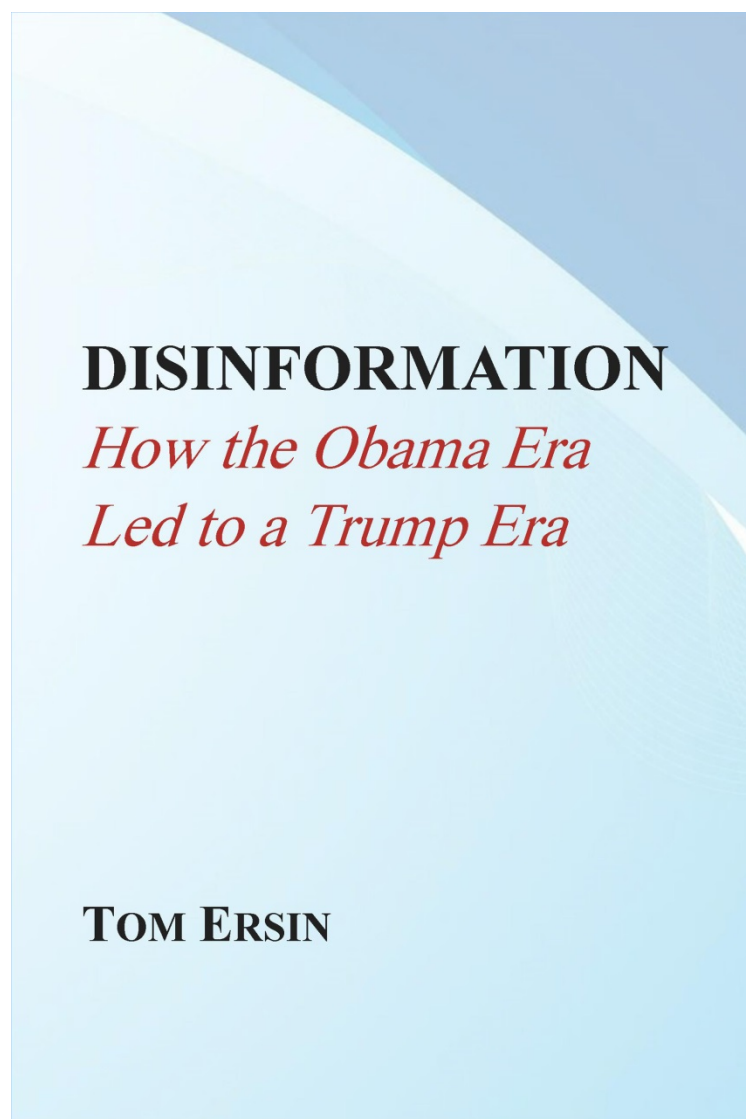


# ***Disinformation:*** ***How the Obama Era Led to a Trump Era***

© 2025 Tom Ersin | [GraniteWord.com](http://GraniteWord.com) | [tom@graniteword.com](mailto:tom@graniteword.com) | Available at [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com)



***On June 16, 2015, the GOP's Frankensteinian monster came to life, broke out of its straps, and jumped onto a descending Trump Tower golden escalator.***

**What led to this phenomenon? In 2012, two centrist Washington think tank members wrote that the biggest political story of the preceding four years was “the radical right-wing, off-the-rails lurch of the Republican Party’s agenda and relationship to truth.” Against this backdrop Trumpism was conceived.**

Disinformation — mendacity — went from fringe to mainstream. Mitt Romney, 2012 GOP presidential nominee, made serial flip-floppiness and prevarication acceptable. Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich and others honed their racial stereotypes about America’s first Black president, Barack Obama. The “nice, respectable” Republican families shrugged off the GOP-aligned tea party’s vile lies and bigotry. They quietly looked the other way, which amounted to tacit approval.

Attention-starved silver-spoon billionaire Donald Trump launched his political career by appointing himself leader of the “birthers,” who disguised their racism behind the red herring belief that the president was a Muslim born in Kenya and not eligible to hold the office. The rest is histrionics.

This book is an entertaining account of Trumpism coming of age in the era of Obama. It’s a well-researched description of the cultural landscape that culminated in the greatest feat of political confidence artistry in American history: the reelection of President Donald Trump.■

Then Donald Trump became president. How did it happen? We can start with the shocking 2008 election of the first African American U.S. president. Republicans and neo-Nazis didn't know what hit 'em. But they would ensure there would be no repeat. Every race-baiting trick in the book was pulled out and new ones invented. Mr. Trump, after teasing in 2011



but declining to run for president in 2012, launched his war on decency and began championing the racist “birther” conspiracy, that Barack Obama was not born in America. GOP candidates such as former House Speaker Newt Gingrich chimed in with their supporting birther innuendo and more. But though they couldn't prove the president was not a “natural born Citizen,” they could insinuate it incessantly and declare, in speech after newspaper headline after talk show appearance after speech, that he *thought* like an un-American and *wasn't one of us*. Did I mention that Obama is Black? (Not that there's anything wrong with that.)

From 2008 through 2016 the Republican Party made clear to supporters that it now was acceptable to be unapologetically boorish, racist, xenophobic, and mendacious. At every instance of covert or overt bigotry aimed at President Obama from within its own ranks, the GOP and its leadership's response was — crickets. By ignoring it, by looking the other way (because it helped their vote count), they told their people anything goes. Donald Trump took “anything goes” near-literally. Starting on a descending golden escalator in Trump Tower June 16, 2015, in front of a supportive crowd of largely paid actors, and culminating in Mr. Trump's elevation to presidential nominee July 19, 2016, the Republican Party created a monster. And like Victor Frankenstein, the Party lost control over its depraved creation.



### About the Author

Tom Ersin has been a full-time professional writer and editor since 2010 and holds degrees in communications and counseling. Ersin is a long-time political observer and editor of current affairs magazine *GraniteWord.com*. He's written a half-dozen nonfiction books on 21<sup>st</sup> century U.S. politics, one being a **2023 International Book Awards Finalist**. His turn-ons are running his (good) dog, Bob Barker, and railing about the lack of critical thinking and civics studies in primary and secondary education.■

## Table of Contents

Prologue

Tracing the Turpitude

THE BEGINNING

“Hello, My Name Is Donald Trump”

08/03/08 — PC vs. the Anti-PC

“Hello, My Name Is Mitt Romney”

BARACK OBAMA ELECTED 44TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

01/21/09 — Rush Limbaugh Supports President but Wants Him to Fail

01/22/09 — Ask Jesus: A True Culture of Life

01/25/09 — Torture vs. Enhanced Interrogation Techniques

02/17/09 — Better Bumper Stickers

05/30/09 — Dick Cheney’s Great American Road Trip

06/26/09 — Boycott GM?

07/03/09 — Gov. Sarah Palin Quits 18 Months Before 1st Term Ends

07/04/09 — Socialism. Not

“Hello, My Name Is Rush Limbaugh”

07/09/09 — Facts, “Facts,” Opinions, Emotions

07/14/09 — W.: “Bring ’Em On”

07/27/09 — New Puppy for Rush Limbaugh

11/09/09 — How to Lie and Make It Stick (but good)

03/03/10 — Baffle ’Em With MBE (male bovine excreta)

04/12/10 — Exremism [sic] Is No Vice

07/19/10 — The Search for Obama’s Oil Spill

08/15/10 — Culture of Life Party

09/12/10 — Fact-Checker Party

“Hello, My Name Is Ann Coulter”

10/12/10 — Ask Jesus: What the World Needs Now

2010 MIDTERMS LEAD IN TO 2012 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

Birther Announcements

04/11/11 — Racism-Lite

07/18/11 — False Equivalency and Active Listening

“Hello, My Name Is Sarah Palin”

08/15/11 — False Equivalency and Junk Thinking

Republican Presidential Primary Debate Highlights

12/27/11 — Democrats, Refuse the Gift of Gingrich

12/30/11 — Real Tears, Crocodile Reputation

01/11/12 — Rick Perry Loses to “Others” in New Hampshire Primary Heartbreaker

01/15/12 — Reserving the Right to Tell the Truth

“Hello, My Name Is Michele Bachmann”

01/16/12 — Huntsman out; Science Denial Reigns

01/18/12 — Gingrich Panders to Latent Racists

01/24/12 — Juxtaposing John King

02/01/12 — Newt Implodes, Histrionics Repeats Itself  
02/05/12 — Mitt Disses Democrats Like a 15-Year-Old Middle Schooler  
Greatest Hits  
02/08/12 — Donald Trump's Romney Endorsement Worked (for Santorum?)  
02/10/12 — Mitt Romney Hones Message at CPAC  
02/17/12 — Dick Cheney Lobbies for Same-Sex Marriage  
02/21/12 — Rick Santorum: Theological Secularism vs. Mendacious Factualism  
03/02/12 — President Santorum Merges Church and State  
03/11/12 — Rush's Drive-By Ad Hominem Attacks  
"Hello, My Name Is Glenn Beck"  
03/20/12 — Two-Headed Washington Panderer: Unendangered Species  
03/26/12 — G.I. Joe Defends Etch A Sketch  
GOP Reasons to Omit Bain Capital From Your Presidential Resume  
04/04/12 — An NPR Liberal Elite Look at Mendacity and Misinformation  
04/14/12 — Speed Opinion-Dating  
04/25/12 — Gingrich Announces Intent to Announce He's Dropping Out  
05/04/12 — It's Official: Mitt Romney Is Invertebrate  
05/11/12 — Misunderstanding vs. Truthiness  
05/24/12 — Sarah Palin Refudiates Romney's Repudiation  
MITT ROMNEY SECURES 2012 REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION  
2016 Preview: "Those Who Fail to Learn From Redundancy Are Doomed to Repeat It, Again"  
05/29/12 — GOP Locks in Mitt Romney as Presidential Nominee  
06/01/12 — Introduction to 2012 Obama-Romney Presidential Election Campaign  
10/04/12 — Debates Happen  
10/10/12 — How Mitt Romney Gets Away With It  
10/19/12 — Negative Ads vs. False Negative Ads  
10/26/12 — Pivoting Is One Thing; A 180-Degree Bat-Turn Is Another  
10/31/12 — Hurricane Sandy: The Politics  
11/04/12 — Two Days Before the Election  
PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA WINS REELECTION  
11/06/12 — Post-Election Headlines: From Here to Inanity  
11/08/12 — Obama Overcomes Sarah Palin's Eleventh-Hour Romney Endorsement  
11/14/12 — Delusion: The Third Stage of Conservative Grief  
11/28/12 — Schooling Romney's Top Strategist, Stuart Stevens  
12/07/12 — Centrist Political Analysts Eerily Predict Massive MAGA Disinformation Campaign  
12/15/12 — What Would Jesus Do? A Lesson for Mike Huckabee  
01/05/13 — Fiscal Cliff and Other Metaphors  
01/17/13 — Team Obama's Halftime Adjustments  
01/19/13 — God, Guns, and Nuts  
01/25/13 — Presidential Inauguration 2013  
Birther Announcements  
Epilogue  
The Author

## Press Release

# Tom Ersin Tracks Birth of Trumpism to First Reality Show Presidency

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Book:** *Disinformation: How the Obama Era Led to a Trump Era* ([GraniteWord.com](https://GraniteWord.com) 2025)  
**Contact:** Tom Ersin (review copies, media requests) | [tom@graniteword.com](mailto:tom@graniteword.com) | 586-992-1485  
Troy, MI 48084  
**Formats:** Available at [Amazon](https://Amazon.com) (paperback, Kindle)

**TROY, MICH., February 1, 2025** — GraniteWord.com has announced the release of *Disinformation: How the Obama Era Led to a Trump Era*, by Tom Ersin.

In the Obama era, the GOP disinformation campaign found its footing but ultimately failed, at least in keeping President Barack Obama out of office. With the backing of tea party big money, the say-anything race-baiting politics of Newt Gingrich and others made a strong run and much was learned. Primarily they learned that the milquetoast, fence-straddling equivocation of a Mitt Romney at the top of the ticket was not going to cut it.

In 2015 emerged their messiah. Prepared by a lifetime of chimerical self-promotion, Donald Trump was cast as a successful billionaire businessman after a decade of fictional reality show image-building. This was buttressed by his knack for manipulating and leveraging the new age of unaccountable social media opinion and “news.” Mr. Trump successfully injected himself into the political arena starting early in Obama’s presidency by championing the ludicrous “birther” conspiracy theory that Mr. Obama was not born in the U.S.

This book chronicles the election and reelection of the first African American U.S. president and the Republican Party’s reaction. Many thought this would improve race relations. Instead, Obama’s presidency heightened bigoted GOP grievance and resentment. Donald Trump recognized and activated a suppressed vein of white nationalism and xenophobia. And he made mendacity great again.

In 2016 America chose its first reality show president. And with Mr. Trump’s reelection in 2024, he pulled off the greatest feat of political confidence artistry in American history.

### About the Author

Tom Ersin has been a full-time professional writer and editor since 2010 and holds degrees in communications and counseling. Ersin is a long-time political observer and editor of current affairs magazine *GraniteWord.com*. He’s written a half-dozen nonfiction books on 21<sup>st</sup> century U.S. politics, one being a **2023 International Book Awards Finalist**. His turn-ons are running his (good) dog, Bob Barker, and railing about the lack of critical thinking and civics studies in primary and secondary education. Email him at [tom@graniteword.com](mailto:tom@graniteword.com).

*Disinformation: How the Obama Era Led to a Trump Era* is available at [Amazon](https://Amazon.com). For review copies, interview requests, or more information, contact Tom Ersin at (586) 992-1485 or [tom@graniteword.com](mailto:tom@graniteword.com).

###

## Excerpt

### Prologue

“He doesn’t have a birth certificate. He may have one but there is something on that birth certificate — maybe religion, maybe it says he’s a Muslim, I don’t know.”

*(referring to President Obama)*

*(Trump, Donald; Fox News’ The O’Reilly Factor; 3/30/2011.)*

37% of Republicans believe Barack Obama was not born in the United States.

*(Fox News poll; FoxNews.com; April 3-5, 2011.)*

30% of Republicans believe Barack Obama is a Muslim (not that there’s anything wrong with that — *thanks to Jerry Seinfeld*).

*(Pew Research Center national survey; PewForum.org; June 28-July 9, 2012.)*

“[I don’t know] whether he needs large amounts of rest [or] whether he needs to go play basketball for a while.”

*(referring to President Obama)*

*(Gingrich, Newt; Fox News’ On the Record; 9/25/2012.)*

### 2008 – 2016

From 2008 through 2016 the Republican Party made clear to supporters that it now was acceptable to be unapologetically boorish, racist, xenophobic, and mendacious. At every instance of covert or overt bigotry aimed at President Obama from within its own ranks, the GOP and its leadership’s response was — crickets. By ignoring it, by looking the other way (because the racism and xenophobia was helpful to their vote count), they told their people anything goes. Donald Trump took “anything goes” near-literally. Starting on a descending golden escalator in Trump Tower June 16, 2015, in front of a supportive crowd of largely paid actors, and culminating in Mr. Trump’s elevation to presidential nominee July 19, 2016, the Republican Party created a monster. And like Victor Frankenstein, the Party lost control over its depraved creation.

Several days after Mitt Romney made his limp-fish concession speech in 2012, Donald filed a trademark application for the phrase “Make America Great Again,” the rallying cry and slogan for his 2016 (and 2020 and 2024) campaign. GOP bosses — who couldn’t stomach Trump until they had to swallow hard after he won the nomination — floated several reasons for his rise. Most ridiculous among them was that President Obama had laid the foundation. Other than his Blackness, however, Obama had nothing to do with this despicable phenomenon. Trump’s elevation emanated from Republican *reaction* to the first Black president.

*Disinformation: How the Obama Era Led to a Trump Era* illustrates the real impetus behind Donald Trump’s political rise: the 2008 and 2012 presidential election cycles. The GOP had set new lows for degenerate, disinformational campaigns. Then they plunged even lower in 2016. The rest is histrionics.



## More Perspective

After the 2008 election, the losing team was in shock. Soon shock turned to anger. On inauguration night about 15 of the top Republicans in Congress gathered at the Caucus Room, a high-end D.C. establishment, not to lick their wounds but to ensure the failure of Barack Obama's first term and 2012 reelection campaign. They would block everything the president tried to do, no matter how much Republican support a policy or piece of legislation had garnered in the past — and no matter what the cost to the American people. (Draper, Robert; *Do Not Ask What Good We Do: Inside the U.S. House of Representatives*; 2012.)

To buttress this effort, the tea party movement was hatched in early 2009 with heavy stealth support from superrich GOP backers including the Koch brothers. Ostensibly an organic grassroots movement, in reality it was an anti-Obama propaganda arm of the Republican Party spewing racial undertones and overtones and accusations of “otherness.” The GOP indulged its embarrassing, bigoted tea party cousin (with whom most of its members secretly agreed — or at least didn't publicly disagree) to keep him in the fold. Are all or most Republicans and their supporters racist? No. But when even the respectable ones fail to repudiate the vile vocal minority, their failure amounts to tacit approval of that racism.

## Reality Show

America's election of her first non-Caucasian president produced a political reality show not seen before, including a colorful cast of cartoon characters. Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich — famously referred to as a stupid person's version of a smart person — honed his dog-whistled racial stereotypes about the president. Attention-starved silver-spoon billionaire Donald Trump appointed himself cheerleading team captain of the “birthers,” who disguised their racism behind the red herring belief that Obama was a Muslim born in Kenya and therefore not eligible to be president.

And who can forget Rush Limbaugh (“*Take that bone out of your nose and call me back*”), Sarah Palin (*Obama's “shuck and jive shtick must end”*), Michele Bachmann (*Obama is running a “gangsta government”*), and of course, Mitt Romney (“*No one has ever asked to see my birth certificate. They know [where I was] born and raised.*”). Together they coddled tea party rumormongers perpetuating outlandish myths about the president, attempting to convey that he was not one of us. But it was never because of his ethnicity (wink).

22% of Republicans believe Barack Obama wants the terrorists to win.

24% of Republicans believe Barack Obama may be the Antichrist.

(The Harris Poll, *Harris Interactive*; March 1-8, 2010.)

President Obama was called a socialist *and* a fascist — by the same people. He was called an atheist *and* a Muslim, again, by the same bipedal primates. These were oxymorons committed by morons. And I had to speak out.

## 2016

Think back to the U.S. presidential campaign of 2016. It is difficult to imagine an election cycle with more of a circus atmosphere before this one. Donald J. Trump has clinched the GOP nomination by racistly and sexistly (Yeah, I made up two new words) maligning most demographic groups known to political pollsters. The Republican Party has long since abandoned its “Never Trump” stance, which most GOP luminaries had adopted early in the primary process, before his repugnant freight train of a campaign vanquished all possible respectable contenders. Republican leaders have violated their own personal

and political principles. They now support the most vile, egomaniacal confidence artist ever to befoul a television screen. Baby boomer kids were taught to fear nuclear annihilation while in grade school. Now we have to fear it again because imagine this: Donald Trump could become president.

Then in January 2017 Donald Trump *became* president. How did it happen? We can start with the shocking 2008 election of the first African American U.S. president. Republicans and neo-Nazis didn't know what hit 'em. But once it sank in they were going to ensure, over the next four years, there would be no repeat. Every race-baiting trick in the book was pulled out and new ones invented. Mr. Trump, after teasing in 2011 but declining to run for president in 2012, launched his war on decency and began championing the racist birther conspiracy, that Barack Obama was born in Kenya, not America. GOP candidates such as former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, Rep. Michele Bachmann, et al. chimed in with their supporting birther innuendo and more. But though they couldn't prove the president was not a "natural born Citizen," as the Constitution requires, they could insinuate it incessantly and declare, in speech after newspaper headline after talk show appearance after speech, that he *thought* like an un-American and *wasn't one of us*. Did I mention that Obama is Black? (Not that there's anything wrong with that.)

On Jan. 20, 2017, Donald John Trump was sworn in as the 45<sup>th</sup> president of the United States. In his inauguration address he said the country was engulfed in "American carnage" and that he would fix it. In reality, President Trump *brought* the carnage to America and never let up until his term ended in 2021 after he lost reelection.

There are volumes written about Mr. Trump's depraved and criminal activities during his first term, including one by me: *Trumpism: Why Traditional Republicans Should Withdraw Support [2017-2021: A Primer]*. It took volumes because the degeneracy was so deep, widespread, and overwhelming. The highlights, alone, make one's head spin:

- 1) Illegal 2016 Russian election assistance: welcoming, soliciting, and employing it to win
- 2) Mueller report crimes of serial obstruction of justice during the DOJ Russia investigation
- 3) Psychological torture of 5,400 migrant children through separation from their families
- 4) Extortion of U.S. ally Ukraine by withholding desperately needed congressionally approved aid in an attempt to extract false dirt on a political foe
- 5) Incompetent, malfeasant, politically motivated (to win reelection) mismanagement of the pandemic, which caused several hundred thousand *additional* U.S. lives lost and a near-2<sup>nd</sup> Great Depression
- 6) Untold bribery through foreign and domestic emoluments clause violations
- 7) Incitement of insurrection (through the attack on Congress) and attempt to overturn decisive 2020 reelection loss

President Trump, in fact, was impeached twice: for the Ukraine extortion and incitement of insurrection.

Don't let anyone tell you that any of these accusations have been debunked. They all happened. They're all true. One need only explore the unbiased historical record.■