratorial ideas that confirm existing biases. Democratic processes in turn become more problematic when there is no consensus on basic truths and falsehoods, which could lead to disengagement and passivity.

PARTICIPATORY ONLINE CULTURE

The possibility of self-expression and communication across vast distances and to huge audiences can, of course, be a wonderful thing. The possibility to collectively direct engagement and speak with a unified voice has brought forth progressive movements like #MeToo. But the same tools that can be used for progressive goals, such as amplifying minority voices, can also allow for the emergence of ideas that had previously been discarded for their sheer ridiculousness. The possibility of extremely niche ideas reaching a critical mass of followers has greatly expanded.

This participatory aspect of the internet and different social platforms is important when it comes to conspiracy theory communities online. Internet sleuths have been an important feature of internet culture from the very beginning, driven by almost infinite access to information, the possibility of pooling time and resources and, importantly, the willingness to question prevailing narratives. As social scientist danah boyd argues, the “process of doubt and discovery is invigorating”. To be able to take part and research a conspiracy theory fits well with this culture. Additionally, just like offline conspiracy theory circles, it also creates a sense of purpose and community.

4chan’s and 8chan’s /pol/ boards (short for “politically incorrect”) have received extensive attention for their connection to far-right ideas and far-right terrorism, but they are also spaces



where conspiratorial world views are spread incessantly. The anonymous user “Q” behind the QAnon conspiracy theory (which believes that there is a secret plot by an alleged “deep state” against President Trump) started posting on 4chan’s /pol/ and quickly gained a large following online and offline. Although Q’s identity remains unknown, the user was named one of the 25 most influential people on the internet in 2018. 8chan’s /pol/ board was simultaneously used to announce far-right terror attacks motivated by Islamophobic and antisemitic conspiracy theories in 2019. In this way, imageboards have become a central hub, where both very specific and more modern conspiracies, like QAnon and Pizzagate, as well as much older and broader systemic conspiracy theories like the idea of undue Jewish influence, come together and are discussed extensively. The shooter in Halle, like the man who attacked the Chabad of Poway synagogue in California in April 2019 (who blamed Jews for the “meticulously planned genocide of the European race”), had both spent time on image boards and used rhetoric common on the forums.

COUNTERING CONSPIRACIES ONLINE

Unfortunately, it is incredibly hard to counter conspiracy theories online. Not only are most conspiracies “self-sealing”, meaning that evidence against them are often reversed and used to strengthen them, but danah boyd also argues that the reasons why people share content online are complex. She has found that people can

share content that they know is dubious in order to make a statement, or to signal belonging to a group or opposition to others.

The issue is described in the internet axiom known as “Poe’s law”, which says that without explicit indication, it is impossible to determine if someone online is serious or parodying extreme views. Without verbal and visual queues available in real life, it is hard to determine if someone is joking or completely honest about their opinions. This is especially true on imageboards where users can only be differentiated by their randomised ID called “tripcode”, which can be changed at any time. Therefore, other users have no insight into what other users have posted before.

In practice, the intent behind a conspiracy theory post online might not matter, as it will inevitably contribute to the confusion. An example is the conspiracy theory that Finland does not exist, which started to spread around the internet in late 2014, after being posted by a user on Reddit called “Jack”. In a later interview, Jack said he did not believe it himself and it was posted as a joke. However, this has done little to slow the spread of the idea. The conspiracy theory now even has a sub-forum on Reddit, and Jack gets responses from people being both angry at him for popularising the idea as well as those who seem to sincerely believe in it.

The effect is that it is difficult to determine the right approach to argue against ideas online, as people might sincerely believe what they share, or might do it simply to upset and cause outrage, or may not believe the specific fact that is shared, but are sharing it simply to make a statement. Without knowledge of intent, a response could mistakenly serve to entrench the idea further, or give it unnecessary attention.

The spread of conspiracy theories online and offline are inherently connected, and to limit their harm one cannot solely focus on online platforms. Conspiracy theory communities online can give a sense of community and purpose to those isolated and adrift, and there are wider social issues that must be addressed beyond

technology and the internet. Likewise are issues about trust towards media and governments not inherently an online issue.

However, the attention-driven structure of current online platforms is problematic and remains a major contributing factor. While many major platforms have to some degree attempted to respond to false information and conspiracy theories, the structure of the platforms continues to promote the spread of information rather than the quality of it, which contributes to an environment where the difference between true and false is increasingly hard to determine.

THE THEORIES

Since the start of the infiltration in early 2017, Keep Talking has played host to an array of both left wing and right wing speakers, who have discussed a wide variety of conspiracy theories. While the group seems happy to discuss any and all conspiracy theories, there are a number of topics with which they are especially preoccupied:

9/11

9/11 conspiracies are at the very core of Keep Talkings activities, the group having originally started as part of the 9/11 Truth Movement. In recent years they have had numerous events aimed at undermining the official account of the attack on the Twin Towers.

■ 1 MAY 2018 – HEINZ POMMER: THE POWER SOURCE(S) OF THE 9/11 EVENT

In May 2018, Heinz Pommer travelled from Germany to explain to the group his theory that 9/11 might have actually been the result of a nuclear device rather than the official government story.



LONDON TERROR ATTACKS

The group also has regular meetings discussing the spate of terrorist attacks in London in recent years. Commonly these are explained as “false flag” attacks that are staged in order to detract blame away from the actual perpetrator.

■ 2 MAY 2017 – NICK KOLLERSTROM: WESTMINSTER BRIDGE ATTACK

Kollerstrom argued that the attack was carried out by actors and gave “evidence” that it was impossible that the attack was carried out the way it was told through official channels, suggesting mainstream media outlets deliberately deceived the public.

■ 4 OCTOBER 2017 – VARIOUS: THE RECENT SPATE OF TERROR ATTACKS IN LONDON

The talk outlined various conspiracy theories of government cover-ups in relation to terror attacks in the UK over the last decade. It also connected these to what was called “soft terrorism”, which allegedly includes “menacing behaviour” by unions as well as HOPE not hate.



Floral tributes left on London Bridge following the attack
Photo: Matt Brown / wikimedia.org

ASSASSINATIONS

Conspiracy theories surrounding the supposed hidden agendas behind assassinations of public figures have long been widespread, and are a regular occurrence at Keep Talking.

■ 6 FEBRUARY 2017 – OLE DAMMEGÅRD: ASSASSINATION OF OLOF PALME

Ole Dammegård outlined his theory of the murder of Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme in 1986.

■ 4 JULY 2017 – HELEN TURNER: FABRICATED CONVICTIONS: DID THOMAS MAIR MURDER JO COX

Helen Turner explained her theory that Thomas Mair was not responsible for the murder of Jo Cox MP. Turner argued that the CCTV video footage from the event proves Mair could not have killed Cox, and that Mair was framed as a far-right activist.

■ 18 OCTOBER 2018 – IAN FANTOM: THE SKRIPAL AFFAIR

Fantom argued that Russia was not behind the poisoning of Sergej Skripal and his daughter, but that it was an MI6 operation.

ANTISEMITIC CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Antisemitic conspiracy theories are at the centre of the group. Sometimes these are expressed in more overt terms, in the form of Holocaust denial and ideas of Jewish influence. Other times these work as explanations for event-based conspiracy theories.

■ 6 JUNE 2017 – IAN FANTOM: FROM USS LIBERTY TO A 'NEST OF SPIES'

Fantom gave his interpretation on the conspiracy surrounding the sinking of the ship USS Liberty in 1967 by Israel.

■ 5 MARCH 2019 – PETER GREGSON: LOSS OF FREE SPEECH ON ISRAEL

Gregson asserted that “Jewish people carry this mantle of victimhood” and that “the Zionists capitalize on that leverage from the Holocaust

and they use it relentlessly”. Gregson was ridiculed at the meeting for suggesting that the Holocaust had actually happened. Regular attendee James Thring asserted during the Q and A that the Holocaust didn't happen.

■ 7 NOVEMBER 2017 – GILAD ATZMON: HISTORY CONCEALMENT AND THE BALFOUR DECLARATION

Atzmon argued that the Balfour Declaration came about to “conceal a century of Jewish political hegemony in Britain”.

THE WHITE HELMETS

An obscure conspiracy theory that the White Helmets, a volunteer organisation aiding victims of the war in Syria, is a terror linked organisation and their activities are actually fake and aimed at eliciting sympathy in the West for regime change in Syria and the overthrowing of Bashar al-Assad.

■ 6 DECEMBER 2018 – VANESSA BEELEY: THE MAKING OF A SHADOW STATE

Beeley is the main proponent of this conspiracy theory and her talk outlined how the civil war in Syria was staged in order to permit foreign intervention.



THE LABOUR PARTY AND KEEP TALKING

The first time our infiltrator noticed Elleanne Green at a Keep Talking meeting was in September 2018. The talk was entitled 9/11, Manhattan and the Manhattan Project and was given by Oliver Kingsbury.

Our infiltrator recognised Green as a Labour Party member who had created the notorious Facebook group Palestine Live, which had been exposed six months earlier as a cesspit of antisemitic conspiracy theories and Holocaust Denial. Chris Williamson, Jeremy Corbyn and other notable Labour Party figures had been members of the secret group at different points since its creation in 2013. Green claimed to have come straight to the Keep Talking event from a meeting with Asa Winstanley, a writer for the Electronic Intifada website who has promoted the conspiracy theory that the Israeli government is behind allegations of antisemitism in the Labour Party – allegations he says are “fabricated”. By September 2018 Green had already been suspended by the Labour Party for alleged antisemitism, and shortly before publication of this report claimed to have been finally expelled; Winstanley (who has not been to a Keep Talking meeting) would himself be suspended the following year and has since resigned his party membership.

In 2015 Green had used the Palestine Live Facebook group to contact Jeremy Corbyn’s office and ask for help organising a meeting in Parliament for American activist Max Blumenthal to speak. Corbyn’s then assistant Jack Bond, also a member of Palestine Live, agreed to help. However, on the night of the meeting Blumenthal was late to arrive, so James Thring took to the podium and gave an impromptu speech – the same James Thring who was a regular at far-right meetings and who our infiltrator would later film telling a Keep Talking meeting that the Holocaust didn’t happen.

Green’s Labour Party connections don’t end there: she accompanied former MP Chris Williamson when he took the Labour Party to court in a complaint related to the party’s

disciplinary process against him. After the hearing Williamson, Green and others celebrated their day in court, as she proudly posted on her Facebook page.

The organiser of the campaign raising money for Chris Williamson’s court case was Professor David Miller, a leading member of the Working Group on Syria, Propaganda and Media – a network of academics, writers and activists who



Vanessa Beeley claims that the Jo Cox Foundation was part of what she called a “philanthro-capitalist billionaire network” controlled by none other than George Soros

promote the conspiracy theory that massacres of Syrian civilians with chemical weapons by their own government are staged by Western intelligence agencies with the assistance of the White Helmets volunteer rescuers. Neither Miller nor Williamson have been to Keep Talking, but a member of Miller’s Working Group has spoken there: Vanessa Beeley, who addressed the Keep Talking group in December 2018 and joined

Miller’s Working Group in March 2019. Beeley’s talk at the Keep Talking meeting claimed that the Jo Cox Foundation was part of what she called a “philanthro-capitalist billionaire network” controlled by none other than George Soros – a hate figure for the alt-right in Europe and the United States. This network, she said, “is actually behind many of these regime change wars or these humanitarian intervention wars that we’ve



been seeing or particularly what we're seeing unroll now in Syria for the last eight years". She named "one powerful and controversial billionaire and I'll give you three guesses as to who that is... George Soros" at the centre of a group she called the "Jo Cox four". The audience murmured their agreement at the name "George Soros" as the prime mover behind this supposed conspiracy.

Claiming that a small group of wealthy, influential people are behind the ills of the world is a staple of any conspiracy theory, and often these alleged conspirators are Jews. In the past this conspiracy theory has involved the Rothschild banking dynasty; more recently Soros has served as the Jew allegedly pulling the strings on invisible conspiracies.

Another person who lectured to the Keep Talking group is disgraced former GMB shop steward Peter Gregson. Gregson was thrown out of the GMB union and suspended by the Labour Party for claiming that the Holocaust was "exaggerated". His talk to the group in March of last year saw James Thring deny point blank that death camps had ever existed to vocal agreement from the audience. In September last year, a banner that Gregson took to Labour Party conference was removed by Police and described by Jeremy Corbyn as "antisemitic poison". Corbyn was criticised for this at the time by Professor David Miller, speaking at a

fringe event to launch his book *Bad News for Labour*, who said he was "disheartened" by Corbyn's statement to the audible agreement of the audience. The removal of Gregson's banner from labour conference was also criticised by fringe groups Jewish Voice for Labour and Labour Against the Witchhunt.

Piers Corbyn, older brother of Jeremy, has attended several meetings and addressed at least one event. When one of his talks to the group was exposed by the Daily Mail in late 2016 he claimed:

"I was invited by Ian, no-one else, convener of the 'Keep Talking' organisation which entertains a wide range of speakers and my attendance was never suggested to imply agreement or not with any view he or anyone involved or present may have."

Ian Fantom advertised a talk by Piers Corbyn to Keep Talking as recently as last month. Corbyn has also appeared many times on the Windows on the World YouTube channel, which is run by Mark Windows – another regular at Keep Talking. Windows on the World has hosted Kollerstrom and Fantom on its YouTube show, as well as antisemites such as Gilad Atzmon. Jeremy Corbyn has been interviewed by the channel twice. Both occasions were unscheduled interviews on the street rather than in a studio: one related to the conflict in Israel and Gaza



Former GMB shop steward Peter Gregson

WINDOWS ON THE WORLD

The fact that Keep Talking meet in the real world makes them something of an anomaly in the world of conspiracy theories, as today most conspiracy theory content is produced and consumed online. However, the line between online and offline is a blurred one, with videos of many of the talks given to the group appearing online, and many of the group's speakers also appearing on other conspiracy theory YouTube channels and running their own websites.

One of the UK's most eccentric conspiracy theory platforms is the YouTube channel Windows on the World (WOW), run and produced by Mark Windows. Windows has a side line as an entertainer with his "Glamtastic Rock Show" in which he sings karaoke in costume. However, his main YouTube channel, started in March 2014, has a little over 12,000 subscribers and has accrued over 1.5 million views. Most videos receive just two-three thousand views, though some have managed tens of thousands.

Like Keep Talking, Windows on the World plays host to a wide array of conspiracy theory "experts" covering topics such as climate change denial, chemtrails, the murder of Jo Cox MP, supposed Zionist influence and HOPE not hate.



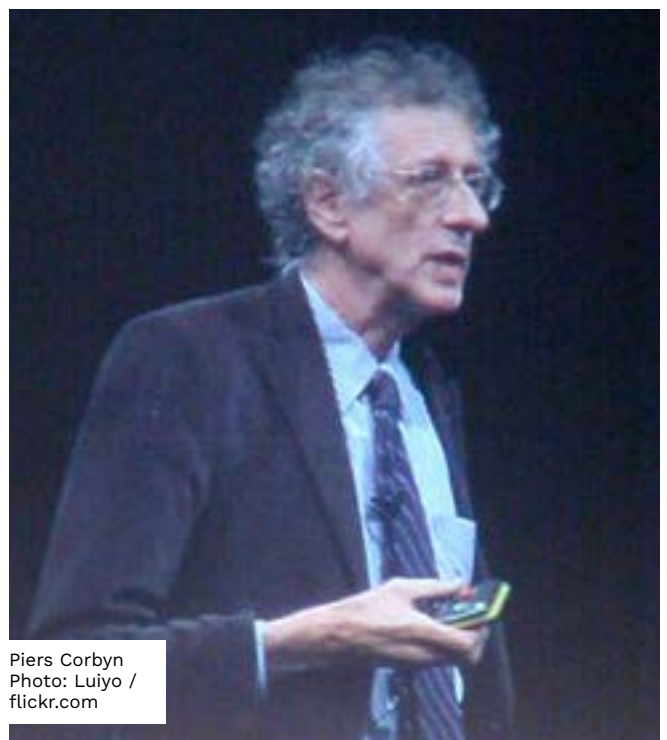
Mark Windows

Windows spoke at Keep Talking in November 2018, and regularly has guests on his show that are from the Keep Talking ecosystem, with Ian Fantom and Nick Kollerstrom appearing numerous times.

Windows is happy to have known Holocaust deniers on the show, and hosted convicted denier Alison Chabloz in April 2017, as well as other antisemites such as Gilad Atzmon who appeared on an episode of the show entitled "The Holocaust of Truth", in August 2018. Atzmon later spoke at Keep Talking in November and Windows attended, as did Stead Steadman, an organiser of the far right London Forum.

in 2014, and the other concerned support for a strike by cleaning staff in which Corbyn expressed "Thanks to Windows on the World".

Conspiracies arguing that Israel funds ISIS or that the CIA created al Qaeda or that Israel is behind antisemitism in the Labour Party have unfortunately become more common in left wing politics in recent years. The conspiracy narrative of the Keep Talking group brings far-right activists into the same room as Labour Party members and the confidantes of former Labour MPs, and they need to be fought every bit as hard as when the same narratives are shared by the far right. Our research has shown that it doesn't matter what political background you're from, the insidious nature of conspiracy theories mean that people who consider themselves left wing are still susceptible to believing the lies that lead to the politics of hatred. Hopefully by exposing the Keep Talking group we have taken a step to help people come back from embracing the politics of hatred and deceit and towards the values of decency and hope.



Piers Corbyn
Photo: Luiyo / flickr.com

KEEP TALKING EVENTS SINCE 2017

This is a list of the events with speakers and the topic that Keep Talking has announced. It highlights not only how active the group is but also the diversity of the conspiracy theories they discuss. Not every talk or speaker has expressed antisemitic views or political extremism.

Date	Speaker	Topic
10 January 2017	Pippa King	State of Surveillance – SOS
6 February 2017	Ole Dammegård	Assassination of Swedish PM Olof Palme
6 March 2017	Edward Spalton	The EU: Some personal reflections
4 April 2017	Heinz Pommer	9/11, nuclear weapons and secret societies
2 May 2017	Nick Kollerstrom	Westminster Bridge terror, fact or fiction?
6 June 2017	Ian Fantom with others	From USS Liberty to a ‘nest of spies’ – 50 years of cover ups.
4 July 2017	Helen Turner	Fabricating Convictions: Did Thomas Mair murder Jo Cox?
9 August 2017 (Cancelled)	Jon Conway	Diana: Twenty Years On...
4 October 2017	Various Keep Talking People	The Recent spate of Terror attacks in London
7 November 2017	Gilad Atzmon	History Concealment and the Balfour Declaration
9 February 2018	Mark Devlin	Musical Truth, Volume 2
5 March 2018 (Cancelled)	Lucy Morgan Edwards	On Professor Bailey’s WTC7 Lecture
3 April 2018	Ian Fantom	The British Council, Mind Control and Russia
1 May 2018	Heinz Pommer	The Power Source(s) of the 9/11 event
5 June 2018	Lucy Morgan Edwards, Dave Barnby, Colin Bex	On Professor Bailey’s WTC7 Lecture
6 September 2018	Oliver Kingsbury	9/11, Manhattan, and the Manhattan Project
18 October 2018	Discussion, led by Ian Fantom	The Skripal Affair
8 November 2018	Mark Windows	The Bigger Picture: Global local agendas explained
6 December 2018	Vanessa Beeley	The making of a shadow state: The billionaire complex behind the Syria ‘regime change’ war.
10 January 2019	Gerry Docherty	World War 1: The Lies They Still Hold True

Date	Speaker	Topic
7 February 2019	Mark Devlin discusses with Nick Kollerstrom	The McCartney Deception
5 March 2019	Peter Gregson	The loss of freedom of speech on Israel, thanks to bogus anti-Semitism claims
4 April 2019	John Petley	How democratic is Britain?
16 May 2019	John Petley	A German Brexit?
6 June 2019	Robin Tilbrook	Why we left the EU on 29 March, 2019
4 July 2019	Marcus Allen & Nick Kollerstrom	Unknown
1 August 2019	Clive Menzies	How money rules
5 September 2019	Richard Gage and Barbara Honegger (by video link)	Unknown
3 October 2019	Miko Peled	Journey of an Israeli in Palestine
7 November 2019	Kevin Boyle	On Bringing Democracy to parliament
13 December 2019	N/A	Keep Talking Christmas Party
9 January 2020	Piers Corbyn	The Reality of Global Cooling
6 February 2020	Mark Devlin	Mind Control in James Bond Movies

PROFILES

THE ORGANISERS



■ NICK KOLLERSTROM

Nick Kollerstrom co-founded the Keep Talking group. He is a long-time conspiracy theorist whose career in academia came to an end when he wrote that the Holocaust never happened. He has since referred to “storybook gas chambers” and “phantom gas chambers” when describing the death camp Auschwitz.

He has written at length that the 7/7 terrorist bombings in London were a British government plot, and that 9/11 was a conspiracy on the part of the US government and Mossad and others. Kollerstrom has a background as an environmental activist but has in later years denied that global warming is happening at all and he has regularly attended meetings organised by the far right London Forum.

He has formed associations with prominent members of the far right, including Holocaust deniers Michelle Renouf and James Thring, both of whom have attended Keep Talking group meetings. The article in which he first publicly espoused Holocaust denial views was written in 2008 and includes depictions of the Auschwitz death camp as some kind of resort;

“the elegant swimming pool . . . built by the inmates, who would sunbathe there on Saturday and Sunday afternoons while watching water-polo matches”.



■ IAN FANTOM

A co-founder of the Keep Talking group, Fantom was a consistent poster in the conspiracy forum “UK 9/11 & 7/7 Truth” Google group. He has written that his motivation for launching Keep Talking was that previous “9-11 truth” groups had been “sabotaged from within”. He used the diaries of Theodore Herzl, the founder of Zionism, to dismiss reports of antisemitism in the Labour Party in a report published on the far-right website The Unz Review.

Fantom wrote that Cecil Rhodes “was in fact working with Lord Rothschild to create a network of central banks in order to dominate the world by means of financial power” in the “UK 9/11 & 7/7 Truth” Google group in 2015.

SPEAKERS OF NOTE



Gilad Atzmon
Photo: Richard Kaby / flickr.com

■ GILAD ATZMON

Atzmon is a jazz musician who has long expressed antisemitism and engaged with antisemitic and conspiratorial groups. The primary charge of supporting Holocaust denial is Atzmon’s circulation of Paul Eisen’s work *The Holocaust Wars*, and support for the work of deniers David Irving and Ernst Zundel among others. CST referred to Atzmon’s 2011 book *The Wandering Who?* as “quite probably the most antisemitic book published in this country in recent years”.

The controversy surrounding Atzmon’s history of antisemitism ensured that he has been prevented from appearing on stage at council-owned venues in Islington. The US Palestine Community Networks called for the “Disavowal of the Racism and Antisemitism of Gilad Atzmon” as far back as 2012.

Atzmon addressed Keep Talking in November 2017 with a speech titled “History Concealment and the Balfour Declaration”. In the speech he argued that the Balfour Declaration came about to “conceal a century of Jewish political hegemony in Britain”.



■ PETER GREGSON

Suspended from the Labour Party and expelled from the GMB Union for his views on the Holocaust and for his comments about Zionists. Gregson founded a group called Labour Against Zionism and Islamophobic Racism (LAZIR).

Gregson gave an antisemitic lecture at the March 2019 meeting on the topic of “The loss of freedom of speech on Israel, thanks to bogus anti-Semitism claims”. During his talk Gregson asserted: “Jewish people carry this mantle of victimhood” and that “the Zionists capitalise on that leverage from the Holocaust and they use it relentlessly”.

He has dabbled in citizen journalism and his articles are still up on the Scottish Labour blog, Labour Hame, as well as the anti-Zionist website Mondoweiss, for whom he wrote an article entitled “Why let Netanyahu Write the Labour Party Rule Book”. He says of Kollerstrom’s views on his blog, Kids not Suits, that “Kollerstrom does not deny the Holocaust. He is a sceptic”, continuing: “A sceptic is quite different from a denier. It is an extremely serious matter to accuse someone of Holocaust denial when they are not”. He was thrown out of Labour Party conference in 2017 for hanging an antisemitic banner outside of the venue, he returned to conference in 2019 with the same banner.



MIKO PELED

Peled is an American/Israeli who has espoused controversial views about Israel and antisemitism. During Labour Party conference in 2017 he told a Labour fringe event that:

“This is about free speech, the freedom to criticise and to discuss every issue, whether it’s the Holocaust: yes or no, Palestine, the liberation, the whole spectrum. There should be no limits on the discussion.”

Peled has also compared Zionism to Nazism, saying that “we don’t invite the Nazis and give them an hour to explain why they are right [...] in the same way we do not invite Zionists – it’s a very similar kind of thing”.

Peled addressed the Keep Talking group in October 2019 with a speech titled: “Journey of an Israeli in Palestine”. During the talk Peled makes fun of the allegations of antisemitism in the Labour party, to the amusement of the audience. The talk was part of a UK tour, which included speaking to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign chapters in Hastings and Rye and Eastbourne.

VANESSA BEELEY

Vanessa Beeley spoke to Keep Talking in December 2018 about the Syrian medical aid group known as the White Helmets. Her talk



made the argument that the White Helmets serve as combatants and are working with terrorist groups. She was referred to as a “pro Russian propagandist” in the *Huffington Post* who also pointed out that she argued that the Charlie Hebdo terror attack in Paris was staged. She has tweeted that “Zionists rule France”.

Beeley is a member of the Working Group on Syria, Propaganda and Media, a group which has publicly questioned whether the chemical weapons attack in Douma, Syria actually happened. She has written extensively about the White Helmets, which she ties to the Jo Cox Foundation.

Beeley appeared before a UN committee organized by the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the UN. In her testimony to that committee she describes herself as “an independent journalist who has spent more than 10 months inside Syria during the conflict”. She claims “the White Helmets work exclusively with extremist groups, notably al Nusra front” adding “they actively collaborate with these groups and have been filmed on a number of occasions participating in brutality against Syrian civilians”.

REGULAR ATTENDEES

ALISON CHABLOZ

Alison Chabloz is a well-known Holocaust denier and far-right activist. She was convicted for her antisemitism in 2018, and her court imposed suspended sentence later led to a custodial sentence due to her inability to stick to the terms imposed on her. Chabloz was



originally convicted on two counts of sending an offensive, indecent or menacing message through a public communications network and a third charge relating to a song on YouTube.

These songs were performed at a meeting of the far-right London Forum. The judge at one of her many courtroom appearances called her “manifestly antisemitic and utterly obsessed with what she perceives to be the wrongdoing of the Jews and their disproportionate influence in politics, the media and banking in particular”.

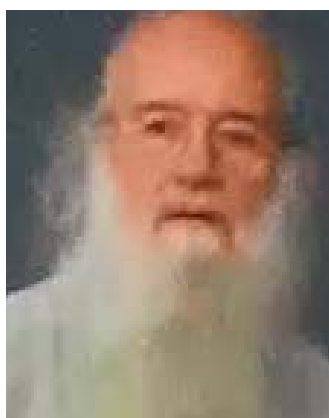
The Jewish News reported that in 2015 she became a paid up Labour Party supporter and “declared loyalty to Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn

in several blog posts”. She also wrote in support of former London mayor Ken Livingstone, saying he was “set up and harangued by arch-Zionist colleague – the despicable John Mann MP”.

During the recent election campaign Chabloz was banned from posting on her local Conservative candidate (now MP) Robert Largan’s Facebook page. She wrote of him in her blog that “no wonder voters mistakenly believe Largan is Jewish. He certainly acts in Jewish-Zionist interests”. In the same blog post she wrote of her local Labour candidate Ruth George that “George goes along with kosherised, anti-Zionist, Momentum mantra”.

■ **JAMES THRING**

Thring is a Holocaust denier and a constant presence in the world of both left and right wing antisemitism. A known supporter of former Libyan dictator Muammar Ghaddafi, Thring travelled to Libya to meet him several times. He also travelled to Iraq to meet with Saddam Hussein in the 1990s.



Recently he was a guest on former Klu Klux Klan Grand Wizard David Duke’s radio show in conversation about Jeremy Corbyn. According to *The Times*: “Thring claimed that although Mr Corbyn did not “mention Jewish power” it was “obviously behind in his mind”.

Thring and Nick Kollerstrom have known one another at least since 2002, when the two of them were on the so called Legal Inquiry Steering Group together. This was before Kollerstrom made his own views on the Holocaust public. During Peter Gregson’s lecture to Keep Talking in March last year, Thring declared that camps established during the Holocaust were “work camps”, adding “if they’d wanted to kill the Jews they wouldn’t have taken them all the way across Europe and put them in a camp and paid for their food and everything”.

He argues on his website that “the Israeli lobby in the UK has barred Magistrates from approving Writs from private individuals to arrest serving politicians and army personnel”.

Thring has lectured at a meeting of the far-right group the London Forum, and made headlines when he spoke at a meeting in Parliament hosted by Jeremy Corbyn. The speaker, Max

Blumenthal, had been delayed. In addition to his far-right connections Thring has been interviewed on Iranian propaganda channel Press TV, where he has compared Israel’s actions against Palestinians to genocide.

■ **ELLEANNE GREEN**

Green is a former Labour Party member in Westminster. She is best known for having founded the secret Facebook group Palestine Live. This group eventually contained thousands of activists, a hardcore of whom, Green included, engaged in antisemitic discourse. Such discourse included Green sharing articles by Gilad Atzmon, adding notorious Holocaust denier Paul Eisen to the group and engaging with Holocaust denial discourse.



Green accompanied former MP Chris Williamson to court when he sued the Labour Party over his suspension, and to a rooftop terrace gathering after one of his hearings. She was suspended by the party in July 2018.

■ **TONY GRATREX**

The former head of Bracknell Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Gratrex’s Facebook profile picture showed an image depicting the belief in 9/11 conspiracy theories. Gratrex was an administrator of the Palestine Live Facebook group along with Elleanne Green at the time of the group’s exposure in the media.





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