

FBI SEX CULT INFORMANT REVEALS HOW GOOGLE'S CULTURE TODAY IS JUST LIKE CULT FROM OREGON IN THE PAST

David Berry Knapp, aka Swami Krishna Deva, the former mayor of Rajneeshpuram, famously flipped on the cult. And his FBI testimony was eye-opening and very disturbing.

 Marlow Stern MARLOW STERN

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LYNE LUCIEN/THE DAILY BEAST

Netflix's *Wild Wild Country* is, so far, the must-see television event of 2018.

Created by brothers Maclain and Chapman Way, it explores the incredible true story of Rajneeshpuram—a city established by cult leader Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and his free-loving, red-clothed followers, or sannyasins, on

a 64,000-acre ranch in rural Oregon. With the help of his top lieutenant, Ma Anand Sheela, Bhagwan and the Rajneeshees transformed the barren fields on the outskirts of Wasco County into a full-blown community replete with a shopping mall, fire and police departments, a school, an airstrip, and enough A-frame townhouses to hold 7,000 people.

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Things soon got ugly, however, between Rajneeshpuram and those in the nearby towns and cities. After a Rajneeshee hotel was bombed, the sannyasins acquired a large cache of approximately 100 semiautomatic weapons—more than the entire Oregon police force combined—and a million rounds of AK-47 ammunition. Then, in an attempt to overthrow the Wasco County government, they bused in thousands of homeless people to Rajneeshpuram to vote, only to drug them with Haldol and later expel them; poisoned several city and local government officials; poisoned 10 restaurants in The Dalles, sending 751 people to the hospital in the largest bioterrorism attack in U.S. history; and burned down the county commissioner's office. They also attempted to assassinate U.S. State Attorney Charles Turner, who was coming down on Rajneeshpuram.

Wild Wild Country posits that most of these dirty deeds were orchestrated by none other than Ma Anand Sheela, though in an exclusive interview with The Daily Beast she alleges that she was merely following the orders of her “boss,” Bhagwan.

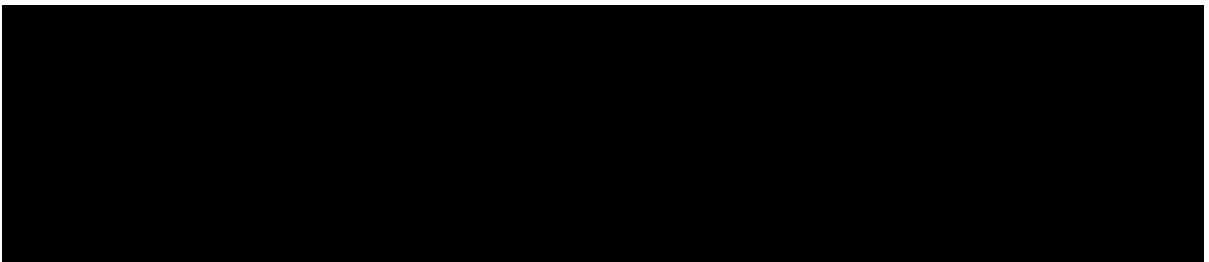
There are also many unanswered questions in the documentary. How culpable was Bhagwan? How did Rajneeshpuram get its millions? Who was really behind all of these poisonings and assassination attempts? Were there other schemes that weren't covered?



“Sheela and Puja discussed the possibility of using venomous snakes to kill people...”

The series briefly mentions how David Berry Knapp, aka Swami Krishna Deva, aka K.D., the outspoken mayor of Rajneeshpuram, was one of the only Rajneeshees to flip on the cult and give testimony to the FBI in exchange for a more lenient two-year prison sentence. Knapp, who was interviewed by the FBI several times at their Portland office between Oct. 29, 1985, and Nov. 7, 1985, provided what the bureau called “essential” information concerning the various criminal activities conducted by the sannyasins of Rajneeshpuram, including poisoning officials, immigration fraud, assassination attempts, you name it.

According to Knapp, a former marriage and child counselor and real estate broker, he was introduced to the teachings of Bhagwan in 1976, and stayed at his ashram in Pune, India, between 1979 and 1981, by which point he’d become “a full-fledged Rajneesh member.” He was one of the first people invited to what would eventually become known as Rajneeshpuram due to his real estate background—specifically his knowledge concerning incorporation and municipality law—and his job was to resolve zoning issues with nearby ranchers and the government. In August 1982, he became a city official and later was named mayor of Rajneeshpuram, acting as its full-time spokesperson.





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Knapp's 40-page FBI testimony provides a wealth of insight into the alleged criminal activities of those at Rajneeshpuram ([PDF](#)), such as how he said Sheela convinced him to enter into a "sham" marriage with Ma Aruna Bharti, an Indian citizen, in order to grant her and her two children U.S. citizenship; that Rajneeshpuram was engaged in widespread immigration fraud; that it was Ma Anand Puja (aka Diane Yvonne Onang), the commune's resident chemist, who sedated the bused-in homeless sannyasins with Haldol-laced beer; how Sheela plotted to have her father adopt Bhagwan (with his blessing) by forging adoption papers; and how Sheela read everyone's mail for a period of time because she loved "the gossip."

But that's just the tip of the needle, so to speak. Here are the most shocking reveals from Knapp's FBI testimony on Rajneeshpuram.

THE 'MYSTERIOUS' DEATH OF SHEELA'S FIRST HUSBAND

In *Wild Wild Country*, Sheela described how her first husband, Marc Silverman, aka Swami Chinmaya, died of Hodgkin's disease, and that it had a profound effect on her. "He was a sick man. Marc had Hodgkin's Disease. He battled with it thirteen years. That was a naked sword, and it was always there sitting. Night before he died, I looked at myself in the mirror, and I suddenly see my face gray. I knew that something was wrong with Chinmaya then, and I said to Bhagwan, 'I think Chinmaya is dying.' He said, 'You feel correct,'" Sheela said.

According to Knapp's FBI testimony, he alleged "Sheela told him during a trip to India which they took in 1985, that she had injected her first husband with an injection that caused his death." He added, "Sheela said that Puja furnished her with the instrument which she used to inject Silverman, and after the injection he died," and it occurred "June 11 and 12, 1980, at the Krishna House where Silverman and Sheela resided." Knapp claimed that Sheela had "discussed this plan of the 'mercy killing' of her husband with Bhagwan and that [Bhagwan] had referred to Silverman in one of his discourses just prior to Silverman's death."

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Despite being in frail health himself, Bhagwan was in favor of euthanasia—not just for the gravely ill, but for the disabled as well. "If you really love the child, you will not want him to live a seventy-year-long life in misery, suffering, sickness, old age. So even if a child is born, if he is not medically capable of enjoying life fully with all the senses, healthy, then it is better that he goes to eternal sleep and is born somewhere else with a better body," he said.

BHAGWAN'S CULPABILITY

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Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh

After Sheela fled the country in 1985, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh broke his three-and-a-half-year silence to publicly condemn her for the alleged crimes committed on behalf of the Rajneeshees. Bhagwan maintained that he had no knowledge of the various crimes orchestrated by Sheela, and that, “She is just going more and more insane before she goes to imprisonment. You just wait. Either she will kill herself out of the very burden of all the crimes that she has done, or she will have to suffer her whole life in imprisonment.” He also called her, in true God-like fashion, “a perfect bitch.”

In my recent [interview with Ma Anand Sheela](#), she alleged that nothing was done without Bhagwan’s approval and she was just following the orders of her “boss.” Knapp appeared to largely back up this assessment, saying that Sheela and Bhagwan met every night, that “the relationship was such that everything Sheela said came from Bhagwan,” and that “it was accepted by everyone that she spoke on behalf of Bhagwan.”

Furthermore, “Knapp informed that he was personally aware of instances when Sheela went to see Rajneesh with one idea and returned, after conversing with Bhagwan, with a different idea and that was the idea which would be adopted,” and that “Bhagwan was aware of everything which occurred at Rajneeshpuram with the possible exception of the conspiracy to kill his personal physician, Devaraj, and the bugging of his personal room at Lao Tzu.”

THE OREGONIAN JOB

NETFLIX

Ma Anand Sheela

Knapp told the FBI that in April or May 1985, he was asked by Sheela (or Ava Avalos) to “find out where Les Zietz, *Portland Oregonian* reporter, had

his office at the *Oregonian* building in Portland.” So, Knapp said he received a tour of the *Oregonian* building and determined where Zietz’s “working area” was located. Apparently, Ava was trying to kill an investigative story that Zeitz was working on concerning Rajneeshpuram by either stealing it from his files or destroying the computer that it was on.

Knapp had also “heard Sheela asking Julian if he could erase computer tapes by either magnetizing or demagnetizing them.” Swami Anugiten (aka Richard Kevin Langford) allegedly floated the idea of “stealing uniforms and attempting a burglary of the *Oregonian*,” and Knapp believed that The Oregonian Job was bankrolled by the gambling operation at Rajneeshpuram, owing to a conversation he’d overheard from Savita, the Rajneeshees’ top financial adviser, about using gambling money for it.

THE AIDS EXPERIMENT

Puja, who Knapp alleged sedated the thousands of homeless people that arrived at Rajneeshpuram through the “Share a Home Project” with Haldol-laced beer, also is said to have become obsessed with the AIDS virus.

“Knapp said that Puja was always very excited about the disease AIDS. Knapp said that [when] Puja heard that a Sannyasin in San Francisco had AIDS, Puja asked Sheela to let her go down to San Francisco and draw his blood.” Sheela, Knapp claimed, gave her approval and Puja subsequently traveled to San Francisco but he’s not entirely sure if it was for this purpose. He added in his FBI testimony that “Puja talked about culturing the AIDS virus and she was very secretive concerning her work in that area.”

The preoccupation with AIDS eventually extended to Rajneeshpuram, and in August 1985, Knapp said that the entire community was forced to undergo AIDS testing. Whether for PR purposes or actual altruism, Knapp told the FBI that in August 1985, Bhagwan said, “We’re going to do something big, much bigger and better than Share a Home Project.” He then “made a suggestion that the commune take in all AIDS victims from around the country and create a place where they would be well treated.” The AIDS

victims, Bhagwan said, would be granted “luxurious surroundings.” According to Knapp, the idea was eventually abandoned by Bhagwan due to “legal problems and due to potential health problems concerning the isolation of these AIDS victims.” Puja eventually served three years in prison for The Dalles bioterror attack.

CURIOUS FUNDRAISING

One question that goes largely unanswered in *Wild Wild Country* is how exactly Rajneeshpuram was able to fund itself—and how the Bhagwan managed to accumulate a fleet of 90 Rolls-Royces. According to Knapp, the city raised funds in several creative—and sketchy—ways. First, those who worked for the city and corporations at the commune were told they were paid salaries, but these salaries were “totally bogus.” People’s salaries would go into currency card accounts that only Sheela and those of high authority were able to access.

Then there’s the Rajneeshpuram casino. Knapp alleged that this was the brainchild of Sheela, who was so “insistent” to open a gambling establishment at the commune that she did so without acquiring any sort of license, and went to Vegas to acquire the necessary tables, chips, and other supplies. Knapp and Sheela then allegedly came up with the idea to have dealers “agree not to keep their winnings and that it would be, in fact, winnings for the house.” And so a casino, dubbed Omar Khyam Lounge, was set up at Rajneeshpuram, and generated tons of money—most of which, according to Knapp, was used as “funny money” for Sheela’s various endeavors.

Another moneymaking scheme was a pair of Rolls-Royce raffles at Rajneeshpuram. Knapp told the FBI that the first raffle brought in \$110,000 in raffle-ticket purchases—more than the value of the Rolls—and that Sheela had arranged for a Dutch woman named Manisha, the Bhagwan’s Rolls-Royce cleaner, to win the Rolls and then refuse it, thus donating it back to the city. Knapp said, “Sheela put the ticket which Manisha bought up her

sleeve. She then rolled the basket containing the raffle tickets and buried her arms up to her elbows in the tickets. When her arms were concealed beneath the tickets she pulled out the winning ticket which was Manisha's." There was a second rigged Rolls-Royce raffle, with the predetermined winner being a sannyasin in Cologne, Germany, but the vehicle was allegedly never shipped due to export issues.

THE PLOT(S) TO KILL BHAGWAN'S PERSONAL DOCTOR

One of the big reveals of *Wild Wild Country* comes courtesy of Jane Stork (aka Ma Shanti B), who alleged that Sheela ordered her to assassinate the Bhagwan's personal doctor, Swami Devaraj (aka Dr. George Meredith), in order to protect Bhagwan. Knapp's FBI testimony appeared to echo Sheela's concerns with respect to Devaraj—that "Devaraj would end up killing Bhagwan." Devaraj, a British national, was married to Ma Prem Hasya (aka Francoise Ruddy), the ex-wife of *Godfather* producer Albert S. Ruddy and leader of the "Hollywood crowd" that Sheela despised for gaining Bhagwan's ear by showering him with luxurious gifts, including a \$2.5 million diamond watch.

According to Knapp's FBI testimony, Sheela had discovered that "an inordinate amount of drugs" were being shipped to Rajneeshpuram, and that Devaraj was behind the shipments. The prescriptions for the drugs, which mainly consisted of "barbiturates, tranquilizers and painkillers," were written for people at the ranch "with no health problems whatsoever." In addition to the drug shipments, another reason Sheela is said to have wanted to eliminate Devaraj was that, according to Knapp, her wiretaps had caught a conversation "wherein Devaraj discussed Bhagwan's death with Bhagwan."

A group of about a half-dozen sannyasins, led by Sheela, then began carrying around cyanide, the hepatitis virus, and other poisons in order to use them on the Hollywood crowd—including Devaraj—at a moment's notice. They held meetings at Sheela's home, plotting the killing of Devaraj

“in order to protect Bhagwan’s life.” First, Knapp claimed that Puja poisoned Devaraj’s coffee in order to land him in recovery at the hospital at Koran Grove. There, Knapp said that Puja “put flower water obtained from a flower vase into his IV,” which caused him to become “very sick.” Another plan hatched was “to simply jump him in his bed, hold a pillow over his head, and inject him with a substance which would kill him” while Devaraj was recovering at Koran Grove. The plan failed when someone “said something at the hospital room” when Julian—accompanied by Shanti B, Anugiten, and possibly Yogini and Ava—tried to open the door.

NETFLIX

Ma Shanti B, aka Jane Stork

Another attempt was made on Devaraj’s life at Koran Grove, where Knapp told the FBI that he, Shanti B, Savita, and Anubhavo were going to inject him with “a hypodermic needle” carried by Shanti B, but Knapp said that he made so much noise opening two wrong doors that it too was abandoned. So then, as Stork recounts in *Wild Wild Country*, a plot was made to assassinate Devaraj by injecting him with a hypodermic needle filled with adrenaline during a satsang ceremony. Adrenaline, Knapp said, was chosen by Puja because it was “non-traceable” and “due to the excitement of the satsang, if a slight amount of adrenaline was detected it would be explained by the excitement associated with that moment.” According to Knapp, Shanti B—at the order of Sheela—injecting Devaraj with the drug but he miraculously survived.

In addition to the numerous poisonings and injections, Knapp informed the FBI that he was present when “Sheela and Puja discussed the possibility of using venomous snakes to kill people,” and they also “discussed the idea of using black widow spiders to kill people.”

Yikes.