

# Who murdered Edgar Allan Poe?

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*The lie that Poe died as a result of alcohol and drug abuse, was refuted 25 years ago by EIR researcher Allen Salisbury. Marianna Wertz reports.*

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49) was America's greatest poet and a leading counterintelligence agent for the anti-British republican faction in pre-Civil War America. Recent press reports on medical findings about the cause of his early death have raised anew one of the greatest unsolved crimes in American history—who murdered Edgar Allan Poe?

The truth about Poe's death was immediately covered up by his enemies, with utter fabrications about his alleged drug and alcohol addictions. In the late 1970s, Allen Salisbury, an associate of Lyndon LaRouche and a writer for *EIR* and other publications associated with LaRouche, produced groundbreaking work to define Poe's real contributions to this nation, its culture, and its battle against the British oligarchical enemy. That research led Salisbury to conclude that Poe was murdered by his enemies, in order to stop his work.

Salisbury showed that Poe was trained at West Point but, because of his epilepsy, went into a career in counterintelligence for the Whig/Federalist republican faction, using his substantial talents as a writer in defense of the United States against the growing British-run Confederate cause. He was involved in a counterintelligence job, investigating matters which pertained to the national security, when he died in Baltimore, a hotbed of pro-Confederate activity, under very bizarre circumstances, at the age of 40.

Tragically, Allen Salisbury also died at a young age, in September 1992, but his work on Poe stands unchallenged to this day.

## Medical report

Medical speculation as to the cause of Poe's death appeared in the September issue of the *Maryland Medical Journal*, in a report by Dr. R. Michael Benitez, chief of the coronary care unit at the Baltimore VA Medical Center and assistant professor of medicine at the University of Maryland Medical System. The report was given big media play.

According to Dr. Benitez, Poe died on Oct. 7, 1849. Poe had stopped in Baltimore by train on Sept. 28, on his way from his home in Richmond, Virginia to Philadelphia, to conduct some last-minute business before his marriage. He was neither seen nor heard from for five days, until Oct. 3, when he was found semiconscious, sprawled across a broad plank outside Ryan's saloon on Lombard Street, wearing someone else's clothing. He was admitted to Washington College Hospital (now Church Hospital), where he died four days later.

While Dr. Benitez pays lip service in his study to the lie about Poe's "history of alcohol abuse" and "possibly of opiate abuse," he establishes that there was no evidence of drugs or alcohol in Poe's system. In fact, the record shows that Poe vehemently refused alcohol when the physicians attempted to treat him with it. The medical records also gave no evidence of symptoms of withdrawal from an addiction.

Instead, Dr. Benitez concluded, based on the hospital records, that Poe died of rabies. Smelling yet another coverup, *EIR* contacted Dr. Benitez by fax and asked whether he had looked into poison as the cause of Poe's death. He replied: "I read with great interest your recent fax regarding E.A.P. and his envelopment in the world of political intrigue, as well as the possibility of 'wrongful death.' I considered poisoning, although this is not expounded upon in the article in the *Maryland Medical Journal*, but I discarded this notion because I am not aware of any poisons which induce the type of cyclical or relapsing delirium which Poe suffered prior to his death. One can not discount the possibility that he was poisoned *twice* (that is, he survived the first poisoning but was poisoned again while he was in the hospital) . . ." (emphasis in the original).

This finding, while mixed, should be viewed as helpful evidence in support of the already-established case, presented by Allen Salisbury 25 years ago, that Poe was indeed murdered. Dr. Benitez's research has put the spotlight once again on a subject which is actually crucial to an honest history of America's fight against its British enemy.

Therefore, Lyndon LaRouche proposed that *EIR* publish some highlights of Salisbury's work, to establish the truth about Edgar Allan Poe and to give impetus to the investigation into who murdered him.

Here, then, are relevant excerpts from the work of Allen Salisbury.

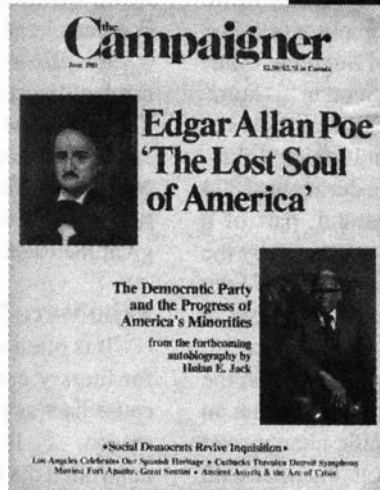
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## 'The Lost Soul of America'

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*From "Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Lost Soul of America,' " by Allen Salisbury, The Campaigner, June 1981:*

In Europe, it is often said that you can tell the spirit of a region by its wine. If that is true, then you most assuredly must be able to discern the true soul of a nation by the way in which it honors its poets. . . . But in America, here in America,



Edgar Allan Poe (left) was a top intelligence agent for the republican faction in America, a threat to British geopolitical strategy. Is it any wonder that 150 years of British-dominated historiography have branded him an alcoholic and drug addict? Allen Salisbury (right) unearthed the truth about Poe and published it in 1981. Today, medical research provides secondary corroborating evidence.

which has for the last 200 years been the recipient of the benefits of the best minds the rest of the world has to offer, the nation has allowed its only poet to be treated in such a despicable manner that one can argue that the very soul of the country has departed. . . .

I do not hold you, the reader, responsible in this matter, because you have been lied to on the subject of poetry and art in general to the point that most of you recoil with visions of Andy Warhol's soup cans or some group of nuts performing a pagan ritual on stage accompanied by electronic grunts, groans, and screams.

To prove that most of you have been lied to, what do you think of when you hear the name Edgar Allan Poe?

The great majority of you have been told . . . that Poe was some sort of alcoholic or opium-eater. A great majority of you have images of Vincent Price's performances on the Late Late Show or Chiller Theater. . . . It is my purpose in this excerpt to give an accurate account of who Edgar Allan Poe really was, as well as to show you exactly how, by whom, and for what purpose you have been deliberately misled. . . .

The evidence points to the fact that in the early 1830s, Poe was assisting James Fenimore Cooper in the Marquis de Lafayette's attempts to establish a French republic for the second time. The Marquis de Lafayette headed the European branch intelligence services for the Society of Cincinnati, which he founded with George Washington and Alexander Hamilton, and which included Quartermaster General David Poe, Poe's grandfather and close collaborator of Lafayette during the Revolutionary War.

Cooper's public activities in France at that time consisted of organizing for a republic in France as well as in Poland. He was instrumental, along with Lafayette, in countering a vicious anti-American propaganda campaign being conducted by British magazines and British-influenced journals in France. Cooper also solicited the aid of his, and later Poe's, American publisher, economist Mathew Carey. Carey was requested to send to France a refutation of the British propaganda line which claimed that it was cheaper to run an aristocracy like Britain than to run a republic like the United States. Carey had been an associate of Lafayette's since he worked as an Irish emigré publishing the dispatches of Benjamin Franklin from Franklin's print shop in Passy. . . .

That Poe planned to go to France to aid the allies of Lafayette is clear in this letter that he wrote to Commandant [Sylvanus] Thayer of West Point shortly after his departure from the academy:

" . . . I intend by the first opportunity to proceed to Paris with the view of obtaining through the interest of the Marquis de Lafayette, an appointment (if possible) in the Polish Army. . . ."

The name C. Auguste Dupin [Poe's detective character in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "The Purloined Letter"] has also been the subject of much debate among Poe Scholars. . . . Poe could have been referring to one person only: Charles A. Dupin of Paris, a leading figure in the Ecole Polytechnique circles of Gaspard Monge, Lazare Carnot, and their associates. It is the Ecole Polytechnique method of scientific investigation that is the subject of Poe's detective tales, or

"Tales of Ratiocination," as Poe more properly termed them.

This is no matter of mere conjecture or guess-work. Poe very early in life came under the influence of Supreme Court Justice John Marshall and General Winfield Scott in his home in Richmond, Virginia. In his early teens, Poe was selected to serve as second in command of the Richmond Junior Volunteers honor guard that accompanied Lafayette during his 1824 visit to the city. Lafayette's visit to Richmond, part of a months-long tour of the United States, was organized by the Cincinnatus Society to secure the presidential election of John Quincy Adams and to raise funds for Lafayette's forces in Europe.

Marshall had been influential in helping to establish the Society of Cincinnatus, and Winfield Scott later became an honorary member of the society, with specific charge over matters of military intelligence. General Scott, together with Commandant Thayer, made several trips to Paris for the specific purpose of acquiring the necessary textbooks and related materials to firmly establish the tradition of the Ecole Polytechnique at West Point.

The military-artillery training acquired directly from the French military genius Carnot was taught to West Point upperclassmen at Fortress Monroe, where Poe had enlisted under the pseudonym Edgar Perry. Poe's commanding officer at Fortress Monroe was Colonel Worth, along with General

Scott, who obtained for Poe his cadetship at West Point after Poe had already completed the advanced training. . . .

It is also a matter of note that a good portion of the American intelligence community was in France during Poe's visit. To name a few, these included General Scott, Colonel Worth, James Fenimore Cooper, and the inventor Samuel Morse. Of course, any biography of these individuals will say that their trips to Paris were for reasons of health. Funny how so many great men seem to get sick all at once. . . .

### Who were Poe's enemies?

It is often said by Poe's critics that Poe chose his victims for literary criticism out of jealousy of their success or because he was prejudiced against their literary style for some reason. . . . In the case of Willis and Gaylord Clark, who controlled the New York Knickerbocker clique, Poe's venom struck at the core of matters vital to the United States and its security.

Both brothers were run from the Edinburgh division of the British Secret Intelligence Services. Their literary affairs, and their other assignments, were controlled directly by Sir Walter Scott's private secretary and literary agent, Gordon Lockhardt.

The Clark brothers were instrumental in conducting a vile slander campaign against the vital assistance James Fenimore Cooper was rendering to Lafayette in France. By besmirching Cooper's name in the United States, it was hoped that his role as spokesman in Europe for the American form of government could be drastically undercut. . . .

It is no wonder then that one of Poe's first editorial announcements concerning the literary cliques who paid homage to British masters was the following:

"We know that the British bear us little but ill will—we know that in no case do they utter unbiased opinions of American books—we know that in the few instances in which our writers have been treated with common decency in England these writers have either paid homage to English institutions or have had lurking at the bottom of their hearts a secret principle at war with democracy. We do indeed demand the Nationality of Self-respect. In letters as in Govt. we require a Declaration of Independence—a better thing still would be a Declaration of War—and that war should be carried forthwith into Africa." . . .

By the time Poe entered on the American literary scene, it was infested with a mad variety of sects and cults. Transcendentalists, Carlisleists, Knickerbockers, Furriorists, and spiritualists were crawling all over the place. . . . Poe's proper and most urgent concern, among his other duties, was to reestablish the universal rules of Neoplatonic poetic composition which had earlier been the root of American culture. It was because of his efforts to accomplish this that he incurred the wrath of the literary charlatans, and still angers them today. . . .

Poe often had a great deal of fun composing tales that mocked the methods employed by the leading British literary

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journals. One of Poe's favorite targets in this regard was *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. *Blackwood's* was notorious for its sense-certainty literary style, and this style was the source for two of the most hilarious satires written by Poe, "How to Write a Blackwood Article" and "A Predicament." . . .

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## 'Poe Lives!'

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From "Poe Lives!" by Allen Salisbury, *New Solidarity*, April 13, 1979 (a review of the book *Poe Must Die*, by Marc Olden, *New York, Charter Fiction*, 1978:

Far from being an occultist, Poe was one of the greatest intellects created by 19th-century America. He was also, as I documented in my book, *The Civil War and the American System*,<sup>1</sup> one of the most feared members of an American Whig-centered counterintelligence service that included such American patriots as John Quincy Adams, Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, Samuel Morse, and John Marshall.

That fact is essential to understanding Poe's tenacious hos-

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1. The second edition of Salisbury's book was published by *EIR* in 1992.

tility toward the Boston Transcendentalist clique headed by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and in turn, defines Poe's literary and investigative work which struck at the heart of the British black nobility and their intelligence scribblers headquartered in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Review* and magazine.

Poe gave his life defending this nation from such godless organizations as the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, the Rosicrucian order, the Scottish Freemasons, and the Order of the Golden Dawn, all of which operated as semisecret societies centrally directed from Great Britain and dedicated to restoring British control over the United States.

In fact, Poe's death was effected in a hospice run by the Order of St. John, where he was refused visitors for three days. . . . It was because Poe waged such a successful campaign that he was slandered during his lifetime, and continues to be slandered to this day in the hope of eradicating the significance of his work from the minds of populations all over the world. . . .

The purpose of continually slandering great Neoplatonic figures in that way—when they have not been able to eradicate all traces of such a person's work—has been the method of the oligarchs throughout history: to cut the human race off from the method of acquiring and discovering the knowledge that is in fact responsible for the existence of the human species to this day.

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