



INJUSTICE VIA THE INTERNET: MYTHS, FACTS, & SMEAR CAMPAIGNS IN THE MARC GAFNI STORY

An Exposé by Kerstin Tuschik

Abstract

This four-part essay is about truth & justice in our post-truth internet era. It uses the Marc Gafni Story as a case study to engage the larger issues at play. At the same time, it sets the records straight regarding some of the gross distortions about Marc Gafni that have been repeated time and again over the past years.

Kerstin Tuschik

PART ONE: HOW POSTMODERNITY REGRESSED INTO THE POST-TRUTH ERA

THIS FIRST PART OF THE ESSAY SETS THE FRAME FOR THE REST OF THE STORY THAT COULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED WITHOUT THESE OVERARCHING ISSUES AT PLAY.

The evolution of culture and consciousness is mirrored directly in the evolution of justice. We might say that there have been three great periods of history in the development of our idea of justice. Roughly, these three periods are referred to as the pre-modern, modern and postmodern periods. Each approaches justice in a fundamentally different way. How we carry out justice tells us who we are as a society more than any other measure.

In the pre-modern period, justice was mostly dispensed via the authority of the religion, which demanded obedience from its adherents. Alternatively, it was dispensed by the King. Although there were formal rules of justice in virtually all societies, the rules were both made by the church or king and could be overridden at any time by the whim of the monarch or the edict of the church.

Justice evolved dramatically in the move from pre-modernity to modernity. In modernity, the scientific method supplanted dogma as formal checking of evidence through a careful and objective process of gathering information became the cornerstone of the new vision of justice.

It was the English jurist Blackstone who said, "It is better that ten guilty persons escape than that one innocent suffer." Thomas Jefferson amended that idea and changed the number ten to a hundred. This new idea of justice is the bedrock of the democratic way of life.

How we gather information in order to render judgment tells us what kind of society we live in. This was the great gift of modernity to the evolution of justice. Fair process, genuine fact checking, researching evidence and motivation, as well as reporting information accurately, have since become the cornerstones of a good and just society. It is for these great principles of integrity that so many human beings have fought and died.

Then along came postmodernity. In postmodernity, we realized that there is not one objective reality. We came to understand that context and perspective matter and facts are always interpreted through our prism of consciousness. This could have given rise to a genuine evolution of consciousness, society and justice. Instead, it gave rise to a society in which facts stopped mattering. Everything was now considered to be a matter of perspective and context. The idea of one truth being higher than another truth was rejected by the leading edge of the western academy. Narrative replaced information gathering and justice did not evolve but regressed.

Justice does not merely refer to formal proceedings that take place in courthouses. Justice is about the judgments we form that directly impact people's lives. Just like a court procedure must be guided by principles of justice, so too the way we talk about a person, especially in the public space must be guided by similar principles. In that sense, engaging in character assassination or smear campaigns on the Internet based on false or distorted claims, in a way that intends to destroy the life of a competitor or colleague or former spouse or partner, would obviously be a gross violation of justice.

The key issue in justice is how we gather information, whether it be for trial, or an Internet post.

In a democratic society, our trust in how information is gathered and presented is the core building block of both our personal safety and our public culture. Specifically, we need to be able to trust our news media to gather information with an intent to seek the truth following the trail of evidence and facts. When facts stop mattering, which unfortunately has become the norm in our so-called post-truth and post-fact culture, the core structure of society breaks down.

Indeed, post-truth is the Oxford dictionary word of the year for 2016. The essential structure of the internet supports the post-truth world. There is no mechanism for fact checking. Many news sites are revenue driven. Revenue is driven by what has come to be called clickbait, sensational titles about scandal and sex that draw clicks which then drive up advertising rates. There is no recrimination for lying.

Google searches create a reality in which the most extreme and provocative views that are more prone to be clicked come up first in the click engines. Moreover, through more and more personalized searches the internet has become, according to all the experts, an echo chamber in which one's own views are reinforced by like-minded people. Assertions are therefore rarely challenged¹.

[Integral philosopher Ken Wilber has recently written at length on the nature of a post-truth world and how facts have become devalued in our postmodern context.](#)

Because of its relevance, I will cite him extensively here:

“In terms of searching, in a sea of aperspectival madness, not for truth or goodness or beauty—and especially for bypassing “truth” entirely and looking just for narcissistic popularity—Google has recently been slammed with exactly that charge—and those screaming “J'accuse!” are rightly and massively alarmed.

Carole Cadwalladr, in a [recent Guardian article](#), pointed out that Google's search algorithms reflect virtually nothing but the popularity of the most-responded to sites for the search enquiry.* There is nothing that checks whether any of the recommendations are actually true (or good or beautiful or unifying or integrating or any other value, and express only the aperspectival madness of “no truth to be favored”). Cadwalladr was particularly alarmed when she typed in “Are Jews...” and before she could finish, Google's search engines had provided the most likely responses, one of which was “Are Jews evil?” Curious, she hit that entry, and was taken to the authoritative Google page of the 10 most common and popular answers, 9 of 10 of which said, in effect, “Yes, definitely, Jews are evil.”

Genuinely surprised—and alarmed—she states,

“Google is knowledge. It's where you go to find things out. And evil Jews are just the start of it. There are also evil women. This is what I type: 'a-r-e w-o-m-e-'. And Google offers me just two choices, the first of which is 'Are women evil?' I press return. Yes, they are. Every one of the 10 results 'confirms' that they are, including the top one, from a site which is boxed out and highlighted: 'Every woman has some

degree of prostitute in her. Every woman has a little evil in her.... Women don't love men, they love what they can do for them.”

With her disbelief—and alarm—growing, she continues,

“Next I type: ‘a-r-e m-u-s-l-i-m-s’. And Google suggests I should ask: ‘Are Muslims bad?’ And here’s what I find out: yes, they are. That’s what the top result says and six of the others. Google offers me two new searches and I go for the first, ‘Islam is bad for society.’ In the next list of suggestions, I’m offered: ‘Islam must be destroyed.’”

Here’s her response:

“Google is search. It’s the verb, to Google. It’s what we all do, all the time, whenever we want to know anything. We Google it. The site handles at least 63,000 searches a second, 5.5 billion a day. Its mission as a company, the one-line overview that has informed the company since its foundation and is still the banner headline on its corporate website today, is to ‘organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful’. It strives to give you the best, most relevant results.

Jews are evil. [Women are evil.] Muslims need to be eradicated. And Hitler? Do you want to know about Hitler? Let’s Google it. ‘Was Hitler bad?’ I type. And here’s Google’s top result: ‘10 Reasons Why Hitler Was One of the Good Guys’. I click on the link: ‘He never wanted to kill any Jews’; ‘he cared about conditions for Jews in the work camps’ Eight out of the other 10 search results agree.

Google is most definitely not “organizing the world’s information and making it universally accessible and useful.” It is disorganizing the world’s information in an atmosphere of aperspectival madness, taking “diversity” to such an extreme that all views have an egalitarian and perfectly equal claim to validity. It is a leading-edge that is deeply discombobulated.”

Genuinely concerned, Cadwalladr contacts Danny Sullivan, founding editor of SearchEngineLand.com.

“He [Sullivan] has been recommended to me by several academics as one of the most knowledgeable experts on search. Am I just being naïve, I ask him? Should I have known this was out there? ‘No, you’re not being naïve,’ he says. ‘This is awful. Google is doing a horrible, horrible job of delivering answers here.’ He’s surprised, too. He types ‘are women’ into his own computer. ‘Good lord! That answer at the top. It’s a featured result. It’s called a ‘direct answer.’ This is supposed to be indisputable. It’s Google’s highest endorsement.’ That ‘every women has some degree of prostitute in her?’ ‘Yes. This is Google’s algorithm going terribly wrong.’”

And it's going "terribly wrong" because today's leading-edge has virtually no idea of what "genuinely right" could possibly mean. The Guardian highlights the overall piece by pointing out that it doesn't just demonstrate this with Google, but also Facebook and, indeed, the general Internet culture itself:

"The Internet echo chamber satiates our appetite for pleasant lies and reassuring falsehoods and has become the defining challenge of the 21st century."

How could an item become the "defining issue" of our century without virtually every university in the world spewing out postmodern poststructuralist nostrums centering on the idea that "truth" itself is the single greatest oppressive force in the history of humankind? (Seriously.) Originated by the green leading-edge in academia, this aperspectival madness of "no truth" leapt out of the universities, and morphed into an enormous variety of different forms—from direct "no-truth" claims, to rabid egalitarianism, to excessive censoring of free speech and unhampered knowledge acquisition, to extreme political correctness (that forced the best comedians to refuse to perform at colleges any more, since the audiences "lacked all sense of humor": you're allowed to laugh at nothing in a "no value is better" world—even though that value itself is held to be better), to far-left political agendas that in effect "equalized poverty," to egalitarian "no judgment" attitudes that refused to see any "higher" or "better" views at all (even though its own view was judged "higher" and "better" than any other), to modes of entertainment that everywhere eulogized egalitarian flatland, to a denial of all growth hierarchies by confusing them with dominator hierarchies (which effectively crushed all routes to actual growth in any systems anywhere), to the media's sense of egalitarian "fairness" that ended up trying to give equal time to every possible, no matter how factually idiotic, alternative viewpoint (such as Holocaust deniers), to echo chambered social media where "pleasant lies" and "reassuring falsehoods" were the standard currency. It saturated the leading-edge of evolution itself, throwing it into a performative contradiction and a widespread, explicit or implicit, aperspectival madness which was soon driven by nihilism and narcissism and a whole post-truth culture, which even invaded the Internet and bent it profoundly, and that brokenness perfused the entire information grid of the overall culture itself—exactly the type of profound and extensive impact you expect a leading-edge (healthy or unhealthy) to have. It has indeed become the defining issue of our century, because not a single other issue can be directly and effectively addressed if there is no compass point of accessible truth to guide action in the first place."

***In discussing this with my colleague, Lisa Engles, she points out that what Wilber didn't address in his article is the deeply personalized nature of Google searches. When a person performs a search on Google, what comes up are the results that it thinks they want, based on their previous searches and clicks.

For example, she said, "when I type 'are women...' or 'are Jews...' into Google search, it gives me precisely ... nothing."

I tried it myself as well. When I type in the same search terms (in German), I also get nothing for "are Jews" and for "are women", I get "Are women faithful? emancipated? still attractive at 45?".

I suggest that you try it yourself as well. Open a tab in Google and type in “are women”... and note the result that Google gives you. They are likely to be different from mine, or anyone else’s. Because the algorithm is programmed to give me the search results that it thinks I want, my own views are constantly reinforced by search results as well as like-minded people — especially on social media — hence echo chambers.

It is important to remember that the algorithms are not human.

Engles elaborates on this:

“Algorithms are still very flawed, and we have not found a way, as of yet, to make algorithms “understand” what [Integral Theory calls] the *interiors* of people or—said more simply—to truly “think” like humans. The result is that the algorithms give you what they think you want, and ... especially if you are like most people who do not know this, you might just accept the search results as truth without any discernment. The devastating result is that falsehoods and negative memes are easily spread, and are in a sense, infectious—especially given that we tend to operate in echo chambers.

It requires a certain level of sophistication, which the vast majority of people simply do not have [yet], to navigate the truth on the internet. However, the light at the end of the tunnel is that there are things you CAN do to find more balanced information on the Internet:

1. Understand how the algorithms work and be more discerning of search results, (i.e. don't believe everything you see)
2. Use the 'incognito' window in chrome, it will not take into account your previous search history, and therefore the algorithms won't be influenced as much.
3. Understand the four litmus tests [that Part Two of this article will elaborate on] and apply them everywhere you can when seeking information about people, companies, social initiatives, etc.”

*In the next part of this article, I will move from general observations to specifics. I will offer the **Marc Gafni Story** as a case study on how this post-truth and post-fact culture plays out in our news media as well as the internet. Moving back from the specifics to more general distinctions, you will learn about the four litmus tests to know the truth.*

PART TWO: MYTHS, FACTS, LIGHT & SHADOW AND MARC GAFNI

In Part One of this article, we looked at how postmodernity regressed into the post-truth era. We examined how the internet does not serve us well in distinguishing myths from facts and how all of us need to grow up in order to navigate the truth on the internet.

To really understand how this works however we need to move from general observations to specifics. For that reason in the next section of this essay, I want to offer the [Marc Gafni Story](#)ⁱⁱ as a case study on how this post-truth and post-fact culture plays out in our news media as well as the internet.

Whether you have already heard or read about [Marc Gafni](#) or not, the core questions in stories like this are always the same: How do we discern between Myths and Facts? How can we gain at least some certainty, in this case not only about Marc, but also about his supporters and detractors, the organization and movement Marc has co-created, as well as his teachings and influence in the world?

I myself have been working with Marc Gafni and the [Center for Integral Wisdom](#) since 2011. Many of my friends have asked me about these issues and wanted to understand the truth and the underlying motives that drive this story.

We, at the Center for Integral Wisdom, have been silent for a long time now. It is time to tell the truth. The myths or downright lies that are repeated time and again through the media and the internet need to be counterbalanced with some facts. We also believe that this story is so (arche)typical for our postmodern culture that we consider this happening to us as part of our mission to participate in the evolution of public culture.

Before we dive into that, however, we need to answer one question:

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

What is so interesting about this story and this guy in particular, that makes it worthwhile for you to spend these next couple of minutes to even read this article?

There are two answers to that; two reasons why you, why we, why all of us should indeed care.

NO. 1: IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU OR YOUR LOVED ONES.

In many ways, this story acts as a didactic play about truth finding, justice, and actual maliceⁱⁱⁱ in the age of postmodernity, our post-truth and post-fact culture, and the age of the internet.

The internet is a great tool that can help us connect with co-creators worldwide. In the next stage of human and cultural evolution that we are here to co-create, we will need it to serve our collective awakening in unprecedented ways.

Yet, like any other tool, it can be used for good or for bad. The greater the potential of anything, the more dangerous it is in the hands of evil. The internet is not an exception. The new possibilities that it offers require a new ethics. Public culture has to be evolved.

Being able to discern between myths and facts, especially on the Internet, will make all the difference in how you respond if or when it happens to you and your loved ones, as well as how you show up in public culture.

NO. 2: THIS IS A STORY OF MYTHIC PROPORTIONS THAT REVEALS A NEW WAY FOR YOU TO EXPAND INTO GREATER LOVE.

How we deal with our public figures and leaders tells us a lot about how we are dealing with our own light and shadow. Especially when we want to expand into our own leadership and contribute to the evolution of love and consciousness on this planet, we certainly need to come to terms with our shadow.

There is one thing that both Marc's supporters and detractors seem to agree upon: Somehow, he is larger than life. No one seems to think that Marc Gafni is normal. Everyone agrees he is in a category by himself.

With a bold statement like that, we are obviously already leaving the realm of facts and entering the realm of myths. In some ways, this whole story is not about Marc, the person. Something akin to the age-old mythic battle between light and dark, love and un-love seems to be at play here. We will get to that in Part Four of this article.

The question that poses itself is whether he is a great avatar of light, imperfect and flawed yet at his core an outrageous lover who brings great gifts to the world? Or is he a dark lord whose core is demonic or sociopathic and motivates deeds of harm and deceit? The folks behind the smear campaign have worked very hard to normalize and inseminate the latter claims into public culture through the internet.

At the same time, many people believe that [Marc Gafni and the think tank he has co-founded](#) have great gifts to offer the world. Engaging this smear campaign in ways that lead to a genuine evolution of culture would be one of these gifts.

Let us now look at the two pictures painted about Marc Gafni that could not differ more:

PAINTING 1: THE PROPHET OF EROS

If we believe his supporters, Marc Gafni is a great Prophet or Poet of Eros telling a new story for humanity that is deeply needed by millions if not billions of people on this planet. He is a brilliant genius whose doctorate at Oxford University is a true masterpiece about which Rabbi Gershon Winkler, author of ten books of Jewish teaching and scholarship, writes:

“This work is a true masterpiece of the sort our people have not witnessed for many centuries, shaking us out of our stupor toward reclaiming life again, reclaiming our goddess heritage and teachings, and the bond with the ancient spark of Eros. Rabbi Gafni in his fine and original reading of Mordechai Lainer in a Lurianic act of exalted scholarship and love raises the spark of paganism and sets it in new evolved ethical context.”

From an Integral perspective, Dr. Zachary Stein, Integral Scholar and Metrics Theorist, Harvard University, adds:

“You will be compelled by the rigor and depth of the scholarship, while at the same time swooning from the beauty of the ideas. A work like this comes along once in a generation.”

He is the great evolutionary philosopher whose name is mentioned in the same breath as Sri Aurobindo, Teilhard de Chardin and Buckminster Fuller. Barbara Marx Hubbard, who has been called the Grande Dame of Conscious Evolution, writes in 2015:

“Marc is a continuation of the lineage of Sri Aurobindo, Teilhard de Chardin and Buckminster Fuller. He holds that lineage in the impulse of his being and his thinking. He began as the Hebrew wisdom expression of this impulse but has now moved beyond to the place of Homo universalis, a universal human.”

He is a charismatic teacher, a Rumi- or Solomon-like lover, a thought leader, a creator of communities, and a game changer. Michael Murphy, Founder of the Esalen Institute and Author of *Golf in the Kingdom*, puts it like this in 2012:

“It is very rare that one comes across a teacher or a book that is ‘changing the game.’ My friend, Dr. Marc Gafni is such a teacher. He is a rare combination of brilliance, depth, and heart. Marc’s teaching on the Unique Self in an evolutionary context is ‘changing the game.’”

His brilliant work [Your Unique Self](#), for which he is well known, has been called seminal by Integral philosopher Ken Wilber.

Equipped with a brilliant intellect, charismatic charm, and a huge heart, he is not only a great scholar and a lover of people but also an embodied master of the dharma he transmits to his circle of students and collaborators. Dr. Kristina Kincaid, Director of the Outrageous Love Project at the Center for Integral Wisdom and the Director of the Integral Evolutionary Tantra Institute in New York City, writes about his teachings at the Fourth Summer Festival of Love in Holland, 2015:

“I had the profound honor and wild pleasure of participating with a most astounding team of Holy Rockstars standing audaciously together supporting Marc as the Living, Breathing, Alive, Aflame, Awakened, Dharma as he liberated Eros, in front of a crowd of over 250 people! WOW!”

You get the picture.

Yet, there is another picture that is painted just as vividly as this first one.

Let us call this:

PAINTING 2: THE DIABOLIC DEMON

No, I did not make that up.

I haven't counted the number of times that Marc has literally been called diabolical or demonic. He is said to have demonic powers that he uses to manipulate people. People consider him something of a dark lord using his occult powers to perpetuate his own super stardom. I have even heard say from reliable sources there are those who have claimed he puts "demon seeds" into people.

Some say they fear his power and manipulations—claiming they cannot even be in the same room with him without fearing the loss of their own autonomy.

Here is a description from one of the major sources for this diabolical demon narrative. Donna Zerner, who we know to have been one of the driving forces behind the scenes in the making of this false narrative, tells this story in a public speech about the effect Marc had on her:

"And I was feeling like he was in my head all the time. It was like my brain was very foggy. I couldn't think clearly. I felt like I was in a trance. I was neglecting my work. I was lying to my friends all the time. I didn't make time for my spiritual practice, and I just felt totally ungrounded, un-centered. And then I got sick. I had a menstrual period that was unbelievably heavy that went on for 40 days, to the point where I was totally anemic and fainting. I literally felt like my life force was being sucked away by an energy vampire. I desperately needed to get out, but I felt so entangled in his web and I just, I could not figure a way out."

It can be noted how she avoids any personal responsibility here and when she mentions her serious menstrual problems, she does not attribute them to any physical cause but to Marc's "vampire" powers.

All of this could be rather comical if the people making such claims would not be so virulently obsessed about it. It is tempting to laugh at a negative meme^{iv}. We would like to assume it has no power because it is ridiculous. However, when it is repeated again and again in the echo chambers of the internet where lies ricochet off each other unchallenged, an absurd negative meme can begin to be regarded as fact.

For example, he has been called a sociopath, pedophile, statutory rapist, serial abuser, and confessed child molester on the Internet as well as in various newspapers and magazines.

There was one person for example who not knowing Marc at all but being very connected to the smear campaign organizers wrote to a friend about Marc using all of these names in one short blistering letter. He had never met Marc but had taken the claims spawned by the smear campaign as a given. Somehow, that letter found its way to Marc and he reached out to the author of the letter. They met in a beautiful and moving meeting of significant depth and authenticity at the end of which the author apologized, acknowledging that it was now, based on new information, self-evident to him that none of the claims were true.

The fact that these memes are self-evidently absurd for anyone who has even cursorily checked facts does not prevent a negative meme from being spread on the internet. While the spreading of derogatory, for example racist or anti-Semitic, memes has a tragic and time-honored history, the internet has totally changed the game. As Joshua Trachtenberg points out in his book *The Devil and*

the Jews, the Jews were regularly called black magicians. They were also regularly accused of sexual deviance or rape of Christian women. Paradoxically, Marc Gafni has been made “the Jew” by the Jews.

Disseminating a false meme today is a new art form. It is possible for a group of people to focus on one individual and scapegoat him or her. Narrative trumps and smear campaigns—for example about Barack Obama not being born in the USA—a favorite canard of what has been called the [“Birther” movement](#), is taken as true by tens of millions of people.

While new fact-checking websites have sprung up all over the internet, they cannot keep up with the fake news sites that are being created simultaneously and get far more clicks than the real news. In our post-fact world, clicks have become the new currency.

Anne Applebaum writes in [“Fact-checking in a ‘post-fact world’”](#) in [“The Washington Post”](#):

“All people are more likely to believe in “facts” that [confirm their preexisting opinions](#) and to dismiss those that don’t. But those with unusually strong opinions — those who are more partisan — are less likely to change their views, more likely to claim that fact-checkers themselves are “biased,” and even more likely to spread their views aggressively to their friends. This has always been the case, but social media now multiplies the phenomenon: In a world where people get most of their information from friends, fact-checking doesn’t reach those who need it most.”

MY VIEW OF THE TWO PAINTINGS:

Here is an only partially tongue in cheek summation: Pretty much everyone agrees that Marc is a magician. Those who work with him today, day in and day out, and dozens of people who are highly conscious, intelligent and discerning think of him as something like a White Magician. The demonizers, with their hidden agendas—we will get to that in a moment—have tried to turn him into a black magician.

Obviously, these two narratives are not exactly two. There are as many versions of these two paintings as there are people. Yet, whatever people think of Marc, it seems to fall into one of these two categories. People in category 1 view Marc as a deeply good and healthy human being with enormous gifts and normal human flaws, and with both the audacity AND the humility to give his gifts for the sake of the evolution of love. People in category 2 on the other hand, see his audacity to try and change the world as proof for his narcissistic grandiosity and his normal human flaws as proof for his sociopathy.

I wouldn’t be working for [Marc Gafni and the Center for Integral Wisdom](#) if I didn’t agree—at least in broad strokes—to Painting 1. I believe in our mission to change something in the source code of culture that desperately needs to be changed.

I see Marc as an intellectual and spiritual genius who has so much to give to the world that the world truly needs.

I believe that many people watch or listen to his popular talks and do not grasp the huge depth of his teachings. Most of Marc's public talks are what he has called *second simplicity*, a simplicity that transcends and includes the complexity that precedes it. People watching these talks, all too often do not see the underlying profound scholarship and deep mystical realization that is the source of these teachings. To find your way into those depths, a first start would be to read [Radical Kabbalah](#) or to study with him at [Mystery School](#) or [Wisdom School](#).

On top of all that, I see Marc as a very unusual and profoundly loving human being, who loves many people in a very personal way and who has a unique capacity to hold and care for many people in his huge heart.

I have seen him teach in front of a room with just a few or with hundreds of people with love and wisdom pouring out from him, opening every heart and every mind in that room. I have seen him work hard for hours, days and weeks in a row with a rare combination of energy, love, commitment, diversity, and focus. I have seen him loving the person in front of him and giving her his undivided, loving attention, whether it is a waiter, student, co-worker, academic scholar, or important donor. I have seen him in countless private moments, talking either to me or to a small group of us and I know that he is the same outrageous lover in private as he is in public.

Yet, obviously, he has normal human flaws like every other living person—with Marc being the first to admit that.

Contrary to beliefs of his being a master manipulator, I have seen him struggle to regain his balance when something hit him off-guard, admitting to it openly and finding it back within minutes. I have seen him receive feedback, admit a mistake, and apologize easily and readily under many circumstances. I have seen him learn and grow, asking for and accepting the wisdom of others and giving them credit for it.

I have been working with [Marc Gafni](#) on an almost daily basis for years now; and I must say that nothing I have experienced even vaguely resembles the picture of Marc that has been painted in this smear campaign or the earlier campaigns that are recycled here.

Of course, the attackers will dismiss my view as irrelevant because I work with Marc at the Center. Yet, actually, the precise opposite may be said to be true.

With all the material online about Marc, it is impossible for anyone to get close to him without having to do their own research and come to their own conclusions. That was definitely true for me when I got involved with the Center in 2011. In my assessment of Marc, I have always relied on my own experiences, that of close friends, as well as objective evidence.

The picture that all of us working with Marc are somehow mindless sheep that are brainwashed by him is just ridiculous. Nowhere else in the world so far have I encountered a more mindful, intelligent and loving tribe than at the Center for Integral Wisdom. Even in the midst of this attack, our ONLY concern has been how we can respond to this with integrity, truth, and love.

There are dozens of people, all of high integrity and high discernment, working actively with Marc and the Center. I interact with them constantly. The atmosphere is clean, open and premises on radical autonomy and Unique Self integrity.

I am honored and delighted to be part of such a wonderful team. And yes, we do collaborate often in our writings—especially when it comes to responding to these accusations. That collaboration involves a beautiful and good process of clarification of our thoughts in these matters.

The fact that some people try to make such a process somehow sordid is indicative of their consciousness, not mine or Marc's.

Whenever I post something under my name, I naturally have the final say in what I write and post. Never ever have I experienced any pressure or manipulation from Marc or anybody else in our organization to write anything that I did not want to write. I actually challenge Marc often and have always found him open and responsive to my perspectives. That is why I can say with confidence that I stand by every word in my articles and posts as an Integral thinker, a woman and a human being. What I write is one hundred percent mine.

The question that people usually ask however is twofold.

FIRST, HOW CAN ONE PERSON EVOKE SUCH OPPOSED REACTIONS? SECOND, IS THERE A WAY TO RECONCILE THESE DIFFERENT VIEWS?

With two pictures of one and the same person that differ so much we naturally need to know: [Who is Marc Gafni?](#) Is one of these paintings true and the other one false? If one is false then, how did the false narrative come into existence? Is it just a misinterpretation of the facts? Or is there a fake Marc Gafni meme that has been intentionally created and spread by a group of people with ulterior motives? If only one of the narratives is true, which one is it? Or does the truth lie somewhere in the middle, as many people suggest?

I, myself, am a person who likes to reconcile opposites and heal polarizations. “The truth lies somewhere in the middle” is a meme that speaks to my innermost yearning. I mostly try to see both sides and find ways to settle the differences.

So, I asked myself:

Did Marc's normal human flaws have somehow played a role in creating the demon narrative about him?

How would you feel if somebody took the worst moments of your life and put them together into a public narrative about who you are?

Marc in my personal experience always recognizes mistakes and owns any shadow element that lives in him. He constantly says that none of us is without shadow—we are all “imperfect vessels for the light.”

Could that be the origin of this narrative? I do not think so.

In fact, in these kinds of stories, the Middle Way is the lazy way out:

There is [a great book on character assassination by Martijn Icks and Eric Shiraev called Character Assassination throughout the Ages](#), a well-researched, very deep and credible book that looks at how these kinds of things happen. It points out that in fact, certain kinds of “big people” who are trailblazers in different ways, almost always evoke equally strong negative and positive reactions. It is however when that person is fundamentally threatening to another group of people, be they competitors, former allies, or those who have acted wrongly against such a person and want to cover it up, that the intense demonization comes into play.

The allegations against Marc are just too absurd and horrendous, the vitriol that accompanies them is too intense, to be satisfied with the meme of the middle truth. In this case, the middle way of splitting the negative and the positive evaluations down the middle would simply be a gross form of untruth.

In February 2016, [Daniel Schmachtenberger posted his view of Marc Gafni online](#), based on his own personal experience with Marc as well as careful reading of the extensive online material of the detractors.

First, let me share Daniel's own experience of Marc:

- Re plagiarism – I have experienced Marc credit me and others for things he's learned, more than anyone else I have worked with professionally. This actually stands out.
- Re sociopathy – I have seen Marc apologize and show sadness and remorse. I see him empathize often and genuinely, and extend support at cost to himself, where there is nothing tangible to be gained.
- Re intimate relationships – I know several of his previous partners who are still close friends and allies and respect him and feel respected by him.
- Re ethics and sexuality – I think Marc's teachings on this topic are profound and offer something otherwise missing to the field ethics.
- Re emotional manipulation – Most of the people that have worked closely with Marc in recent years that I know of feel respected and honored in the connection and because of that, have stayed friends despite social pressure to distance arising from this campaign.

Even more importantly, Daniel talks about the danger of getting caught up in the negative memes about Marc that were being spread by the smear campaign at that time:

1. ***Faulty pattern recognition.*** *They will thoughtfully give the benefit of the doubt that likely some of the allegations are made up or exaggerated but assume that some have to be true – it couldn't all come from nowhere. They will say things like “where there is smoke there must be fire” and figure enough wrongdoing to be cautious at least. This is actually a form of presumption of guilt without due process.*
2. ***Appeal to authority.*** *Someone they trust or respect wrote something or signed or shared an article. They must have done their research so we can put our energy where they did.*

3. **Groupthink.** *This is the same as appeal to authority but the authority is the crowd. That many people couldn't be wrong.*
4. **Erring on the side of safety.** *In lieu of knowing all the facts, let's err on the side of safety and assume there is danger. That's better than erring on the other side and possibly condoning or allowing harm. This is another rationalization for presuming guilt. . . . This doesn't factor the harm of wrongful incrimination.*
5. **Misplaced 'moderateness'.** *In lieu of knowing everything, they will assume some is true and some isn't, as a form of reasonable moderateness and bias away from extremism and towards reconciliatory points of view. Except that when there are actual facts, they matter and should be pursued.*

If we want to avoid these fallacies and come to our own conclusions, we need to understand how to discern between a legitimate public critique and a smear campaign.

HOW DO WE KNOW THE TRUTH?—FOUR LITMUS TESTS

In order to discern truth from myths or even outrageous lies—when it comes to sex scandals, righteous or false complaints, and smear campaigns—there are a few litmus tests of discernment we can apply. Mariana Caplan unveiled these key litmus tests in her essay on Marc Gafni, [An Unexpected Twist: False Complaints against Teachers](#)^v. I will build and expand on her list.

1) Have the accusers spoken carefully to all parties involved in the issue before taking action? This minimal bar is even prior to the second litmus test, fact checking.

2) Has a fact-checking mechanism been set up to check and cross check all available evidence before any action is taken? Are there effective and safe pathways for direct meeting, clarifying facts, investigating how various parties are affiliated, the historical context of the relationships, checking possible ulterior motives on all sides, and more? All of these are variables that are necessary to investigate before taking action. A related question: Is there a forum that has the capacity to take account of new evidence as it emerges that might change initial conclusions?

3) Is there a method available for holding all sides accountable, making amends and creating closure through healing and transformation for both sides? Or does one side of the conflict demand the annihilation of the other side no matter what?

4) Is the accused party treated with dignity, or is he or she dehumanized, demonized and treated with cruelty?

It is more than slightly indicative of what is going on in the Marc Gafni story, that the parties attacking Gafni have the wrong answers for all of these questions.

Let's start from the bottom up.

We have already addressed the demonization that many of Marc's detractors tend to use. So, according to [Litmus Test No. 4](#), Marc's detractors have already failed our examination. I have, on the other hand and contrary to what his detractors have said about him, never seen Marc lash out at any

of them. I have been with him in person or on skype in several situations where most people would have lashed out with fury. Yet, even when I see Marc outraged, he still holds even his most virulent attackers in a genuine love. He does not demonize them even when others around him move in that direction. He always holds them in their complexity and even finds something good to say about pretty much everyone.

No. 3—setting up pathways for healing and transformation—doesn't seem so obvious.

Transformation and healing can be a matter of years if not decades. Yet, with an impartial 3rd party in play, there can at least be a process set up that can clarify facts and then over time bring about healing and transformation.

Despite the fact that the objective record indicates that Marc is the one who has been terribly wronged and abused, Marc has offered to meet with anyone in a professional mediated context time and again. There is a long email record of Marc reaching out seeking clarification, healing and resolution.

He wants to “clarify facts and adduce objective evidence” and then from that place, seek “healing, transformation and forgiveness on all sides.” I know that Marc would forgive the terrible suffering that he has experienced, immediately, if there were any takers in genuine healing and transformation. He has said so—many times—in both public and private contexts.

His detractors, on the other hand, keep avoiding these meetings. There are some attackers and ostensible victims who tell people that they would meet but when Marc readily agrees to, they back out.

They have claimed that they cannot get close to him—even in a mediated context—because they feared that he would use his “demonic powers” to manipulate them. Presbyterian Minister Rev. Sam Alexander [in his blog post writes about one such situation in which he was directly involved](#). He called the claim that Marc would manipulate them in a mediated meeting with him, “a load of horseshit” and reported that Marc was completely ready to meet and that the persons in question each found excuses to back out.

About No. 1 and 2—talking to all parties and creating a mechanism for fact checking—I can definitely say that this has not happened. The attackers have not spoken to Marc. Irrevocably damaging action in the written and oral word as well as in deed has been taken by them time and again over the last ten years without ever engaging in dialogue or in fact checking.

Even some of the so-called journalists who [have written articles about Marc Gafni](#) have refused to check facts. Carolyn Baker, for example, [wrote two virulent and false portrayals of Marc](#) in a blog for the Huffington Post in early 2016. She has no relationship to Marc or anyone at the think tank. Seemingly she was recruited by the organizers of the 2016 smear campaign who dumped over fifty blogs and articles onto the internet in the first quarter of 2016. There was no triggering event. The articles simply appeared out of nowhere, organized in larger part directly or indirectly by Stephen Dinan. Baker hung up the phone on our staff-person who called to share with her numerous facts that refuted her story. She does not know Marc, has never reached out to him, etc. Yet she had no problem characterizing Marc as a sociopath who is “not like the rest of us.”

I personally have read most, if not all of the first person accounts, written by the supposed victims, telling their story and making numerous factual assertions about what did or did not happen. I have been in contact with trusted friends and colleagues who collectively, at different stages, had personal contact with virtually all of the key actors—the “supposed victims” in this and the previous smear campaign. I have also read the [extensive evidence that Marc Gafni’s team has gathered](#) over many years from many sources including hundreds of emails written by the alleged “victims” which—to say it straight—shows that they did not tell the truth. This extensive trove of evidence presents very blatant contradictions between what actually happened and what has been claimed in public. This leads me to realize that the people claiming to be victims and others supporting them who have set themselves up as rescuers are in fact acting as perpetrators.

In the next part of this essay, I will focus on the second litmus test as discussed above. This second test is the need for fact checking. While Marc’s detractors fail this test—we cannot. In Part Three of this essay I will discern nine myths that I have found on the internet about Marc Gafni and give you the facts that refute them.

PART THREE: WHO IS THE REAL MARC GAFNI?

In Part One of this article we looked at how postmodernity regressed into the post-truth era. How we gather information in order to render judgment tells us what kind of society we live in. In Part Two we moved from general observations to specifics and back to general distinctions. We talked about the litmus tests that we need to deploy in order to determine if legitimate issues are at stake or if there is a smear campaign going on hiding behind the veneer of righteous victim advocacy.

In the next part of this essay, I want to focus on the second litmus test. This second test is the need for fact checking. While Marc's detractors fail this test—we cannot. So let us do some fact checking.

MYTHS & FACTS

MYTH NO. 1:

THERE WAS A SPONTANEOUS EXPLOSION ON THE INTERNET ABOUT MARC AFTER A NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ABOUT HIM, WRITTEN BY A REPORTER WHO HAD NO AGENDA AND WAS SIMPLY REPORTING FACTS AS HE SAW THEM, ON DECEMBER 25TH, 2015.

FACT:

This is clearly a lie.

First, without a shadow of a doubt, I can say that this is an orchestrated campaign purposefully fabricated in ways that make it look like a spontaneous explosion.

Second, the reporter was enrolled, directly or indirectly, by Stephen Dinan to write a “hit article” on Marc.

HOW DO WE KNOW THIS?

Stephen Dinan, a key mastermind behind the campaign, told Barbara Marx Hubbard's daughter about this article as early as October 2015. I have personally read an email dated October 13th from Barbara's daughter to Steven Hassan, a self-appointed “cult buster” who Stephen Dinan had put her in touch with to “free her mother” from the grip of Marc's “evil magic.” In that email, Barbara's daughter reports to Hassan what Dinan had told her:

“Stephen [Dinan] is putting his efforts toward exposing Gafni in a major way publicly with an article, possibly in the New York Times.”

On October 15th, Stephen Dinan responds into that same email thread:

“I would say that I have gone from being concerned about Barbara and the Shift Network to recognizing that this is very important not just for us but for the world. That's actually my primary motive now. Protecting the Shift Network is by far the easiest part. Ensuring a good

result for the whole is harder, which also requires intervening with Barbara, who has become one of his lead door-openers into more power/respect/trust with others.”

That was the moment when Barbara’s daughter contacted her mother and sent her the communications with the words:

“I feel like I have been royally taken advantage of by these men who one should be able to trust. Because I was wary of Gafni from the beginning I was vulnerable to their hype. I feel like they wanted me to fund your demise. It does not get lower than that.”

She later told her mother:

“If anyone tried to do this to my daughter, I would have called the police.”

You can read Barbara’s account of the whole story in her article, [SPEAKING OUT for the Evolution of Public Culture](#) or listen to her [here](#).

Dinan claims in an email to Barbara to have had no direct or indirect contact with the NY Times reporter. There is a wealth of objective information that shows that this claim is false. The reporter also claimed in speaking to Marc and to his representatives to have no knowledge of Dinan. This was clearly not true.

In an article in the Huffington Post in October 2016, Stephen Dinan describes the exact strategy that he has enacted with Marc. This time he prescribes it as a strategy against Donald Trump. While many of us might feel that this is a good and righteous endeavor, it is striking again that his main concern is not truth (in his whole strategy there is no process for truth finding involved) but to touch people emotionally and to “neutralize a powerful person’s ability to retaliate.”

“The key to sharing your story is to NOT make it into a political statement, endorsement, or even say how you are voting. It’s about sharing your true story with as much vulnerability, honesty, and simplicity as you can. By not endorsing a candidate or sharing a party identification, you maintain your credibility.

Sharing your story needs to be on video because video is what touches people emotionally.

Then, all the rest of us can commit to amplifying these testimonial stories on Facebook and other social media, both by posting to our personal pages and by paying to boost those posts to professional and fan pages with larger audiences.

In this way, Facebook can become an ever-increasing flood of personal stories from those hurt by Trump.

As happened with Roger Ailes, it is the volume of testimony from many people in parallel during a short time period that can paint a full picture and neutralize a powerful person’s ability to retaliate.”

Replace Trump with Gafni, and this is EXACTLY the strategy he and his collaborators have enacted during this whole smear campaign.

Even in this case, I want to point out that “the end does NOT justify the means.” Otherwise, we are not better than what we fight against. We become part of the problem instead of the solution.

MYTH NO. 2:

MARC “ADMITTED TO A SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP WITH A 14-YEAR-OLD GIRL. HE WAS ALSO ACCUSED OF MOLESTING A 13-YEAR-OLD GIRL OVER A PERIOD OF NINE MONTHS.”

FACT:

This is one of the most outrageous misrepresentations I have seen so far. Not only has the author of this quote on Marc’s Wikipedia page (quoted [here from 10/11/16](#)) made two people out of one, but wherever this is quoted it looks like Marc, the 56 year old, is having sex with a 13 or 14 year old child.

HERE ARE SOME FACTS:

- Marc met Sara when he was 19. When their relationship, which lasted for several months, began, Sara was 14. Her birthday is Nov. 30th and the short relationship began in December.
- Marc describes the relationship as profoundly loving. He says that it was limited to what is now referred to as teenage necking and that the loving nature of the relationship at the time was supported by a long letter from Sara to Marc after the relationship was over.
- His version of the story was supported by [a polygraph that Marc took in 2006 with Gordon H. Barland, Ph.D.](#), one of the leading experts in this field.

At this point, I want to emphasize that the idea that polygraphs should be dismissed is not at all accurate. Polygraphs depend in part on the expertise of the person administering the tests. Security services all over the world use polygraph as a vital tool. Dr. Barland is one of the leading experts on polygraph and has trained security services around the world. Dr. Barland was the director of polygraph research for the department of defense of the United States.

Marc Gafni took extensive polygraphs on this and a second story about a 17 year old that has been circulated. Both of these women have been in close touch with each other over decades and are in close touch with Marc’s most virulent adversaries, who have strongly encouraged them and demonized Marc to them for decades. In both stories, Marc’s version of the events that directly contradicts their assertions is supported by the polygraphs.

The question remains why Sara’s and Marc’s accounts of their relationship differ so much from each other. Of course, there is no way for us to definitely answer that question. However an important fact might shine some light upon it: Vicki Polin, a licensed therapist, who claimed in one of her articles to have been Sara’s counselor or therapist, is mainly known for her appearance on the Oprah Winfrey show in 1989. There she claimed to have memories of murdering a baby in a satanic cult. Those “memories” have been severely criticized by many experts. Although we cannot know for sure, we should at least raise the question when reading Sara’s story about Marc whether Vicki Polin “supported” Sara in the same misleading ways that she was once “supported” during the time she dealt with what many writers consider being her own false memories?^{vi}

Sara herself suggests in an early account she posted about this on the Internet in 2004, that she was heavily influenced by therapists and counselors who encouraged her to view this as an abuse story:

“After talking with counselors, lawyers, and professionals who advise and counsel sexual perpetrators, I learned that in 99% of cases, people who compulsively sexually abuse girls or women, especially those who were abused themselves as children, don't stop. These are dangerous people. The more we are silent about them, the more they have the freedom to act out their sexual compulsions.”

MYTH NO. 3:

IN 2006, THERE WAS A FORMAL POLICE INVESTIGATION AS A RESULT OF ACCUSATIONS AGAINST MARC FROM THREE WOMEN. THIS WAS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE.

FACT:

In 2006, representatives of two women claimed in writing that they had registered legal complaints against Marc with the Israeli police. Nine years later, it turned out that—not only was the *content* of the complaints false which I will talk about in the next myth/fact below, but the very claim that complaints *were registered* with the police—was itself false.

In 2015, a prominent attorney in Israel, Nitsa Cohen, did a complete check and found that no complaints had ever been registered with the police ([see here for her legal letter](#)). There is information that suggests that the police had told the women that, since the relationships were, according to them, fully consensual, there was no ground for complaints. The women hired a lawyer from Haifa in Israel who, according to research done with prominent attorneys and clinicians in Haifa, is known as a “victim feminist” and “headline chaser.” Apparently, the women ultimately fired this attorney but not before she did great damage in the public space, making false claims in the press, in the name of the two women involved, which were—according to them and their representatives in written emails to Marc—not true.

The question remains: Why did Marc not simply call the police in 2006 to find out if there were complaints?

There are two main reasons:

1. Marc had returned to the United States immediately upon hearing about the complaints in order to recover the material that had been deleted from his computer. Without recovering the materials from the computer, Marc would have no ability to prove his innocence. For that reason, Marc traveled back to the USA where he finally recovered the deleted emails about a year later.
2. Marc's attorney mistakenly believed the press reports and took it as a given that official police complaints existed. He suggested that if Marc were to call the police, they could ask him to come back from the USA to Israel as part of their investigation. For Marc to do so would have required him to spend approximately \$500k in legal and related fees—money he did not have available. In addition to that, the attorney advised Marc (even though he was

fully innocent) not to engage in a legal fight on the topic of sexual harassment in a political atmosphere in Israel, between 2006 and 2010, that tended to automatically believe women, and disbelieve men.

This is an excerpt from a letter that Dr. Ruth Engel Eldar wrote to Marc after talking with Chaya, Marc's ex-wife, who was one of the forces behind the false complaints in 2006 as well as the smear campaign in 2015/16:

"She confirmed to me what the lawyer we hired had already written in a statement, that no complaints were ever filed because the police did not register them. It was clear that she knew that no complaints were registered even though she has said many times online that there were police complaints. I was shocked to hear this because they had told you and the rest of the world that there were complaints. I remember well when I called you last year to tell you and you were in full shock and did not believe me. You burst out crying if you remember, because everything you had done for eight years was under the assumption that there were complaints.

What really revealed Chaya's state of mind is that she did not seem aware that there was anything wrong with telling you and the entire world that there were police complaints when there were not.

As I shared with you when we talked, she must still be in love with you in a distorted way because her existence internally revolves around what she called, you "falling again". It is also important to share that she told me that she was the one who organized the women and pushed this all forward. When you put that together with what you shared with me, that several months before this happened in 2006, she talked to you about you and her remarrying, the obsession becomes clear if not less frightening. It is very hard for people who do not know malice to recognize it. . . . I also want to say that Chaya told us clearly that she was a prime organizer of the complaints. She said it proudly with a kind of delight that surprised us."

MYTH NO. 4:

MARC SEXUALLY HARASSED WOMEN IN ISRAEL WHO WERE ON HIS STAFF OR STUDENTS. THIS WAS CAREFULLY INVESTIGATED IN ISRAEL AND FOUND TO BE TRUE.

This myth has been repeated in countless places on the web, particularly in the Jewish media and countless Jewish websites especially those associated with the Jewish Renewal movement but not only.

FACT:

This is a complete fabrication. Both [Clint Fuhs in his original Integral Institute report](#) as well as Mariana Caplan, Sally Kempton and numerous other legal and other evaluators who have read all of the extensive material available have written that this is simply not true. The claims made of sexual harassment, false promises to marry, etc. were not true. This assertion is supported by hundreds of

pages of documentary evidence that comes in part from the very extensive email, skype and chat record between Marc and the parties involved.

All of this was supported by extensive polygraph, which confirmed all of the documentary evidence.

MYTH NO. 5:

MARC IS A SOCIOPATH... AND OTHER CHARACTER ATTACKS.

FACT:

This kind of psychologizing people on the web, especially by angry ex-wives, partners, or students is not credible and is in fact a very dangerous phenomenon. It is hard to objectively refute a subjective character attack—something that is obviously wrong—but I will share with you my own experience with this.

The first time I read this “diagnosis” of Marc was in an article by his ex-wife Chaya. Hopefully, nobody reading this article will think that a disenthralled ex-wife is a good source for a clinical diagnosis. Unfortunately, Chaya does think of herself that way.

In her blog-post “I admit it, I was using Gafni, too” she is telling the story of how she wrote her Master thesis in Clinical Psychology about her ex-husband.

Are you for real? Is that what they consider a valid thesis in America? I am more than a bit flabbergasted by that, I have to admit.

This is what she wrote in the article:

“Most providentially, at that time I was getting my Masters in Clinical Psychology. I had a thesis to write. It was obvious what my topic would be. *Why we women did it*. Because G!d forbid I should be so mean-spirited as to focus on the abuser’s responsibilities. No, no. It was ‘What was so very wrong with me and my sisters that we got entangled with a sociopath?’”

Later on, in the same article, she writes about a popular book by Martha Stout *The Sociopath Next Door*. Seemingly, she thinks that this is a credible source for diagnosing someone. Oh, well... And not only that. Reading on in that article it becomes clear that she has used the typologies of that book to design her questionnaire and “prove” that she and “her sisters” indeed fell prey to a sociopath. Talk about [circular reasoning](#)... I can hardly believe that this was accepted as a thesis.

On the other hand, Marc’s detractors go out of their way to devalue any of the serious evaluations that he has posted on his website, totally ignoring the fact that some of these therapists have been working with him for long periods of time. This makes Marc one of the few, if not the only teacher in the (Integral) Spiritual community not only willing to spend time on therapy looking at his own shadows, but also making that transparent for everyone to see. Integral followers have often demanded something like this, with virtually nobody actually doing it.

The most recent of these is [Peter Dunlap's assessment of Marc](#). Dunlap has worked with Marc from 2011 until now and has had direct contact with at least one of the most virulent accusers.

“In light of the recent spate of attacks, let me just say that Marc is psychologically sound, a significantly empathic and ethical person whose character bears no resemblance to the projections described on the web. Marc's goodness, commitment to transformation, and core integrity are, based on my work with him, beyond question. To even need to say this is almost inappropriate, but given the memes that have expressed themselves in the blogosphere, the self-evident may need to be stated.”

There are also a series of evaluations after the false complaints of 2006 ([Berke](#) and [Meehan](#)).

MYTH NO. 6:

MARC THREATENS AND DISCREDITS PEOPLE TO KEEP THEM FROM TELLING THE TRUTH.

FACT:

This I have read so often and it just couldn't be further from the truth. Actually, seeing the discrepancy between what was said here and what actually happened helped me discern facts from myths more than anything else did.

To give but one recent example, Rabbi David Ingber, one of the key actors behind the false claims in 2006 and the smear campaign in 2016, says in his video testimonial:

“And the great irony of what's been happening in the last couple of months is that of course Gafni wants to spin this as some kind of vendetta or some kind of Internet smear campaign, and the reality is that he's the Internet smear campaign master. He's the one that has spoken against all manner of people to discredit them from seeing the truth.”

Nevertheless, no matter how often people have claimed that Marc had threatened them, the actual truth is that Marc never even spoke badly about a person, not in public, and not even in private. Does he sometimes criticize people? Of course he does. Has he threatened or defamed anyone? Never, ever.

Why then would Ingber say this?

Is he maybe trying to respond in advance to Marc sharing information that would appropriately discredit his own credibility or that of key people involved?

Marc has tried to let this go for ten years by consistently taking the high road. This last smear campaign of 2016 was a deliberately orchestrated campaign to destroy him and, by association, many of those he holds dearly in the world.

Many of us at the Center have urged him to break the silence, speak the truth of these matters, and reveal who these people are. To suggest that this is Marc being aggressive or threatening is

ridiculous. Moreover, he did not initiate this smear campaign, nor did he trigger it in any way. In fact, he has done his best to walk away time and again for a decade.

MYTH NO. 7:

MARC'S VICTIMS ARE TAKING A RISK IN BREAKING THE SILENCE.

Chaya in an article in the *Times of Israel*:

“Putting this two-decade chronicle into print is a risk for me.
Everyone who cares about me is begging me to just “Keep quiet”.
And yet I can’t. So, in honor of them, I leave out my name.
But in honor of the victims I share my story.”

Really? I mean: REALLY?

FACT:

First of all, Marc is the one who has been silent for so long that probably nobody thought he would ever break the silence.

His so-called “victims” on the other hand have been posting their stuff all over the internet for more than a decade now—since 2003-04—most of the time under the guise of anonymity.

The only risk they take is the risk that one day they might be found by their own conscience. How scary that must be for some of them.

MYTH NO. 8:

MARC DOES NOT HAVE A PHD FROM OXFORD.

FACT:

This is clearly a lie. You can read his doctorate together with a letter of recommendation by his doctoral thesis supervisor Moshe Idel published in the two-volume book *Radical Kabbalah*. You can also look up his doctorate in the registry of doctorates of Oxford University.

MYTH NO. 9:

MARC HAS OFTEN BEEN CONVICTED OF PLAGIARISM.

FACT:

First of all, I want to repeat and support Daniel Schmachtenberger’s personal experience with Marc as expressed in his February 2016 post on the [Center for Integral Wisdom Statement](#):

“Re plagiarism – I have experienced Marc credit me and others for things he’s learned, more than anyone else I have worked with professionally. This actually stands out.”

I have seen Marc quote others in his oral teachings as well in the footnotes or the main text of his books. I have also seen him rely on others to take care of this for him. Yet, in good academic tradition, I know that this is very important for him. And yes, that actually does stand out.

I am aware of exactly two times where this issue came up.

One was in an article that Marc had written half of with a co-author. The part written by the co-author inadvertently used material from an article that was not cited. Marc published that article on the web without carefully reviewing the material of this co-author. His co-author wrote Marc directly and apologized saying “my bad.”

The second time was a position paper that he had worked to support, which a staffer inadvertently posted as Marc’s. It was one of thousands of pieces published by that staffer on his site. Once he became aware of it, he immediately took it offline and apologized.

This however is mixed in with claims made after the false claims in Israel—during the period of time when Marc was forced to go silent while trying to recover deleted emails from his computer. During that time, one of the organizers of the false complaints, his former wife Chaya Lester, made the claim that she had written substantive parts of Soul Prints. Marc substantively debunks these claims fully in [his response to Lester](#).

Marc has written and published at least ten serious and highly original books and because I work at the think tank I know that there are many more on the way.

Chaya has written and published... what was it again? Ah, her dubious master thesis and a couple of blog-posts. Really?

The other claim was made by a close associate of Chaya’s and former associate of Marc’s with whom he parted ways many years ago. This claim in regard to a book they co-authored and published together on Lilith and the nature of feminine shadow is compellingly debunked by Marc [here](#).

MORE INFORMATION

Even after knowing these facts, it might still be difficult to understand how a story like this could unfold. I would recommend some of the articles below that tell the story of the smear campaign in more detail. Most of them have been written in the last few months and are just being published. This is the larger field that I am making a contribution to.

1. The [response to the 2016 smear campaign by the Center for Integral Wisdom board and the fifty comments by communal leaders and colleagues of Marc](#) that will give you a sense of who Marc really is.
2. Clint Fuhs’ epic study called [Anatomy of a Smear](#), which deals in depth with the smear campaign of 2016 and the prior dimensions that caused it.
3. [Lisa Engles’ response to the absurd attacks on the former board chair of the Center](#) for his association with Marc, which also deals in depth with some of the key false stories as well as here longer article called “[How Fake News Is Used to Undermine Leaders: A Case Study](#)”.
4. [Claire Molinard’s article](#) on Wikipedia flaws and the false portrayal of Marc

5. [Rev. Sam Alexander's article on Patheos](#) on one aspect of the smear campaign
6. [Marc Gafni's response to Chaya Lester](#)
7. It is also worth looking at the [CIW Newsletter that I wrote](#), which talks about the nature of one piece of the Jewish Forward's involvement and coverage of the smear campaign.
8. There are also some key extant articles on the smear campaign and false complaints of 2006 and the web attack of 2011, all with many of the same people involved behind the scenes, which are all available [here](#).
9. In particular, you may want to read Marc's article about [The Evolution of Public Culture: Crowd Sourcing a Witch Hunt: An Eight-Step Guide to Internet Abuse](#).
10. For a full response to the smear campaign in all of its dimensions, see [WholsMarcGafni.com](#).

There is, however, another story with a deeper mythological storyline that deserves to be told. It is the story of the Murder of Eros that I will address in my fourth and final part of this exposé.

PART FOUR: THE CHARACTER ASSASSINATION OF MARC GAFNI & THE MURDER OF EROS

In Part One of this essay, we have looked into the regressive memes of the post-truth and post-fact era of postmodernity. In Part Two, we have introduced and applied the four litmus tests for discerning truth to the case study of Marc Gafni. In Part Three, we have discerned nine major myths about Marc Gafni and done some actual fact checking.

There is, however, another story with a deeper mythological storyline that deserves to be told.

It is the story of . . .

THE MURDER OF EROS

Eros is a subject that Marc has been teaching on extensively and in depth for many decades and he has been making a substantive contribution to this field. Again, I want to quote and support Daniel Schmachtenberger's evaluation of Marc's contribution from his February 2016 post:

- Re ethics and sexuality – I think Marc's teachings on this topic are profound and offer something otherwise missing to the field ethics.

In my evaluation, a story like this smear campaign can only unfold in a world and an atmosphere where Eros has been suppressed.

This is clearly the case in many of the traditional circles that many of us, including Marc, have grown up in.

Yet, even the so-called sexual revolution hasn't really healed this. We thought we had crossed the final frontier with the sexual revolution and its apparent sexual freedom but we didn't get to the other side. The sexual revolution hasn't healed shame nor has it ushered in a new vision of sexuality or—deeper still—of Eros.

In our public culture today, women are still seen as seducers, while men are seen as perpetrators. It is a culture in which terrible victim shaming abounds, while name rape generated by false complaints rooted in confirmation bias—aka powerful men must be abusers—has replaced public debate.

The sexual, which models the much larger [Eros, according to Marc's teachings](#), has withdrawn into the shadows. The [shadow is our unlive life](#), the life we don't dare to live, the life-force, evolutionary impulse or Eros in us that is suppressed and then [gets distorted and projected outwards in its distorted form](#).

It is then in that atmosphere what we call the Murder of Eros, or what Wilhelm Reich has called [The Murder of Christ](#), takes place. And no, I am not saying that Marc is *Christ*. What Reich is referring to as Christ energy is the unarmored and raw life force in human beings.

Throughout history, people like Jesus, Mahatma Gandhi, or Martin Luther King, people who have had an abundance of this erotic life force in them and have expressed it through in their sacred activism, have fallen victim to this Murder.

Today it is Marc Gafni, who not only clearly has an abundance of Eros, but has also wrestled with it in his own life. In some ways similar to his more famous predecessors, he is an activist who has come up with an audacious vision and—in his case—a post-postmodern “dharma” on Eros, Spirit, Self, and sexuality that has the potential to “shift the source code of culture.”

In his words from the Summer Festival 2014:

“Something started in the sixties. Something opened up. But that work was left undone. We are going to finish it; we are going to take it the next great step in the evolution of love.”

As Marc has pointed out so often:

“Every breakdown of Ethics is sourced in a failure of Eros.”

Or deeper still:

“When Eros is not realized, pseudo-Eros always comes in its place. When Eros is denied, pseudo-Eros demands its pound of flesh.

If the separate self will not die, there remains a deep knowing that some sort of death is still required. No longer will the death be that of our own ego, but the death of the other. And so we bear witness to some of the world’s most horrible atrocities, all in the name of a higher power to which we refuse to surrender our own lives.”

Read more [here](#), in Marc Gafni: *Your Unique Self* Chapters 17-19, Integral Publishers 2012, and in *The Mystery of Love*, pp.24-31, Atria 2003. Or [pre-order his new book A Return to Eros here](#).

What comes in the wake of [shame](#) and pseudo-Eros is Envy, Jealousy, and Greed, which lie at the core of Malice, as Joseph Berke has pointed out in his seminal book *The Tyranny of Malice*.

“Malice must never admit of itself so it must always plead other motives,” says Milan Kundera.

The other motives pleaded are that of being a protector, rescuer, or victim. This is famously referred to in Karpman’s “drama triangle”, or the “victim triangle,” where the actual perpetrator is either the seeming victim or the rescuer, while the seeming perpetrator is the actual victim.

[“...some sort of death is still required.”](#) Eros needs to be murdered, in the other person. If “I” cannot have it, nobody can.

This is why we need a new vision of Eros, of sexuality, Self, shadow, Evolutionary Love, and Spirit so desperately. Marc’s dharma and the work of the Center for Integral Wisdom are essential for our world.

Eros is the strongest force there is. It can either transform and uplift or degrade and destroy.

We need to engage in genuine “dharma combat” to clarify the dharma. We need embodiment practices and moral guidelines. We need purification of our own impulses and compassionate mutual feedback to start seeing our blind spots or shadows.

“First take the beam out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.” (Matthew 7:5)

Let me conclude this article with Marc's impossible dream:

“What if the result of this explosion was the seeking of a higher clarification? What if over time, all the parties could sit together, fact check, and seek genuine truth and reconciliation?

Some of the key actors in this story are the same people who demand that Israel sit and negotiate with the Palestinians. I understand that demand, despite the terrorism, killing of each other's children, and countless atrocities.

Yes, Israel and Palestine must make peace. How can we demand that they make peace if we cannot, in far different circumstance, even make peace between ourselves?

I am ready and willing.”

Let us stop that age-old fight between dark and light, between love and un-love, Eros and Thanatos.

Let us heal the outrageous pain of the world through Outrageous Love.

May we all find peace—not the pseudo-peace of the death of Eros or what Reich has called the character armor, but a peace that is vibrant with life, love, and with the impulse of evolution that is Eros.

ENDNOTES:

ⁱ The basic points made from the beginning of the article until this point were initially drafted by Marc Gafni in an internal symposium at the Center for Integral Wisdom Think Tank where I am the co-executive director.

ⁱⁱ [Dr. Marc Gafni](#) is a Visionary Philosopher, Author, and Social Innovator. He is the Co-Founder and President of the [Center for Integral Wisdom](#), an Activist Think Tank committed to evolving the source code of human existence based on what Marc has called “The Universe: A Love Story” principles.

ⁱⁱⁱ “Actual Malice refers to a legal distinction as is pointed out in [this article](#):

“Melania Trump’s lawsuit describes both publishers’ conduct as “despicable, abhorrent, intentional, malicious, and oppressive.” But the legal battle will hinge on a specific descriptor her lawsuit used to describe Tarpley and the Daily Mail’s actions: “actual malice,” which basically means that the publishers knew, or should have known, that something they published was false.”

^{iv} A meme as we use the term here is “a cultural item that is transmitted by repetition and replication in a manner analogous to the biological transmission of genes.” <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/meme>

^v Mariana Caplan first wrote about these litmus tests in her essay [An Unexpected Twist: False Complaints Against Teachers](#) concerning scandals with spiritual teachers:

“There are a number of simple litmus tests of discernment which reveal whether the critique of a teacher in an apparent scandal is primarily motivated by a desire to protect the innocent, or is just a convenient veneer which hides the malice, fear, jealousy, or power motivations of those who decry the scandal and who may even benefit from it.

The first litmus test is: Have the spiritual leaders and others involved spoken carefully to all parties involved in the issue before taking action?

Second: Has a fact-checking mechanism set up to check, and cross check, all available evidence regarding the claims of both sides before taking action?

Third: Is there a protocol for healing and forgiveness which is effective and safe for both sides?

Fourth: Is the accused party treated with dignity, or is he or she dehumanized, demonized and treated with cruelty?”

^{vi} There is a whole literature about what has been called false memory syndrome, see e.g. [here](#).