

By Eric Samuelson, J.D.



Skull & Bones  
logo

**Genesis 3:22: "The Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil".**

**This brief introduction to Skull and Bones is dedicated to those journalists in America who have both the courage and the ability to inform the public regarding what others may consider to be a taboo subject—a foreign-born secret society that has exported itself to this nation and may succeed in securing the highest office in the land for still another of its sworn initiates. The two main characters in this story so far are Antony C. Sutton and David Armstrong. The first is a scholar of the first order to began the definitive work on this subject and then vanished. The second came to Texas from California, became the editor of the most liberal Texas magazine, wrote a series of very insightful articles on the Bush family and then, like Sutton, was apparently muzzled.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

**In May of 1994 a *Texas Monthly* story (p. 146) by Skip Hollandsworth, on George W. Bush, briefly stated: "Although he did not graduate Phi Beta Kappa as his father had, he did follow his father into the university's Skull and Bones Club, a secret society for the males of prominent families."**

**The majority of Bonesmen are from old-line Puritan families. They include the following families: Whitney, Lord, Phelps. Wadsworth, Allen, Bundy, Adams, Stimson, Taft, Gilman and Perkins. A second group of families in the Skull & Bones are: Harriman, Rockefeller, Payne, Davison, Pillsbury and Weyerhauser. The Order of Skull and Bones was once called the "Brotherhood of Death."<sup>(1)</sup>**

**At any given time, only about 600 or so members of the Order are alive. Of that number only 150 (about one-quarter) take an active role in the society. It is estimated that a core of perhaps 20-30 families run the Order. Recent Bones inductees include a few blacks, gays, and even some foreign students. In 1991 Skull and Bones began to admit women members. Each initiate gets**

**\$15,000 and a grandfather clock. A neophyte's name is changed to Knight so and so. The old Knights are known as Patriarchs. Outsiders are known as Gentiles and vandals. It meets annually—patriarchs only—on Deer Island in the St. Lawrence River.(2)**

#### THE SECRECY OF BONES

**"Initiates are sworn to secrecy. They are required to leave the room if The Order comes into discussion. They cannot—under oath—answer questions on The Order and its organization."**

**— Antony C. Sutton(3)**

**The Senior secret societies at Yale, wrote Lyman Bogg, "never mention their names."(4) Not even the inquisitive Pamela Churchill Harriman could get her third husband to talk about Bones: "(Averell) Harriman regularly went back to the tomb (the Bone's Temple) on High Street, once even lamenting that his duties as chief negotiator at the Paris Peace Talks prevented him from attending a reunion. So complete was his trust in Bone's code of secrecy that in conversations at annual dinners he spoke openly about national security affairs. He refused, however, to tell his family anything about Bones. Soon after she became Harriman's third wife in 1971, Pamela Churchill Harriman received an odd letter addressing her by a name spelled in hieroglyphics. 'Oh, that's Bones,' Harriman said. 'I must tell you about that sometime. Uh, I mean I can't tell you about that.'"(5)**

#### UNIVERSITIES AS SPAWNING GROUNDS OF THREE DIFFERENT SECRET SOCIETIES

**Between 1983-1986, the British-born conspiracy scholar Antony C. Sutton wrote a series of pamphlets about the Order of Skull & Bones. Sutton said that his series was "based on several sources, including contemporary 'moles.'"(6) The short pamphlets were compiled into one volume and published as a book in 1986. Sutton noted that secret societies had been organized at three universities: "The Illuminati was founded at (the) University of Ingolstadt. The (Cecil Rhodes) Group was founded at All Souls College, Oxford University in England, and the Order was founded at Yale University in the United States."**

**(7) He noted: "The paradox is that institutions supposedly devoted to the search for truth and freedom have given birth to institutions devoted to world enslavement."**

## **BUT, WHAT'S WRONG WITH SECRET SOCIETIES?**

Sutton's "magnum opus" laid out his views regarding secret societies: "Secret political organizations can be-and have been-extremely dangerous to the social health and constitutional validity of a society. In a truly free society the exercise of political power must always be open and known."**(8)** He then stated: "Moreover, organizations devoted to violent overthrow of political structures have always, by necessity, been *secret* organizations. Communist revolutionary cells are an obvious example. In fact, such revolutionary organizations can only function if their existence was secret."**(9)** Further, said Sutton: "In brief, secrecy in matters political is historically associated with coercion. Furthermore, the existence of secrecy in organizations with *political* ambitions or with a history of political actions is always suspect. Freedom is always associated with *open* political action and discussion while coercion is always associated with secrecy."**(10)**

A pamphlet on Bones described the walls of the tomb as "adorned with pictures of the founders of Bones at Yale and of the members of the Society in Germany when the Chapter was established here in 1832."**(11)** Sutton asked: "Think about this: Skull and Bones is not American at all. It is a branch of a FOREIGN secret society."**(12)** Sutton concluded that Skull and Bones "is a clear and obvious threat to constitutional freedom in the United States. Its secrecy, power and use of influence is greater by far than the masons, or any other semi-secret mutual or fraternal organization."**(13)**

## **SUTTON COMPARED BONES TO THE BAVARIAN ILLUMINATI**

While critics concede that the Illuminati "was an actual group that existed from 1776 until 1785. . ." it is also explained that: "Given the fact that Weishaupt's ideas ran counter to the authoritarian, church-intertwined-with-state power structure, he was forced to keep his Illuminati secret and work through Masonic lodges. He was not successful."**(14)**

Sutton made numerous tentative comparisons between the Illuminati and Bones. Each member, according to an 1876 anonymous satire, has an "inside name" and "these names bear

a remarkable resemblance to those used by the Illuminati, e.g., Chilo, Eumenes, Glaucus, Pristicus and Arbaces."(15) He added: "During its time, the Illuminati had widespread and influential membership. After suppression by the Bavarian Government in 1788 it was quiet for some years and then reportedly revived." (16) Sutton promised that "in a subsequent book, *we will trace the order to the Illuminati. . .*"(17) Also, Sutton stated: "The significance of this study is that the methods and objectives (of the Illuminati) parallel those of the Order. In fact, infiltration of the Illuminati into New England is known *and will be the topic of a forthcoming volume.*"(18) He later wrote: "At this point we want to draw a comparison between the Order known as Skull and Bones and The Order known as Illuminati in 18th century Bavaria. *This is not the time and place to draw final conclusions .*"(19) Sutton noted that "It (Bones) was introduced into the United States by William Russell, later General William Russell, who brought a charter back from his student days in Germany." (20) [So far a check of Russell's biographies has revealed no hint of a German education]. When the Skull and Bones "Temple" was raided in 1876 a card was found that read: "From the German Chapter. Presented by Patriarch D.C. Gilman of D. 50."(21) The Yale Bones catalogs indicate that Skull and Bones began in the U.S. in the 3rd decade of the second period of the organization. The first decade of the second period would be 1800 with the first period being 1790-1800: "That places us in the time frame of the elimination of Illuminati by the Bavarian Elector."(22)

Two years later Sutton, in 1988, wrote *The Two Faces of George Bush*. In this work he identified George W. Bush as a Bonesman like his soon-to-be President father. Sutton has not written further on the Order. At least one close associate claimed that Sutton became and remains "a fugitive in his own adopted country."

#### EDITOR OF TEXAS OBSERVER, DAVID ARMSTRONG, LASTS EIGHT MONTHS

On March 22, 1991, a crusading journalist named David Armstrong became the editor of the *Texas Observer*. His career at the most liberal and outspoken Texas magazine lasted just over eight months. On April 5, 1991, he wrote an article entitled "The Great S&L Robbery: Spookbuster Pete Brewton Tells All." On July 26, 1991 another article by Armstrong was entitled: "Oil in the Family." On September 20, 1991, Armstrong wrote another piece entitled: "Global Entanglements." The cover featured a

**cartoon of George "W" Bush with "Harken" on his head and CIA agents (spies) all around him.**

**On November 29, 1991 David Armstrong's name appeared on the masthead of the *Texas Observer* for the last time. Armstrong deplored and described what he termed a trend of preemptive journalism: "Mainstream media have never demonstrated a keen interest in challenging the status quo. Contrary to the popular image of an independent and adversarial press, U.S. corporate media are, in fact, little more than lackeys for elite interests."**

**Armstrong also blasted criticism of Stone's JFK movie prior to the scenes even being shot. He criticized *Times* Harken coverage as "half-measures." His last *Texas Observer* words were: "*Time's* handling of the Harken story is just one more example of the disturbing trend toward preemptive journalism. The consequences of this practice are serious indeed, for it has the potential to not only diffuse and obscure information, but to prevent it from ever being debated in the public arena at all. Unlike the alternative press, mainstream sources are widely available and well indexed. For that reason, they are widely cited and help shape official history. Twenty years from now when George W. Bush is running for president, researchers and journalists interested in his business activities in Texas will likely turn to *Time* magazine and other mainstream sources of their information. But if they're interested in reading the whole story, they'll have to look elsewhere."(23)**

Thus ended David Armstrong's editorship at the *Texas Observer*. It is believed that there was a last conversation between Armstrong and his publisher but no explanation was ever written that explained his departure to the *Observer's* readership. Armstrong's prophecy of a run for the presidency by George "W" Bush has now come true. But his pen is no longer telling more of the real Bush story.

### **Further Information on Skull & Bones**

**[Background to the Skull and Bones](#)**

**[Everything You Wanted to Know About Skull and Bones](#)**

**[Rites of initiation](#)**

**[Skull and Bones Article from Esquire Magazine, September, 1977](#)**

**[New York Observer investigation](#)**

## **Bibliography**

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- 14. John George and Laird Wilcox, *American Extremists* 81 (1996).**
- 15. Antony C. Sutton, *America's Secret Establishment* 189 (1986).**
- 16. Antony C. Sutton, *America's Secret Establishment* 80 (1986).**
- 17. Antony C. Sutton, *America's Secret Establishment* 77 (1986) (emphasis added).**
- 18. Antony C. Sutton, *America's Secret Establishment* 80 (1986) (emphasis added).**
- 19. Antony C. Sutton, *America's Secret Establishment* 212 (1986) (emphasis added).**
- 20. Antony C. Sutton, *America's Secret Establishment* 212 (1986).**
- 21. Antony C. Sutton, *America's Secret Establishment* 212 (1986).**
- 22. Antony C. Sutton, *America's Secret Establishment* 214 (1986).**
- 23. David Armstrong, "Preemptive Journalism," 12 *Texas Observer* (November 29, 1991). [intro1.htm](#)**