

The Real Fantasyland



By Steven Yates

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“The power of privilege is the right to dictate what is truth and what is misinformation. Always has been.” ~Marc Andreessen (Netscape cofounder)

A few years ago, I ran across references to a book entitled *Fantasyland: How America Went Haywire* by one Kurt Andersen, which had just come out (this was 2018). I think I perused an excerpt from it in some Establishment publication (possibly *The Atlantic Monthly*).

I haven't read the book otherwise. This is not a review, therefore. It is more a review of the idea that seemed to motivate it, that of the dogmatic hyper-rationalism associated with the kind of epistemic authoritarianism now known as *The Science*.

I gather, going by some of the Amazon reviews the book garnered, the author was quite upset that far too many people reject or at least question official narratives, scientific as well as political-economic, or supposed public health measures. To elitist defenders of *The Science*, we peasants aren't supposed to ask questions, as opposed to sitting down, shutting up, and doing as we are told.

We may be talking about the Federal Reserve System, or money power generally.

Or political assassinations like those of the Kennedys, or Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Or stealth campaigns such as Agenda 21 / Sustainable Development.

Or “conspiracy theories” about 9/11.

Or those surrounding covid and the so-called vaccines.

Or January 6, 2021, that it was an “insurrection against democracy.”

Or countless other cases about which suspicion can be cast upon an official story that has been repeated over and over again, like a mantra, in corporate media.

This includes, for *arch* hyper-rationalists (Andersen appears to be one), just the idea that a God exists, as His existence is rejected by materialists and so-called “scientific humanists” and New Atheists. It annoys hyper-rationalists that there are subcultures at home, and cultures abroad, that reject the materialism baked into *The Science*.

Fantasyland was published before the coronavirus / Covid-19 debacle. With what we now know is provable (think: Twitter Files), that federal agencies worked very closely with Big Tech to impose censorship on anyone who questioned either the lockdowns or, when they arrived, the safety and efficacy of the mRNA shots that were forced on populations, often via employers, amidst relentless campaigns against “vaccine hesitancy,” “misinformation,” “baseless conspiracy theories,” etc., I wonder if Andersen wishes he’d waited to publish!

Andersen seems to believe – and again, I am going off some of the reviews – that inherent in the very idea of American liberty is a slippery slope: if people are able to believe and worship as they see fit, or pursue whatever ends they see fit based on their own beliefs about reality, they will end up with the relativistic idea that *your beliefs are just as “true” as mine*, or that *what’s “true for me” need not be “true for you.”*

While I'm no relativist, the title still seemed to me an apt description of the collective mental/cognitive landscape into which we've actually been taken at an accelerated rate over the past several years – not by QAnon types and MAGA hat wearers but by the Establishment, as it has scraped and clawed to stay in power epistemically as well as politically, amidst the upsurge of “populism” represented by the Donald Trumps of the world and those who spoke awkwardly of “alternative facts” (they mean: alternatives to the official narratives about what is fact).

This clash of narratives didn't begin yesterday. There's a sense in which industrial civilization itself is based on control systems, passed off under euphemistic terms like “socialization.” The best control systems work by compelling “the masses” to control themselves and each other, via public education and mass media messaging (remember: “If you see something, say something”?). Control systems, beginning in public schools, encourage obedience and conformity, not critical thinking and independence.

Hence exposés on education like John Taylor Gatto's *Dumbing Us Down* (1992) and *The Underground History of America* (2001), among others; Charlotte Thomson Iserbyt's [*the deliberate dumbing down of America*](#) (2000); and Beverly Eakman's [*Educating for the New World Order*](#) (1991), among others.

Include here equivalent exposés on mass media, the development of the technologies it uses to get its messages into our heads, resulting in social control via narrative management: *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business* (by Neil Postman, 1985), *The Unreality Industry: The Deliberate Manufacture of Falsehood and What It Is Doing To Our Lives* (by Ian I. Mitroff and Warren Bennis, 1989), *Into the Buzzsaw: Leading Journalists Expose the Myth of a Free Press* (ed. by Kristina Borjesson, 2002), and of course *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of Mass Media* (by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, 1988, 2002).

This is a representative sample. Note that these tomes span the ideological spectrum. I doubt anyone would classify Chomsky as a “right winger.”

There are other such exposés, many devoted to specific topics such as health and medicine, or food, or science itself. All tend to show how moneyed and therefore powerful interests have studied, and made use of, techniques ranging from clever marketing to psychological manipulation to lead audiences by their noses in desired directions – often using the latter’s own preferences for entertainment over substance against them.

What these authors all expose, in one way or another, is the fabrication of “reality” by elite (and superelite) interests and those working for them, often unknowingly, often in ways intended to entertain us in the process. If we’re finding someone’s content entertaining, we’re less likely to be on our guard.

The result is *Real Fantasyland*. The purpose of *Real Fantasyland*: more money and power for the elites and superelites; less money, power, and independence for We The People. Examples of *Real Fantasyland* are easy to enumerate.

Real Fantasyland is the belief that men can turn themselves into women and women can become men through “transitioning”; and that such options should be made available to children.

Reality: your sex is determined by your chromosomes. Males have XY chromosomes; females have XX chromosomes. These are fixed early in prenatal development. There may be a very tiny fraction of humans whose chromosomes are somehow different or incomplete or ambiguous, but this fraction is far too small to explain the upsurge of “transgenders” that now seem to be everywhere. The obvious explanation for this last is cultural left politics, not some sudden biological mutation. Cultural left politics may well embrace *The Science* but rejects the real science of biology.

Real Fantasyland is believing that the “white supremacism” of straight white Christian males is responsible for every calamity that has befallen the black community (and, for that matter, every other group), for the “systemic racism” baked into the American cake as it were since 1619.

Reality: there are probably no more than a few hundred bona fide white supremacists in America. On the other hand, straight white Christian males have been under systemic cultural and legal attack for the past 50 years. This attack has intensified over the past 30 years or so, the political correctness era. Boys and men have been under attack, the natural expression of their identity derided as “toxic masculinity.” The percentages of males enrolled in colleges and universities has been dropping for over two decades now. No one will address the real cause: an academic environment that is toxic for *men* who aren’t emasculated left-liberals.

Real Fantasyland is believing you can continue bullying a people, having already outsourced their jobs to foreign lands for cheap labor, deindustrializing their communities and turning once thriving downtowns into wastelands, and then continue gaslighting them about nonexistent “white privilege,” without inviting pushback.

Reality: the Donald Trumps of the world stepped into the roles they did for specific, identifiable reasons, and as long as those reasons remain valid, “populism” will remain a force to be reckoned with unless it is violently suppressed (something not outside the realm of possibility as events continue to play out this year and next).

Real Fantasyland, however, is believing you are ever going to get the *truth* about important current events, especially wars and their causes, from any major corporate media outlet anywhere in the Western world.

Realities: the Russian invasion of Ukraine was not

“unprovoked,” as anyone who studies the history of the region – just the era since the end of the Soviet Union will do. Ukraine is not “winning” despite receiving hundreds of billions in foreign aid from the U.S. The person accused of leaking classified Department of Defense documents, Jack Teixeira, 21, an Air National Guardsman of Massachusetts, is (predictably) being demonized as a racist and an antisemite as well as a “gun enthusiast.” He is probably on his way to a deep, dark hole. That’s what happens when you expose the lies of powerful people in the U.S. war machine, and you don’t flee as Edward Snowden did.

Real Fantasyland is believing you are ever going to get the truth about *any* of the history-shaping events of our lifetimes from the U.S. federal government.

Realities: the U.S. federal government still has thousands of documents related to the JFK assassination that are labeled *classified*. The truth about the assassination of JFK’s brother five years later has never been unraveled. What some of us have learned (in my case, from a relative of someone who was there) is that the official narrative of that event has more holes than Swiss cheese. Sirhan Sirhan is almost certainly an innocent man whose life was destroyed.

We do not have the full truth about how the 9/11 attacks were accomplished; what we have are accounts by qualified scientists and engineers who argue that the official narrative of three (not two) skyscrapers descending into their own footprint is physically impossible. The official story of the killing of Osama bin Laden in Pakistan is extremely dubious. Buried at sea? No one ever saw a body. We’re supposed to just *trust* “authorities” who have lied to us repeatedly?

Finally we get to the “mysterious” origin of the coronavirus that causes covid, and what was known in the back rooms of Big Pharma about the mRNA shots before their being forced on a “vaccine hesitant” public. *The Science* would have you believe

that the former evolved in a bat, and that the latter are “safe and effective” despite the fact that huge numbers of people got the vaxxes and got covid anyway, while others got the vaxxes and died or have sustained life-altering injuries. All memory-holed.

Real Fantasyland is seeing an “autocrat” or an “authoritarian” in every leader – Trump, Florida’s Ron DeSantis, Hungary’s Viktor Orbán, Brazil’s Jair Bolsonaro, others, who puts / has put the interests of his own nation ahead of those of the “liberal international order,” i.e., he refuses to play the globalist game.

Reality: the policies of such figures put the brakes on left-liberals and globalists (and corrupt mass media outlets) saying and doing anything they see fit, and since most national elites and global superelites are unused to having anyone influential, or with political power of their own, stand up to them, naturally they cry foul.

Real Fantasyland for many American conservatives, however – at least they identify as such – is believing the death culture at home can be voted out of power.

Reality: it is not that sort of thing. It seems likely, for example, that the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* genuinely hurt Republicans in the midterms (2022). I’ve been reading about the just-published book by one of the few living conservative political philosophers, Claes G. Ryn, entitled *The Failure of American Conservatism and the Road Not Taken* (2023). Ryn argues that for years now, too many who self-identify as conservative have focused only on politics. They’ve neglected culture, mass media, academia, and academic subjects and endeavors that aren’t profitable to business such as philosophy, history, theology, the arts, and so on. Hence conservatives lost every one of them. It is probably *Fantasyland* to believe we have any chance of winning these arenas back in our lifetimes. The *reality*: we are going to

have to reconstruct them – in some cases, from scratch.

Real Fantasyland is thinking that if you get rid of legally-owned firearms, society will be safer.

Reality: if the U.S. ever follows the path Australia took, two classes of people will be armed: government employees (e.g., police) and criminals. Guess which one will have all the advantages at the street-level. And when the next excuse to lock down the population shows up, perhaps for months with no end in sight, those who foolishly gave up their arms will have no means of defending themselves. Ask the residents of Melbourne.

Real Fantasyland is believing that our present money system, which redistributes wealth upwards, can survive its central bank, the Federal Reserve, continuing to print money, print money, print money.

Reality: Modern Monetary Theory, which sanctions this, is a pseudoscientific fraud. In combination with the reckless incompetence of the Bidenistas, other nations are now moving away from the dollar. They are allowing China to broker agreements between them, as Saudi Arabia and Iran recently did. As the dollar gradually loses its status as the world's reserve currency, reasons for holding dollars will evaporate. They will return to U.S. soil, causing still more price inflation and dislocation. If programmable CBDCs replace dollars, the U.S. outside elite enclaves will become a dystopia not far removed from the nihilistic world depicted in science fiction author Neal Stephenson's cyberpunk novel *Snow Crash* (1992).

Real Fantasyland is believing that civil society can be maintained indefinitely on an edifice of lies, deceit, censorship, and memory-holing inconvenient truths; or on political prosecutions of the opposition (think: that of Trump in Manhattan for non-crimes), and the utter incompetence that

results when identity-politics trumps qualifications in appointments at the federal level.

Real Fantasyland is believing Joe Biden will still be in the White House in 2028 even should he miraculously hang on through the episodes of word salad and physical stumbling and win in 2024 (God help us all if he does!).

Reality: Mark Milley wants to understand “white rage”; this is the woke loon presently leading the U.S. armed forces. Bidenista weakness, especially where foreign policy is concerned, has yielded the most dangerous situation since the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1961 – a potential confrontation between nuclear superpowers both of which have weapons 500 times more powerful than what was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki!

Getting to the bigger picture:

Real Fantasyland is believing that the wealthy and powerful have never conspired against the public good, and against the world’s populations generally.

Reality: as I’ve noted previously, many of the superelite’s representatives have set down *in their own words*, in *numerous* books and articles, what they are doing and what they hope to achieve.

Real Fantasyland is believing either than the U.S. (or any other Western power) is actual democracy, or that left-liberal Democrats have any sincere interest in “protecting democracy,” whether from Jan-6er political prisoners or from anyone else. You cannot “protect” what does not exist.

Reality: the U.S. and other Western powers are plutocratic oligarchies, or plutocracies. Arguably the U.S. became such when the superelite of the time created the Federal Reserve System.

Real Fantasyland is believing that the technocratic, techno-feudalist dystopia in the making can possibly endure.

Reality: highly centralized empires based on lies and fraud, and when these fail, brute force, have never succeeded.

This one, however, when it fails, will still be powerful enough to do damage on a planetary scale!

Real Fantasyland, finally, is believing you can discount God's watchful eye and capacity to take action because His existence cannot be proved by human logic or laboratory science (or *The Science*).

Since by definition *Real Fantasyland* is *not* real: when governments, corporations and whole populations are immersed in it for a long enough period of time, it exacts a price. In our case, the price is proving to be the long term collapse of everything that went into building the West, and of the West itself.

Our foundations were Christendom (our second president, John Adams: "*Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.*"), the value of truth more broadly, and the values of life and liberty. No, our original republic wasn't perfect, but whether anyone likes it or not, it was better than anything else accomplished either before or since, and it would be a shame to *lose it all* because of the present-day immersion in the *Real Fantasyland*, be this about "gender" fluidity, the destruction of our currency at the hands of those once entrusted to safeguard it, foreign wars we should not be involved in, or anything else.

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E-Mail Steven Yates: freeyourmindinsc@yahoo.com

Did one little-known American astronomer singlehandedly destroy Big Bang Cosmology? To find out, access Issue #4 of *Truth, Freedom, Validation* [here](#). (You can read it, and future issues, for just \$1/month!)

ANNOUNCING: an online course/tutorial entitled **The Philosophy of Responsible Freedom**, directed by Jack C. Carney with myself as chief partner: a Zoom-based intellectual encounter between an atheist (Carney) and a Christian (Yates) exploring the history of ideas using [Academy of Ideas](#) videos and supplementing them with the thoughts of others. Carney is an autodidact in areas ranging across psychology, psychiatry, and anthropology who emphasizes the importance of human relationships in a world where loss is omnipresent (he also teaches English online). I am an author and trained philosopher with a doctorate in the subject who taught philosophy courses in years past, walked away from academia, still writes philosophy emphasizing the need to identify, clarify, and evaluate the success (or failure) of worldviews in civilization, stages of civilization, the quest to build free societies, and how worldviews either enhance or hobble responsible freedom. Course/tutorial outline [here](#). For more information or to get on our email list: freeyourmindinsc@yahoo.com.

Steven Yates's latest book *What Should Philosophy Do? A Theory* (2021) is available [here](#) and [here](#). His earlier *Four Cardinal Errors: Reasons for the Decline of the American Republic* (2011) is available [here](#).