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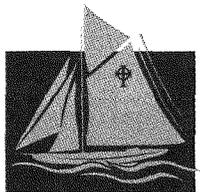
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Counterfeit Code

Answering The Da Vinci Code Heresies

James A. Beverley



BayRidge
B O O K S

Counterfeit Code: Answering The Da Vinci Code Heresies

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Introduction

Author on a Mission

Dan Brown probably does not consider himself a missionary. That term conjures up images of faraway jungles and Protestant and Catholic ambassadors of the Christian gospel. Dan Brown is no Jesuit, and he does not sound like a missionary for the Southern Baptist Convention. However, the author of *The Da Vinci Code* is on a mission, whether he admits it or not. My concern is that he is unaware of the danger of his mission, not just for him but for everyone who believes the counterfeit code of his novel.

Sometime in the last few years Dan Brown heard of a radical ideology about Jesus Christ, Mary Magdalene, the Bible, and early church history. This new worldview involved allegations about secret societies and power plays by the Vatican. Some of the most famous figures in the worlds of art and science were also mentioned as crucial players.

Dan Brown appears to have embraced these new theories and has become a missionary for them. He did not spread the good news by preaching. He wrote a book. And that book has become the most widely sold adult novel in the entire history of humanity. *The Da Vinci Code* is now "the Bible" of this new gospel. And, Dan Brown has become its most famous apostle.

Readers of this book need to understand three important realities about *The Da Vinci Code* and its author. First, this is not just a novel. It is a novel that claims to be based on facts. The famous opening pages state that "All descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents, and secret rituals in this novel are accurate." If only Dan Brown would withdraw this misleading statement from his novel, there would be no need to worry about its false teachings about Jesus, Christian faith, Mary Magdalene, paganism, sexual rituals, the Bible, history, secret societies, Opus Dei, witchcraft, and Leonardo da Vinci.

Second, the novel is full of sloppy thinking and is based on seriously flawed research. *The Da Vinci Code* does deserve praise as a thriller novel, in my opinion, though a few reviewers have disliked it. But regardless of the literary merits, I sincerely believe Dan Brown owes his readers (especially his Christian ones) an apology for his inadequate research and careless thought, and for presenting as "fact" views that have been long discredited by experts.

Third, Dan Brown does not seem to be concerned enough to deal with evidence and arguments against his radical and harmful views. This is a moral, intellectual, and spiritual tragedy. As I will demonstrate in this book, Dan Brown has misled millions by following theories that have no credibility. His few public statements show little ability or desire on his part to address the strong case against his views.

Brown has basically said that he is glad that people are taking his book seriously. Fine, he still needs to take more seriously, and respond to, the abundant proof of experts that he has been duped by a few crackpot conspiracy theorists. In his defense, he is right that historically females have often been put down by the Church, but this is no justification for advancing a whole range of flawed views that are utterly foolish and untrue.

When I first heard about *The Da Vinci Code* I could not understand all the fuss about a novel. Now, after seeing the grave impact it is having on the Christian faith of many people, I know better. I have examined virtually every factual claim made in the

novel. While we cannot look at every issue, this book lays out the evidence for the fact that Dan Brown is an unreliable guide for anyone interested in the truth about Jesus Christ and many of the related issues raised in *The Da Vinci Code*.

None of my criticisms are meant to deny Dan Brown's right to write or say what he believes, whether in a novel or otherwise. I defend his right to freedom of speech and freedom of religion. I admire his writing ability and his daily discipline as an author. Further, I believe that Christians should defend his liberty and do nothing that challenges his rights as a human being or as an American citizen.

Dan Brown appears to be a really nice guy. I do not question his sincerity or the motives of his writings. Given this, I hope he will show himself open enough to examine the evidence against his views and respond appropriately. Where he is wrong, he should admit it. Where he has damaged the faith of millions of Christians, he should apologize. He should not allow his unbelievable success as an author to blind him to his obligations to deal with the errors and false views that have made *The Da Vinci Code* a very dangerous model for looking at history and for studying religious issues.

Like Dan Brown, I am glad that his novel has led to serious engagement with very important spiritual and intellectual matters. However, it is very alarming that millions of people have used the strident claims of *The Da Vinci Code* as a rationale for their beliefs and views that have virtually no merit. Brown's views gain acceptance not only because people do not have the ability to investigate them, but mostly because they fit so conveniently with popular views of our day.

C. S. Lewis wrote that good philosophy must exist because bad philosophy needs to be answered. The same argument applies in relation to bad history and theology. I have written this book because I believe that *The Da Vinci Code* is built on bad research and flawed logic. I urge readers to now follow my arguments and examine the evidence for themselves.