

Chemtrails: Strong Competitor for Dumbest Conspiracy Theory Ever

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are so ridiculous, it's hard to choose which are the least plausible or which faces the higher mountain of opposing evidence.

Some seem within the realm of the possible, such as the ones that surround the assassination of [JFK](#), the [Pearl Harbor](#) attack or the murder of [Princess Di](#).

Others, like the absurd theories about the [9/11 attacks](#), rampant [alien abductions](#), faked [moon landings](#), [Jewish world domination](#) and [Biblical creationism](#) can be dismissed by reasonable people within minutes of hearing their proponents' arguments.

The so-called "[chemtrails](#)" theory, espoused by [Valley guitarist Carole Pellatt](#), lands solidly in the latter category. Simply put, the idea that secret agents are using jumbo jets to spray the whole world with toxins for some nefarious purpose is opposed by common sense, contrary evidence, lack of supporting evidence and sheer implausibility.

The theory has at least a few dozen supporters who know how to use a computer. Our recent blog post about Pellatt and chemtrails has received 127 comments as of this morning.

Most of the commenters are strong believers in the chemtrails conspiracy and took us to task for the minimal research we did before declaring the theory "debunked."

We feel our level of research was far more than sufficient, given the subject matter. But we decided to spend another hour or so reviewing the post's comments, reading some of the Internet reports -- both pro and con -- on chemtrails and e-mailing one of the ardent supporters of the theory for comment.

We had an interesting conversation with Dave Mason of southern California, the person we e-mailed who uses the handle "freedomfighter4theplanet" for his blog comments. And we came to understand something about these chemtrail believers.

Their real enemy isn't the toxins they believe are being sprayed by waves of sinister jumbo jets.

What they are really scared of is skepticism.

Mason, when confronted with a healthy dose of questions, seems to writhe on the phone like a vampire being dragged into sunlight. Our first question for Mason was why the government would be spraying people with poison. In a move typical of believers in disproven, illogical ideas, Mason tries desperately to change the subject.

What he wants to talk about are his unending questions: Why won't the government take his claims seriously? Why would a Raytheon-owned airplane working for the military fly [in circles](#) for hours without landing? Why can't he inspect that airplane when it lands? Why would he be arrested if he threw chemicals out of his car window, yet no one seems to care that government jets are showering particles of heavy metals on people?

When *New Times* attempted to show Mason some of his questions might have perfectly mundane answers -- don't some planes fly in circles to monitor weather? -- Mason got upset.

"It's military -- classified! Got it?" he pouts.

When asked why he thinks the Raytheon airplane is suspicious, beyond the fact that it's flying in circles, he hesitates to give an answer, perhaps wary of how corny it may sound. *New Times* presses, and Mason says the plane -- which, admittedly, does bear the spooky name of "VOODOO1" -- is suspicious "because we're not allowed to look at this plane to see what it is doing."

Finally, he admits he wants to see the plane because he thinks something "sinister" could be going on.

"I think they are putting barium, aluminum and titanium into the atmosphere," he says. "I think (VOODOO1) is one of the planes."

His theory for why "they" are putting the metals in the sky: To turn clouds into communications devices. Worldwide.

"I think it's the United Nations, not just the United States," Mason says.

New Times points out there's a big problem with this theory: Valley air quality monitors don't show high concentrations of barium, aluminum and titanium particles in our air.

Mason immediately changes the subject. Now he wants to talk about a government program to monitor clouds for the aerosols he believes are being sprayed. He points *New Times* to a government [Web site](#) for something with the ominous-sounding name of "Indirect and Semi-Direct Aerosol Campaign."

He urges us to look at the canister on the wing of an airplane in a picture (at left) on the Web site.

But there's nothing remotely scary about the canister, *New Times* tells him. The site says this equipment collects particles in the air to determine their effect on climate change. That's a *good* thing, isn't it?

At that point, Mason grew hysterical and hung up on *New Times*. He proceeded to write a new comment on the blog post about Pellatt (his fifth? sixth?) claiming we're a "lost cause."

Pellatt wrote four comments on the post. In one, she claims we must be either "insane" or "in the paid service of the industrial complex."

In responding to one skeptical reader's comment that one only need read a physics book to prove "chemtrails" is wrong, Pellatt's comments show just how far deep she's

in:

William, please give me the name of the book that proves there is no aerosol spray program...

Of course, like me, I know you checked into who the author, authors, or organization was that authored and published the book, and then checked them out to make sure they have no ties to the Government, National Science Institute, EPA, NASA, National Weather Service etc. Because we know that NASA-just go to their web pages-is the lead organization in the National Weather Service's "Weather Modification Program". That's public knowledge. It's only a conspiracy theory in the mind of ignoramuses.

Nowhere in any of the 127 comments do the supporters of the chemtrails conspiracy theory offer any evidence of their theory, nor do they even fully outline what that theory is. Failing to explain details is a trick common to many proponents of wacky theories, and it's used to avoid scrutiny. Creationists do this all the time, because saying you believe in the vague notion of "intelligent design" sounds a lot less nuts than saying you believe baby dinosaurs rode with Noah on the Ark.

Some commenters presented what they see as evidence for the theory. For instance, "Doug" lists "facts" that include an alleged Wall Street Journal article about Russian "weather modification" experiments and the astonishing news that "almost all wildfires have been well documented as burning hotter and with more intensity than at any other time in recorded history."

No evidence is offered for the wildfire claim, which makes sense because the statement collapses under the weight of its own silliness.

What's really lame here is that there is [real science](#) behind contrails, which are formed when jet exhaust condenses in cold air, but these seemingly smart people would rather focus on unprovable nonsense. As the picture at the top of this blog post shows, jet contrails have become ubiquitous with the huge increase of air traffic in recent decades of air traffic. The contrails cause more cirrus clouds in the sky, which trap heat and lead to more warming on the ground.

There's another real problem lurking in jet exhaust: [Carbon emissions](#), which the world's top scientists say are leading to global warming.

Plus, piles of white lines cluttering up what would otherwise be a mostly blue sky could be considered a type of visual pollution -- ugly, but not as disturbing as the rumbling noise pollution the engines also put out.

But to look at the peaceful contrails floating in the sky most days and perceive them as some kind of death-rain attack by our own government -- that's just sad. -- **Ray Stern**