

Falsehood or Truth in Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*.

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Dan Brown (1964---) is one of the modern American promising novelists. He has graduated from Harvard University, which is concerned with preparing presidents, leaders and thinkers for America. He starts his literary prominence diving after so sensitive issues. During his study of the history of art in Spain, he is influenced by his teacher's talk about the Leonardo Da Vinci's secret scenes, which he left within his drawing *The Last Supper*. The teacher's disclosure that there are many things in this drawing, even the simple viewer can find suitable interpretation for, arouses Brown's curiosity. The idea of writing this novel develops in his mind, so after ten years he decides to write *The Da Vinci Code*. The appearance of this novel in 2003 causes him some troubles. He is charged with forgery, lying and that his novel is so weak and never based upon real foundations. However, those who advocate this novel regard it as one of the great

historical, exciting, and stimulating books even if its content does not appeal to the majority of Christian extremists. Dan Brown's bestselling novel, *The Da Vinci Code*, has captivated the imagination of millions of readers. Its provocative story and rich historical background has instigated wide interest in the author's source materials and has caused controversies, both public and private, all over America. Readers everywhere want to know what is fact and what is fiction.

If one has read this novel, he may have some questions about whether it is factual and well researched, as the author claims, or it just tells the real story about the history of Christianity, Jesus, the Catholic Church, and Mary Magdalene¹. In fact, this novel is rich with information about all aspects of life. It is a didactic novel, since it contains different types of knowledge such as; history, geography, art, religion and even mathematics. All these information affirm that the author is one of the most knowledgeable and intelligent writers. More than just a fiction or an entertaining book, this novel is written to challenge what people believe about God, Jesus, the Bible, history, and the nature of the truth itself. In an interview on "The Today Show", Brown is asked that in his novel he required "the reader to challenge certain long-held beliefs or truths about religion." Brown

replies" Yes." He then goes on to say that while some readers have found the book to be a little bit shocking, the majority of readers love it.² Brown hopes that this novel, in addition to entertaining people, will serve as an open door to begin their own explorations. One should activate the mind throughout reading because as Brown thinks, indifference is the great enemy for religion.

The story of this novel tells that while in Paris, Robert Langdon is informed that Sauniere (the elderly curator) of the Louvre has been murdered inside the museum. Near the body, police have found a baffling cipher. Solving the enigmatic riddle, Langdon is shocked to discover that his name is written on the floor near the body. In fact, the unfortunate murdered man was Sophie's grandfather. Langdon joins forces with a gifted French cryptologist, Sophie Neveu, who arrives at the crime scene with a message for Langdon to contact the U.S. Embassy immediately. Langdon retrieves the message from Fache's cell phone under Sophie's directions. The message is from Sophie herself warning him that he is in grave danger. Langdon learns that the late curator was involved in an actual secret society called the Priory of Sion. It is a European society founded in 1099--- as a real organization. In 1975, Paris Bibhiotheque Nationale

discovered parchments known as Les Dossiers secrets, identifying numerous members of the Priory of Sion, including Sir Isaac Newton, Botticelli, Victor Hugo, and Leonardo Da Vinci³. In a breathless race through Paris, London and beyond, Langdon and Sophie match wits with faceless power broker who appears to work with Opus Dei. Unless Langdon and Sophie can decipher the labyrinthine puzzle in time, the Priory's secret and stunning historical truth will be lost forever. Police detective, Fache, will begin to chase Langdon who escapes after receiving a warning about the captain's intentions. Sophie has with her a kind of key with dots engraved on it, which opens to her and Langdon a big complex investigation that involves a supposedly heretic theory: Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene were, in fact, a couple who produced a daughter named Sara. The Priory of Sion has kept for centuries the secret of that matter. Albino monk Silas, an Opus Die's member, will chase Langdon and Sophie as well in order to impede that they solve the mystery of Christ and Mary Magdalene, and discover the real meaning and location of the Holy Grail.

Traveling to mythical place in the UK such as The Church Temple, where it is believed that a group of Templar Knights is buried, and Sir Isaac Newton's tomb at

Westminster Abbey, where some of the main keys are located to solve the Holy Grail's mystery. Whenever their path takes them, their discovery that is about to be revealed could shake the foundations of humanity, if they are able to uncover the greatest mystery of all time. The central claim Brown's novel makes about Christianity is that "almost everything our fathers taught us about Christ is false."⁴ Opus Dei is certainly wealthy, powerful, and secretive. It may well be pledged to a religious philosophy and even a set of political goals that many find anathema. "It may have a very interesting history of unexplained involvements with the CIA, the Vatican's finances, and right-wing death squads in Latin American's civil wars. However, it is not dispatching albino monks to the streets of Paris to murder people over ancient religious secrets."⁵ Undoubtedly, Opus Dei is a deeply Catholic sect that has been the topic of recent controversy due to reports of brain-washing, coercion and a dangerous practice known as corporal mortification.

We must watch the work of young writers to get hints about future directions in American literature. The American writer today is listened to with more respect, in his own country and throughout the world, than ever before. With this new importance comes greater responsibility. Dan Brown is

concerned with universal themes that have connections with all types of religion and he never writes for the American nation only. As a young writer, Brown should remember Hemingway's advice. Once Hemingway has mentioned "to be counted among the great, a writer must not be just southern author, a New England author, a western author or even an American author. He must be a writer in the biggest league of all, one who says something meaningful to men of all nations. America has produced, and is producing, writers who are at home in that league."⁶ Writers help to shape thoughts and feelings of their countrymen and the events of their time. In addition, we have seen, writers themselves are shaped by the thoughts, feelings, and actions of their time.

The idea of falsehood is the dominant idea that Brown tries to manipulate in this novel. Throughout the deception among the characters and within the essence of Christianity, the author succeeds in revealing the deep secrets. The mind trained to look through catchwords and slogans, is not deceived by half-truths or falsehoods. Instinctively, the mind seeks the truth and when it gains it, it is strengthened against most of the shocks that so often break down our inner fortresses of character and faith. It is a well-known fact that life is based on truth; knowing the truth and accepting its

responsibilities disciplines the mind, and a disciplined mind takes charge of the whole life. With this in mind, Brown attempts to activate the indifferent mind of humanity. The mind that has found the truth; truth about God, the nature of life, the supreme values worth living and dying for, becomes the commanding officer in the whole regiment of life's inner reserves. The truth shall make us free, and nothing else can or will. Nothing else can make us sufficiently strong or bold.⁷

This novel emerges in the adequate place and time and the element of luck plays a great role in its brilliant success. More important elements that help to make *The Da Vinci Code* a successful novel are; the world witnesses the beginning of twenty- first century, the new appearance of religious fanaticism for the three well-known religions, the clash of civilizations, and what the people used to watch on TV daily. The foggy insight the public has of what revolves within the extremists' minds creates some kind of hunger to know more and to solve the riddles of those fanatic groups. Nowadays in Europe, many arguments about the laws of Catholic Church and Vatican are counted strict and devoid of new realism. Concerning America, it lives a tremendous shock after the event of 11th September; this great country is turned to be an easy target for terrorism. The Americans find

difficulties to live in insecure world. What complicates the situations is George Bush's behavior and exaggeration of the danger of Bin Laden. Under this pretext, they attack Afghanistan and then Iraq to leave Bin Laden away from justice. A scale of values determines our loyalties. Under certain circumstances, some things must be given first place in our lives, even if there are others that we hold very dear. People are in war because they think that there are certain questions of human rights and freedom, which must be settled, even at tremendous cost.

The falsehood is somewhat obvious in the novel especially among the characters. According to Sophie, Langdon has been called to the Louvre not as a symbologist but rather as a suspect. He was currently the unwitting target of one of Opus Dei's favorite interrogation methods...

"a deft deception in which the police calmly invited a suspect to a crime scene and interviewed him in hopes he would get nervous and mistakenly incriminate himself."⁸ Sophie has stated "look in your Jacket's left pocket, you'll find proof, they are watching you." She knows the tricks of such detectives; they use spying instruments to monitor people's locations. She addresses Langdon saying, "they hoped you would run; it would make their case stronger."(p.70) Langdon

is informed that the curator has left proof that refers to the name of the symbologist. "Do you recall the three lines of text that Saunier wrote on the floor? There was a fourth line that Fache photographed and then wiped clean before you arrived." Fache has erased evidence:

13-3-2-21-1-1-8-5

O, Draconian devil!

Oh, lame saint!

P. S. Find Robert Langdon. (p.71)

This postscript has left Langdon in a real dilemma and at once, he realizes why Fache insists on seeing him in the museum. The *Da Vinci Code* is essentially a story of right versus wrong, good versus evil. Good characters include, of course, Robert Langdon and Sophie Neveu, who are pure in thought and intent only on discovering the truth. Even the officer Fache who works in French judicial police, who in the end is seen to be on the side of good.⁹

In France, the law protects the police, not the criminal. Unfortunately, in this case, there is also a media consideration. Jacques Saunier was a very prominent and well-loved figure in Paris, and his murder will be news in morning. Fache will be immediately pressured to make a statement, and he looks a lot better having a suspect in

custody already. Whether or not you are guilty, "Central Directorate Judicial Police" most certainly will hold you until they can figure what really happened. (p.73) Langdon feels himself losing touch fast. Whether or not Sophie has lost her mind is at this point up for grabs, but at least Langdon now understands why she is trying to help him. P.S. Find Robert Langdon. She apparently believes the curator has left her a cryptic postscript telling her to find Langdon. Sophie concludes that Fache, who seems unnaturally determined to implicate Langdon, has erased the last line from Saunier's message. It is one of the debunked tricks created by the characters of this novel. When Langdon asks Sophie if the initials mean anything to her, she remembers a golden key with the same initials she has found once hidden in her grandfather's room. When she confronts him, Saunier has told her the initials refer to her secret name, Princess Sophie. She recalls, "P. S. is the nickname he called me with when I lived with him. It stood for Princess Sophie. Jacques Saunier is my grandfather."(p.74)

The author of this novel has introduced the main characters first and then he turns to the minor but most important ones. Without them, the novel cannot see the light of fame. The introduction of the following characters is so

necessary to the reader to know the secrets of this work. Silas, the murderer, and Bishop Manuel Aringarosa, president-general of Opus Dei, both of whom are acting under orders known only as the teacher. Throughout the novel, the reader finds out that Silas is albino and he is the dutiful Opus Dei supernumerary in *The Da Vinci Code*. Albinos are either deficient or entirely lacking in pigment in their hair, eyes, and skin. People with albinism generally suffer from severe vision deficits, many are legally blind. Silas seems to have no such impairment; indeed, Bishop Aringarosa insists that albinism makes Silas unique, even holy.¹⁰ Using an eccentric character by secret organization for the sake of the church and religion shows the importance of hidden fact that is intended to be as it was. The curiosity of people urges them to uncover reality especially towards religion to know whether they are on proper way or not. Some writers stand against the spread of such novel and regard it as a humiliation to the Christian religion. *The Da Vinci Code* can be viewed as merely an ephemeral artifact of popular culture. However, its immense sales ensure that it will have influence on people who never read serious books. Dan Brown has found a formula for becoming rich: sex, sensationalism, feminism, anti-Catholicism, and the occult. But it is also obvious that "he

sincerely hates Christianity and sees himself as engaged in anti- crusade. The culture is ripe for such a debased book, on that even professing Christians are being seduced by it."¹¹It is so obvious that the writers who are satisfied by the church's instructions have attacked Brown's novel because it creates a sort of suspicion in Christian belief.

Undoubtedly, Sophie and her grandfather are the target of the Opus Dei's schemes. Her grandfather often tries to warn her but she does not listen to the voice of right. Once the curator Sauniere phones her saying, "you cannot be mad forever. Have you read the letters that I have sent all these years? Do you not yet understand? We must speak at once. Please grant your grandfather this one wish. Call me at the Louvre. I believe you and I are in grave danger. Please, I must tell you the truth about your family." (p.79) Sophie's parents had died when she was only four. Her grandfather's insistence confirms that there is danger threatening their lives. Sophie is certain its cryptic nature is additional proof that the words are intended for her. Sophie's passion and aptitude for cryptography are a product of growing up with Jacques Sauniere. He is fond of codes, word games, and puzzles. Because of his influence, Sophie becomes a code breaker for judicial police. The love of this game will lead her to be in

plights and troubles. For the first look, she has realized that what is on the floor near the body is a call for her. Nevertheless, she does not know that her grandfather is the grand master of The Priory of Sion. There is no question that Brown has brought much of criticism on himself by confirming that the novel is more than a work of action. On the first page he has a statement titled "fact" that claims the Priory of Sion is a real organization, gives information about the religious organization Opus Dei. He has asserted, "All the descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents, and secret rituals in this novel are accurate."¹² Throughout this declaration, he has drawn the people's attention and at the same time causes the church's resentment.

The cryptographer in Sophie is forced to respect the efficiency with which her grandfather has used a simple code to unite the two total strangers (Sophie and Langdon). Sophie believes that the meeting between her grandfather and Langdon is arranged for some certain secrets. Langdon has stated that his secretary sets the meeting without offering any specific reason. He says, "I assumed he'd heard I would be lecturing on the pagan iconography of French Cathedrals, was interested in the topic, and thought it would be fun for drinks after the talk." (p.80). She admits that there must be an

important reason. Her suspicion reflects the human being's instinct that they never meet in such time unless for something dangerous. Not only curious the characters are also truth-seekers. Brown's novel is not based on distrust of traditional avenues of history, religion, and truth, "it harbors the notion that truth ultimately cannot be known."¹³ The novel is well received by popular reader as a thriller. But reviewers debate its merits because of Brown's clumsy prose and the apparent anti- catholic stance he takes in the novel. This novel has received a negative attention from the Catholic Church. Many articles have been published attacking Brown's bold publishing and his implication that the history presented in his novel is more widely accepted by scholars than it is. Some critics who read *The Da Vinci Code* have affirmed, "Although Brown is not a great writer, he has proven to be a clever, adept promoter of his beliefs--- or at least of beliefs that he correctly thought would sell well."¹⁴ Generally speaking, to obtain all the people's content is unattainable desire.

The Opus Dei is a Catholic organization that works under the authority of Rome church. It is labeled the holy mafia or the new crusade society. Throughout this novel, Dan Brown tries to debunk or defame the crimes of such terrorist

organizations. Gradually, Sophie has realized that her grandfather is a victim for the Opus Dei's conspiracy, warns Langdon and encourages him to escape. She has said, "If you let Fahce take you into custody now, you'll spend weeks in a French jail while DCPJ and the U. S Embassy fight over which court try your case. But if we get out of here, and make it to your embassy, then your government will protect your rights while you and I prove you had nothing to do with this murder."(p.82) Sophie needs Langdon for herself and there is a kind of mutual benefit between the new expected friends. Cleverly, Dan Brown uses the characters as devices to reach his goal as a modern writer who has his personal perspective towards the Christianity tricks. Many writers criticize him for his hostile attitude towards church and Christianity. This negative situation is counted as a defect in *The Da Vinci Code*. This novel claims to be historically accurate and based on fact, but logically it depends on the writer's subjective views. A serious reading of it reveals the characters are simply devices meant to help promote Brown's central concerns, which are ideological.¹⁵ Once he is asked about this novel, whether it is against the Christianity, he explained that it is written to uncover some documents that have connection with the Christian history. It is a work that activating minds to

meditate and urging the conversation about the spiritual subjects.

It is advisable to talk about Leonardo Da Vinci whose shadow is the tent of this novel from the beginning until the end, as if he were the monitor who watches the events with gazing eyes. His well-known painting, *Mona Lisa*, is the cover of this novel; she watches every thing through her secret smile. Sophie's grandfather has told her about this strange smile "that's why she was so famous. People like to guess she is smiling. Life is filled with secrets. You cannot learn them all at once." (p.107) Da Vinci is a member of The Priory of Sion, but he gives a lot of attention to knowledge and wisdom. Leonardo knew of genealogical secret and put a clue of it in this painting. It is from this detail that the novel gets its title.¹⁶ Langdon has stressed that Sauniere is a member of this organization too. He has once mentioned, "I'm fairly certain your grandfather was a member of a secret society. A very old covert brotherhood. I've written about this group. Researching the symbols of secret societies is a specialty of mine. They call themselves the Priory of Sion. They're based here in England and attract powerful members from all over Europe. In fact, they are one of the oldest surviving secret societies on earth." (p.119) many

references have mentioned this society. Figures from Isaac Newton to Leonardo Da Vinci may have belonged to a secret society. Da Vinci has a great curiosity to know every thing and show his creativity in his paintings. His works always precede his time and they are pioneer in every thing. Above all, many secrets still revolve around his private life and around the symbols that he has put in his paintings. In spite of all his achievements, he was criticized by the novel's main male character, professor Langdon. He said, "Leonardo is a flamboyant homosexual. He is an awkward subject for historians, especially Christian historian. He was also a worshipper of nature's divine order. He had a reputation for spiritual hypocrisy. He accepted hundreds of lucrative Vatican commissions. He painted in order to find a lavish lifestyle."¹⁷

Concerning the masterpiece of Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, it is so famous because Leonardo Da Vinci claims she is his finest accomplishment. He carries the painting with him whenever he travels. And if he asked why, would reply that he found it hard to part with his most sublime expression of female beauty. (p.125). The public at large still consider her smile a great mystery. Langdon is the mouthpiece of the author has chuckled. Actually, "this is a little trick Da Vinci

played. By lowering the countryside on the left, Da Vinci made *Mona Lisa* look much larger from the left side than from the right side. Historically, the concepts of male and female have assigned sides—left is female, and right is male. Because Da Vinci was a big fan of feminine principles, he made *Mona Lisa* look more majestic from the left than the right." (p.126) Philip G. Davis has mentioned, "An important lesson of this book is the ease with which patent falsehoods may clothe themselves in the garb of scholarship and masquerade as truth."¹⁸

The coincidence is so important in this novel. It is a device created by a clever young novelist to unmask the falsehood of Christianity. The victim and the accused will expose the reality by the interference of Sophie. Through the conversations of the main character, the reader understands the task of the Priory of Sion. The Priory exists for the sole purpose of protecting a secret, a secret of incredible power. The revelation of Langdon to Sophie shows that the Christianity exemplified by the church hides so dangerous secrets. After his insistence, Langdon has exposed:

The priory of Sion was founded in Jerusalem in 1099 by a French king named Godefroi de Bouillon, immediately after he had conquered the city. King

Godefroi was allegedly the possessor of a powerful secret—a secret that had been in his family since the time of Christ. Fearing his secret might be lost when he died, he founded a secret brotherhood—the Priory of Sion—and charged them with protecting his secret by quietly passing it on from generation to generation. During their years in Jerusalem, the Priory learned of a stash of hidden documents buried beneath the ruins of Herold's temple, which had been built a top the earlier ruins of Solomon's Temple. These documents, they believed, corroborated Godefroi's powerful secret and were so explosive in nature that the church would stop at nothing to get them.(p.167)

The Da Vinci code is a very serious book, since it is nothing less than attack on the very foundations of historical Christianity, an attack that would be little noticed if it were presented in the form of a historical or theological treatise. This novel propagates a relativistic, indifferent attitude toward truth and religion. Millions of people read it not because they necessarily believe its absurd story but because it creates a myth that serves certain emotional needs and allow them to be religious without submitting to any of the demands of faith.¹⁹

Dan Brown's novel deals with deep secret that stays hidden for long ages. The plain speaking is so dangerous but this novelist does not care for the consequences. He has used one of his assumed religious characters to mislead others to keep the secrets of the Christianity veiled. The teacher Arigarosa tries to persuade Silas to keep on killing for the sake of God. It shows one of the styles of debunking, he says, "indeed, Noah of the Ark, an albino like you, he had skin white like an angel. Consider this. Noah saved all of life on the planet. You are destined for great things, Silas. The Lord has freed you for a reason. You have your calling. The lord needs your help to do His work." (p.175) Sometimes the word "Lord" Stands for the God and for the Christ. For the Christian people, Jesus Christ is the all in all, who permeates the world and yet comes to the world. As the light that can bring the human spirit out of the darkness to return to its heavenly home by acquiring the self-knowledge necessary for salvation.²⁰ Some critics and writers, regard Brown's novel as a conspiracy tract set in fictional frame. The conspiracy theory is built on an orthodox account of Christian history advanced in the early 1980s by the book *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*. In that pseudo-scholarly publishing sensation, Michael Baigent and colleagues argued on the basis of documents

found later as a hoax. These documents show that the descendants of Jesus and Mary Magdalene were part of the Merovingian royal line of the early middle ages. The Roman Church sought to erase evidence of this hidden history and eliminate the descendants themselves for the sake of preserving church authority and exalting orthodoxy. Bart D. Ehrman has stated in his book that "the past is a story that we ourselves can live in, one that can inform our lives in the present. It is a true story, one that contributes to our sense of ourselves and our places in the world. In addition, for that reason, if for no other, it seems important for us to know the truth for what happened in the past. As it turns out, this is a view of history that is shared by the characters of *The Da Vinci Code*. All the more reason to know whether their version of the past is historically accurate or not, whether their historical claims are true or flights of literary fancy." ²¹

It seems that much of what Brown sets forth about the early Christian documents, largely on the lips of his character, is built into the fabric of his fictional narrative and cannot be trusted as part of the historical records. To affirm that the authenticity of his story, Brown depends on an important character Leigh Teabing, who was a former British royal Historian. He lives in Paris whom Sophie thinks will help

them to solve the riddle of the keystone. He moves to France to search church in hopes to find the Grail. Langdon has stressed to Sophie "Leigh Teabing knows more about the Priory of Sion and the Holy Grail than anyone on earth."(p.225). The Grail is housed in a temple on top of mountain, surrounded by water and protected by obstacles which only the chosen few can overcome. Its guardian is both a priest and a king at once alive and dead; the rewards of the hero successful in the quest are good fortune, blessings and sometimes the hand of the king's daughter.²² This popular work suggests that these ideas are new, surfacing historical data. For example, Teabing one of the novel's major characters, appeals to real, newly discovered documents disclosing new truths about Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and the earliest history of the church. In Leonardo Da Vinci's paintings, the two discover clues to the meaning of the Grail. In the end, inevitably, they fall in love. Only does the reader discover that the grail is not a chalice, as medieval legend has it, but a tomb holding the bones of Mary Magdalene. To make matter so interesting, the grail also represents the womb of Mary Magdalene, who according to the novel bore Jesus Christ's child and whose descendants live on in France and Sophie being one of them. For this reason, the mutual

attraction between Langdon and Sophie not only love relationship but also holds theological importance. What ails us all is that we cannot accept ourselves exactly as we are. We just cannot seem to accept ourselves as being perfectly natural, just as the whole of existence is natural. If only we can act spontaneously, without being programmed into someone else's belief system, we can ask the real questions of ourselves. Then, miraculously, for one moment, the vessel of the Grail is empty--- and in the next, it is filled with the wonder and glory of all and everything.²³ If one traces Brown's novel he may find that he wants to busy people with things that cause suspicion and confusion.

Leigh Teabing is one of Brown's reliable source, has attacked Christianity, he said that, " The Bible is a product of man, my dear. Not of God. The Bible did not fall magically from the clouds. Man created it as a historical record of tumultuous times, and it has evolved through countless translations, additions, and revisions. History has never had a definitive version of the book." (p.237). Not only the Bible is the attacked target; even Jesus Christ is hurled by brown. In *The Da Vinci Code*, the Opus Dei attempts to cover up the "fact" that Jesus had a family and children in order to protect His claims to deity. In the novel, the Opus Dei is a secret

church society whose goal is to protect the church by any means. The novel argues the case for Jesus' marriage on two primary bases: that it was unJewish to be unmarried. And that according to Gnostic texts, Jesus kissed Mary on the mouth, and the apostles were jealous of his Special relationship."²⁴ But it is a well-known fact for everyone that Jesus was so dedicated to his ministry and He remained single. Christians and scholars that Jesus was single, and there are good reasons for this belief have long believed it. When he was in ministry, there was no mention of a wife. When he was tried and crucified, there was no mention of a wife. After His death and resurrection, there was no mention of a wife. Jesus' family members--- His mother, brothers, and sisters—were mentioned more than once, but never a wife. Nor was there any indication that He was widowed.²⁵ According to the characters' speech in this novel that the Priory of Sion has not protected the truth all these years to have it gather dust until eternity. They have been waiting for the right moment in history to share their secrets. The suitable time when the world is ready to handle the truth.

We can see that we need myths that act as guideposts for us to resolve psychological tensions for our modern world. These myths occupy a considerable space in our thinking and

allow us to be positive individuals in our everyday life. We also need myths to overcome cultural distortions that have caused pain to many people. *The Da Vinci Code* is having an impact because it begins that matter or issue. Brown's novel and other modern myths tell us that we need a new mythological guide that is relevant to our needs. We can continue to seek it in fiction or go beyond fiction to create a functional myth for our time. If we desire to be men and women after the pattern of Jesus, our greatest help forward to that stature is not the valley of ease, but the hill of difficulty. In short, Dan Brown has solidified his reputation as one of the most skilled thriller writers on the planet with his best book. If what Brown has exposed were true, this ancient mystery would be unveiled to the wider universe. As a literary work, readers should enjoy this novel for what it is, a work of fiction uses plausible sounding but imaginative history to deepen the reader's interest. Real knowledge about the past will not come from murder mysteries. If this novel is looked at from a political perspective, it is intended to divert the people's thinking and attention away from what was going on at that time. The bad circumstances of the modern world pave the way in front of the writers to impose their thoughts on people.

Notes

¹Carl E.Olson and Sandra Miesel, *The Da Vinci Hoax: Exposing the Errors in The Da Vinci Code* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), p.17.

²Ibid. p.18.

³ Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*, (New York: Anchor Books, Random House, Inc., 2003) p.177.

⁴ Dan Brustein ed., *Secrets of the Code*, (New York: CDS Books, 2004), p.160.

⁵ Ibid., p. 163.

⁶ Alf J. Mapp, *America Creates Its Own Literature*, (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1967), p.59.

⁷Norman E. Nygaard, *Strength for Service to God and Country*, (New York: Providence House Publishers, 2002), p.31.

⁸Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci, Special Illustrated Edition*, (New York: Broadway Books, 2004), p. 70. All the subsequent quotations are from the same edition.

⁹Bart D. Ehrman, *Truth and Fiction in the Da Vinci Code*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), p.3.

¹⁰Dan Brustein, *Secrets of the Code*, p. 329.

¹¹Carl E. Olson, and Sandra Miesel, *The Da Vinci Hoax: Exposing the Errors in The Da Vinci Code*, p.23.

¹²Sangeet Dvchane, *Beyond The Da Vinci Code*, (New York: Sterling Publishing, 2005), p.7.

¹³Carl E. Olson, and Sandra Miesel, p.41.

¹⁴Ibid., p.39.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁶Darrell L. Bock, *Breaking The Da Vinci Code*, (New York: Nelson Books,2004), p.14.

¹⁷Carl E. Olson, and Sandra Miesel, p. 244.

¹⁸Philip G. Davis, *Goddess Unmasked: The Rise of Neopagan Feminist Spirituality*, (Dallas: Spence, 1998), p. 1x.

¹⁹Carl E. Olson, and Sandra Miesel, p.37.

²⁰Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, 3rd ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 69-70.

²¹Bart D. Ehrman, *Truth And Fiction in The Da Vinci Code*, p. 190.

²²John Matthews, *The Grail, Quest for the Eternal*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), p.5.

²³Malcolm Godwin, *The Holy Grail, its Origins, Secrets, and Meaning Revealed*,(New York: Barnes and Noble Books,1998),p.247.

²⁴Darrell L. Bock, *Breaking The Da Vince Code*. P.32.

²⁵Ibid., p.45.

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