

Archaeological Cover-Ups?

by **David Hatcher Childress**

Who controls the past, controls the future. Who controls the present,
controls the past.
George Orwell,
[1984](#)

Most of us are familiar with the last scene in the popular Indiana Jones archaeological adventure film *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, in which an important historical artifact, the *Ark of the Covenant* from the Temple in Jerusalem, is locked in a crate and put in a giant warehouse, never to be seen again, thus ensuring that no history books will have to be rewritten and no history professor will have to revise the lecture that he has been giving for the last forty years.

While the film was fiction, the scene in which an important ancient relic is buried in a warehouse is uncomfortably close to reality for many re-searchers. To those who investigate allegations of archaeological cover-ups, there are disturbing indications that the most important archaeological institute in the United States, the Smithsonian Institution, an independent federal agency, has been actively suppressing some of the most interesting and important archaeological discoveries made in the Americas.

[The Vatican](#) has been long accused of keeping artifacts and ancient books in their vast cellars, without allowing the outside world access to them. These secret treasures, often of a controversial historical or religious nature, are allegedly suppressed by [the Catholic Church](#) because they might damage the church's credibility, or perhaps cast their official texts in doubt. Sadly, there is overwhelming evidence that something very similar is happening with the Smithsonian Institution.

The Smithsonian Institution was started in 1829 when an eccentric British millionaire, by the name of **James Smithson**, died and left \$515,169 to create an institution "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." Unfortunately, there is evidence the Smithsonian has been more active in the suppression of knowledge... than the diffusion of it for the last hundred years.

The cover-up and alleged suppression of archaeological evidence began in late 1881 when **John Wesley Powell**, the geologist famous for exploring the Grand Canyon, appointed [Cyrus Thomas](#) as the director of the *Eastern Mound Division of the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of Ethnology*.

When Thomas came to the Bureau of Ethnology he was a,

"pronounced believer in the existence of a race of Mound Builders, distinct from the American Indians."

However, John Wesley Powell, the director of the Bureau of Ethnology, a very sympathetic man toward the American Indians, had lived with the peaceful Winnebago Indians of Wisconsin for many years as a youth and felt that American Indians were unfairly thought of as primitive and savage.

The Smithsonian began to promote the idea that Native Americans, at that time being exterminated in the Indian wars, were descended from advanced civilizations and were worthy of respect and protection. They also began a program of suppressing any archaeological evidence that lent credence to the school of thought known as *Diffusionism*, a school which believes that throughout history there has been widespread dispersion of culture and civilization via contact by ship and major trade routes.

The Smithsonian opted for the opposite school, known as Isolationism. Isolationism holds that most civilizations are isolated from each other and that there has been very little contact between them, especially those that are separated by bodies of water. In this intellectual war that started in the 1880s, it was held that even contact between the civilizations of the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys was rare, and certainly these civilizations did not have any contact with such advanced cultures as the Mayas, Toltecs, or Aztecs in Mexico and Central America.

By Old World standards this is an extreme, and even ridiculous idea, considering that the river system reached to the Gulf of Mexico and these civilizations were as close as the opposite shore of the gulf. It was like saying that cultures in the Black Sea area could not have had contact with the Mediterranean.

When the contents of many ancient mounds and pyramids of the Midwest were examined it was shown that the history of the Mississippi River Valleys was that of an ancient and sophisticated culture that had been in contact with Europe and other areas. Not only that, the contents of many mounds revealed burials of huge men, sometimes seven or eight feet tall, in full armor with swords and sometimes huge treasures.

For instance, when Spiro Mound in Oklahoma was excavated in the 1930s, a tall man in full armor was discovered along with a pot of thousands of pearls and other artifacts, the largest such treasure so far documented. The whereabouts of the man in armor is unknown and it is quite likely that it eventually was taken to the Smithsonian Institution.

In a private conversation with a well-known historical researcher (who shall remain nameless), I was told that a former employee of the Smithsonian, who was dismissed for defending the view of *Diffusionism* in the Americas (i.e., the heresy that other ancient civilizations may have visited the shores of North and South America during the many millennia before Columbus), alleged that the Smithsonian at one time had actually taken a barge full of unusual artifacts out into the Atlantic and dumped them in the ocean.

Though the idea of the Smithsonian's covering up a valuable archaeological find is difficult to accept for some, there is, sadly, a great deal of evidence to suggest that the Smithsonian Institution has knowingly covered up and "lost" important archaeological relics. The *Stonewatch Newsletter of the Gungywamp Society* in Connecticut, which researches megalithic sites in New England, had a curious story in their Winter 1992 issue about stone coffins discovered in 1892 in Alabama which were sent to the Smithsonian Institution and then "lost."

According to the newsletter, researcher **Frederick J. Pohl** wrote an intriguing letter in 1950 to the late Dr. **T. C. Lethbridge**, a British archaeologist.

The letter from Pohl stated:

A professor of geology sent me a reprint (of the) Smithsonian Institution, *The Crumf Burial Cave* by Frank Burns, U.S. Geological Survey, from the report of the U.S. National Museum for 1892, pp. 451-454, 1984. In the Crumf Cave, southern branch of the Warrior River, in Murphy's Valley, Blount County Alabama, accessible from Mobile Bay by river, were coffins of wood hollowed out by fire, aided by stone or copper chisels. Eight of these coffins were taken to the Smithsonian. They were about 7.5' long, 14" to 18" wide, 6" to 7" deep. Lids open.

I wrote recently to the Smithsonian, and received reply March 11th from **F. M. Setzler**, Head Curator of Department of Anthropology. (He said) *We have not been able to find the specimens in our collections, though records show that they were received.*

David Barron, President of the *Gungywamp Society* was eventually told by the Smithsonian in 1992 that the coffins were actually wooden troughs and that they could not be viewed anyway because they were housed in an asbestos-contaminated warehouse. This warehouse was to be closed for the next ten years and no one was allowed in except Smithsonian personnel!

Ivan T. Sanderson, a well-known zoologist and frequent guest on Johnny Carson's Tonight Show in the 1960s (usually with an exotic animal like a pangolin or a lemur), once related a curious story about a letter he received regarding an engineer who was stationed on the Aleutian island of Shemya during World War II. While building an airstrip, his crew bulldozed a group of hills and discovered under several sedimentary layers what appeared to be human remains. The Alaskan mound was in fact a graveyard of gigantic human remains, consisting of crania and long leg bones.

The crania measured from 22 to 24 inches from base to crown. Since an adult skull normally measures about eight inches from back to front such a large crania would imply an immense size for a normally proportioned human. Furthermore, every skull was said to have been neatly trepanned (a process of cutting a hole in the upper portion of the skull).

In fact, the habit of flattening the skull of an infant and forcing it to grow in an elongated shape was a practice used by ancient Peruvians, the Mayas, and the Flathead Indians of Montana. Sanderson tried to gather further proof, eventually receiving a letter from another member of the unit who continued the report. The letters both indicated that the Smithsonian Institution had collected the remains, yet nothing else was heard. Sanderson seemed convinced that the Smithsonian Institution had received the bizarre relics, but wondered why they would not release the data.

He asks,

"... is it that these people cannot face rewriting all the text books?"

In 1944 an accidental discovery of an even more controversial nature was made by **Waldemar Julsrud** at

Acambaro, Mexico. *Acambaro* is in the state of Guanajuato, 175 miles northwest of Mexico City. The strange archaeological site there yielded over 33,500 objects of ceramic [and] stone, including jade, and knives of obsidian (sharper than steel and still used today in heart surgery). Julsrud, a prominent local German merchant, also found statues ranging from less than an inch to six feet in length depicting great reptiles, some of them in active association with humans—generally eating them, but in some bizarre statuettes an erotic association was indicated. To observers many of these creatures resembled dinosaurs.

Jalsrud crammed this collection into twelve rooms of his expanded house. There, startling representations of Negroes, Orientals, and bearded Caucasians were included as were motifs of Egyptian, Sumerian and other ancient non-hemispheric civilizations, as well as portrayals of Bigfoot and aquatic monster-like creatures, weird human-animal mixtures, and a host of other inexplicable creations. Teeth from an extinct Ice Age horse, the skeleton of a mammoth, and a number of human skulls were found at the same site as the ceramic artifacts.

Radiocarbon dating in the laboratories of the University of Pennsylvania and additional tests using the thermo luminescence method of dating pottery were performed to determine the age of the objects. Results indicated the objects were made about 6,500 years ago, around 4,500 B.C. A team of experts at another university, shown Jalsrud's half-dozen samples but unaware of their origin, ruled out the possibility that they could have been modern reproductions. However, they fell silent when told of their controversial source.

In 1952, in an effort to debunk this weird collection which was gaining a certain amount of fame, American archaeologist **Charles C. DiPeso** claimed to have minutely examined the then 32,000 pieces within not more than four hours spent at the home of Julsrud. In a forthcoming book long delayed by continuing development in his investigation, archaeological investigator John H. Tierney, who has lectured on the case for decades, points out that to have done that, DiPeso would have had to have inspected 133 pieces per minute steadily for four hours, whereas in actuality, it would have required weeks merely to have separated the massive jumble of exhibits and arranged them properly for a valid evaluation.

Tierney, who collaborated with the late Professor Hapgood, the late William N. Russell, and others in the investigation, charges that the Smithsonian Institution and other archaeological authorities conducted a campaign of disinformation against the discoveries. The Smithsonian had, early in the controversy, dismissed the entire Acambaro collection as an elaborate hoax. Also, utilizing the Freedom of Information Act, Tierney discovered that practically the entirety of the Smithsonian's Julsrud case files are missing.

After two expeditions to the site in 1955 and 1968, Professor **Charles Hapgood**, a professor of history and anthropology at the University of New Hampshire, recorded the results of his eighteen-year investigation of Acambaro, in a privately printed book entitled *Mystery In Acambaro*. Hapgood was initially an open-minded skeptic concerning the collection but became a believer after his first visit in 1955, at which time he witnessed some of the figures being excavated, and even dictated to the diggers where he wanted them to dig.

Adding to the mind-boggling aspects of this controversy is the fact that the *Instituto Nacional de Antropologia e Historia*, through the late Director of Prehispanic Monuments, Dr. **Eduardo Noguera**, (who, as head of an official investigating team at the site, issued a report which Tierney will be publishing), admitted "the apparent scientific legality with which these objects were found." Despite evidence of their own eyes, however, officials declared that because of the objects "fantastic" nature, they had to have been a hoax played on Julsrud!

A disappointed but ever-hopeful Julsrud died. His house was sold and the collection put in storage. The collection is not currently open to the public.

Perhaps the most amazing suppression of all is *the excavation of an Egyptian tomb by the Smithsonian itself in Arizona*. A lengthy front page story of [the Phoenix Gazette on 5 April 1909 \(see page inset "Explorations in Grand Canyon" on page 222\)](#), gave a highly detailed report of the discovery and excavation of a rock-cut vault by an expedition led by Professor **S. A. Jordan** of the Smithsonian. The Smithsonian, however, claims to have absolutely no knowledge of the discovery or its discoverers.

The *World Explorers Club* decided to check on this story by calling the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., though we felt there was little chance of getting any real information. After speaking briefly to an operator, we were transferred to a Smithsonian staff archaeologist, and a woman's voice came on the phone and identified herself.

I told her that I was investigating a story from a 1909 Phoenix news-paper article about the Smithsonian Institution's having excavated rock-cut vaults in the Grand Canyon where Egyptian artifacts had been discovered, and whether the Smithsonian Institution could give me any more information on the subject.

"Well, the first thing I can tell you, before we go any further," she said, "is that no Egyptian artifacts of any kind have ever been found in North or South America. Therefore, I can tell you that the Smithsonian Institution has never been involved in any such excavations."

She was quite helpful and polite but in the end, knew nothing. Neither she nor anyone else with whom I spoke

could find any record of the discovery or either **G. E. Kinkaid** and Professor **S. A. Jordan**.

While it cannot be discounted that the entire story is an elaborate news-paper hoax, the fact that it was on the front page, named the prestigious Smithsonian Institution and gave a highly detailed story that went on for several pages, lends a great deal to its credibility. It is hard to believe such a story could have come out of thin air.

Is the Smithsonian Institution covering up an archaeological discovery of immense importance?

If this story is true it would radically change the current view that there was no transoceanic contact in pre-Columbian times, and that all American Indians, on both continents, are descended from Ice Age explorers who came across the Bering Strait.

Is the idea that ancient Egyptians came to the Arizona area in the ancient past so objectionable and preposterous that it must be covered up?

Perhaps the Smithsonian Institution is more interested in maintaining the status quo than rocking the boat with astonishing new discoveries that overturn previously accepted academic teachings.

Historian and linguist **Carl Han**, editor of *World Explorer*, then obtained a hiker's map of the Grand Canyon from a bookstore in Chicago. Poring over the map, we were amazed to see that much of the area on the north side of the canyon has Egyptian names. The area around Ninety-four Mile Creek and Trinity Creek had areas (rock formations, apparently) with names like Tower of Set, Tower of Ra, Horus Temple, Osiris Temple, and Isis Temple.

In the Haunted Canyon area were such names as the Cheops Pyramid, the Buddha Cloister, Buddha Temple, Manu Temple and Shiva Temple. Was there any relationship between these places and the alleged Egyptian discoveries in the Grand Canyon?

We called a state archaeologist at the Grand Canyon, and were told that the early explorers had just liked Egyptian and Hindu names, but that it was true that this area was off limits to hikers or other visitors, "because of dangerous caves."

Indeed, this entire area with the Egyptian and Hindu place names in the Grand Canyon is a *forbidden zone*—no one is allowed into this large area.

We could only conclude that this was the area where the vaults were located. Yet today, this area is curiously off-limits to all hikers and even, in large part, park personnel.

I believe that the discerning reader will see that if only a small part of the "*Smithsoniangate*" evidence is true then our most hallowed archaeological institution has been actively involved in suppressing evidence for advanced American cultures, evidence for ancient voyages of various cultures to North America, evidence for anomalistic giants and other oddball artifacts, and evidence that tends to disprove the official dogma that is now the history of North America.

The Smithsonian's Board of Regents still refuses to open its meetings to the news media or the public.

If Americans were ever allowed inside the "nation's attic," as the Smithsonian has been called, what skeletons might they find?

EXPLORATIONS IN GRAND CANYON

Mysteries of Immense Rich Cavern Being Brought to Light

Front page of the Phoenix Gazette
5 April 1909

JORDAN IS ENTHUSED

Remarkable Finds Indicate Ancient People Migrated From Orient

The latest news of the progress of the explorations of what is now regarded by scientists as not only the oldest archeological discovery in the United States, but one of the most valuable in the world, which was mentioned some time ago in the Gazette, was brought to the city yesterday by G. E. Kinkaid, the explorer who found the great underground citadel of the Grand Canyon during a trip from Green river, Wyoming down the Colorado, in a wooden boat, to Yuma, several months ago.

According to the story related to the Gazette by Mr. Kinkaid, the archaeologists of the Smithsonian Institute, which is financing the expeditions, have made discoveries which almost conclusively

prove that the race which inhabited this mysterious cavern, hewn in solid rock by human hands, was of oriental origin, possibly from Egypt, tracing back to Ramses.

If their theories are borne out by the translation of the tablets engraved with hieroglyphics, the mystery of the prehistoric peoples of North America, their ancient arts, who they were and whence they came, will be solved. Egypt and the Nile, and Arizona and the Colorado will be linked by a historical chain running back to ages which staggers the wildest fancy of the fictionist.

A Thorough Investigation

Under the direction of Prof. S. A. Jordan, the Smithsonian Institute is now prosecuting the most thorough explorations, which will be continued until the last link in the chain is forged. Nearly a mile underground, about 1480 feet below the surface the long main passage has been delved into, to find another mammoth chamber from which radiates scores of passageways, like the spokes of a wheel. Several hundred

The Suppression of Unorthodox Science

rooms have been discovered, reached by passageways running from the main passage, one of them having been explored for 854 feet and another 634 feet. The recent finds include articles which have never been known as native to this country, and doubtless they had their origin in the orient. War weapons, copper instruments, sharp-edged and hard as steel indicate the high state of civilization reached by these strange people. So interested have the scientists become that preparations are being made to equip the camp for extensive studies, and the force will be increased to thirty or forty persons.

"Before going further into the cavern, better facilities for lighting will have to be installed, for the darkness is dense and quite impenetrable for the average flashlight. In order to avoid being lost, wires are being strung from the entrance to all passageways leading directly to large chambers. How far this cavern extends no one can guess, but it is now the belief of many that what has already been explored is merely the 'barracks,' to use an American term, for the soldiers, and that far into the underworld will be found the main communal dwellings of the families. The perfect ventilation of the cavern, the steady draught that blows through, indicates that it has another outlet to the surface."

Mr. Kinkaid's Report

Mr. Kinkaid was the first white child born in Idaho and has been an explorer and hunter all his life, thirty years having been in the service of the Smithsonian Institute. Even briefly recounted, his history sounds fabulous, almost grotesque.

"First, I would impress that the cavern is nearly inaccessible. The entrance is 1,486 feet down the sheer canyon wall. It is located on government land and no visitor will be allowed there under penalty of trespass. The scientists wish to work unmolested, without fear of the archaeological discoveries being disturbed by curio or relic hunters. A trip there would be fruitless, and the visitor would be sent on his way. The story of how I found the cavern has been related, but in a paragraph: I was journeying down the Colorado river in a boat, alone, looking for mineral.

Some forty-two miles up the river from the El Tovar Crystal canyon, I saw on the east wall, stains in the sedimentary formation about 2,000 feet above the river bed. There was no trail to this point, but I finally reached it with great difficulty. Above a shelf which hid it from view from the river, was the mouth of the cave. There are steps leading from this entrance some thirty yards to what was, at the time the cavern was inhabited, the level of the river. When I saw the chisel marks on the wall inside the entrance, I became interested, [secured] my gun and went in.

During that trip I went back several hundred feet along the main passage till I came to the crypt in which I discovered the mummies. One of these I stood up and photographed by flashlight. I gathered a number of relics, which I carried down the Colorado to Yuma, from whence I shipped them to Washington with details of the discovery. Following this, the explorations were undertaken.

The Passages

"The main passageway is about 12 feet wide, narrowing to nine feet toward the farther end. About 57 feet from the entrance, the first side-passages branch off to the right and left, along which, on both sides, are a number of rooms about the size of ordinary living rooms of today, though some are 30 by 40 feet square. These are entered by oval-shaped doors and are ventilated by round air

spaces through the walls into the passages.

The walls are about three feet six inches in thickness. The passages are chiseled or hewn as straight as could be laid out by an engineer. The ceilings of many of the rooms converge to a center. The side-passages near the entrance run at a sharp angle from the main hall but toward the rear they gradually reach a right angle in direction.

The Shrine

"Over a hundred feet from the entrance is the cross-hall, several hundred feet long in which are found the idol, or image, of the people's god, sitting cross-legged, with a lotus flower or lily in each hand. The cast of the face is oriental, and the carving shows a skillful hand and the entire is remarkably well preserved, as is everything in this cavern. The idol almost resembles Buddha, though the scientists are not certain as to what religious worship it represents.

Taking into consideration everything found thus far, it is possible that this worship most resembles the ancient people of Tibet. Surrounding this idol are smaller images, some very beautiful in form; others crooked-necked and distorted shapes, symbolical, probably, of good and evil. There are two large cactus with protruding arms, one on each side of the dais on which the god squats. All this is carved out of hard rock resembling marble. In the opposite corner of this cross-hall were found tools of all descriptions, made of copper.

These people undoubtedly knew the lost art of hardening this metal, which has been sought by chemists for centuries without result. On a bench running around the workroom was some charcoal and other material probably used in the process. There is also slag and stuff similar to matte, showing that these ancients smelted ores, but so far no trace of where or how this was done has been discovered, nor the origin of the ore.

"Among the other finds are vases or urns and cups of copper and gold, made very artistic in design. The pottery work includes enameled ware and glazed vessels. Another passageway leads to granaries such as are found in the oriental temples. They contain seeds of various kinds. One very large storehouse has not yet been entered, as it is twelve feet high and can be reached only from above. Two copper hooks extend on the edge, which indicates that some sort of ladder was attached.

These granaries are rounded, as the materials of which they are constructed, I think, is a very hard cement. A gray metal is also found in this cavern, which puzzles the scientists, for its identity has not been established. It resembles platinum. Strewn promiscuously over the floor everywhere are what people call 'cats eyes,' a yellow stone of no great value. Each one is engraved with the head of the Malay type.

The Hieroglyphics

"On all the urns, or walls over doorways, and tablets of stone which were found by the image are the mysterious hieroglyphics, the key to which the Smithsonian Institute hopes yet to discover. The engraving on the tablets probably has something to do with the religion of the people. Similar hieroglyphics have been found in southern Arizona. Among the pictorial writings, only two animals are found. One was of the prehistoric type.

The Crypt

"The tomb or crypt in which the mummies were found is one of the largest of the chambers, the walls slanting back at an angle of about 35 degrees. On these are tiers of mummies, each one occupying a separate hewn shelf. At the head of each is a small bench, on which is found copper cups and pieces of broken swords. Some of the mummies are covered with clay, and all are wrapped in a bark fabric. The urns or cups on the lower tiers are crude, while as the higher shelves are reached, the urns are finer in design, showing a later stage of civilization. It is worthy of note that all the mummies examined so far have proved to be male, no children or females being buried here. This leads to the belief that this exterior section was the warriors' barracks.

"Among the discoveries no bones of animals have been found, no skins, no clothing, no bedding. Many of the rooms are bare but for water vessels. One room, about 40 by 700 feet, was probably the main dining hall, for cooking utensils are found here. What these people lived on is a problem, though it is presumed that they came south in the winter and farmed in the valleys, going back north in the summer. Upwards of 50,000 people could have lived in the caverns comfortably.

One theory is that the present Indian tribes found in Arizona are descendants of the serfs of slaves of the people which inhabited the cave. Undoubtedly a good many thousands of years before the Christian era a people lived here which reached a high stage of civilization. The chronology of human history is full of gaps. Professor Jordan is much enthused over the discoveries and believes that the find will prove of incalculable value in archaeological work.

"One thing I have not spoken of, may be of interest. There is one chamber in the passageway to which is not ventilated, and when we approached it a deadly, snaky smell struck us. Our light would not penetrate the gloom, and until stronger ones are available we will not know what the chamber contains.

Some say snakes, but other *boo hoo* this idea and think it may contain a deadly gas or chemicals used by the ancients. No sounds are heard, but it smells snaky just the same. The whole underground installation gives one of shaky nerves the creeps. The gloom is like a weight on one's shoulders, and our flashlights and candles only make the darkness blacker. Imagination can revel in conjectures and ungodly daydreams back through the ages that have elapsed till the mind reels dizzily in space."

An Indian Legend

In connection with this story, it is notable that among the Hopi Indians the tradition is told that their ancestors once lived in an underworld in the Grand Canyon till dissension arose between the good and the bad, the people of one heart and the people of two hearts. Machetto, who was their chief, counseled them to leave the underworld, but there was no way out.

The chief then caused a tree to grow up and pierce the roof of the underworld, and then the people of one heart climbed out. They tarried by Paisisvai (Red River), which is the Colorado, and grew grain and corn. They sent out a message to the Temple of the Sun, asking the blessing of peace, good will and rain for people of one heart.

That messenger never returned, but today at the Hopi villages at sundown can be seen the old men of the tribe out on the housetops gazing toward the sun, looking for the messenger. When he returns, their lands and ancient dwelling place will be restored to them. That is the tradition. Among the engravings of animals in the cave is seen the image of a heart over the spot where it is located.

The legend was reamed by W.E. Rollins, the artist, during a year spent with the Hopi Indians. There are two theories of the origin of the Egyptians. One that they came from Asia, another that the racial cradle was in the upper Nile region. Heeren, an Egyptologist, believed in the Indian origin of the Egyptians.

The discoveries in the Grand Canyon may throw further light on human evolution and prehistoric ages.

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