

What I'm Doing Here: Another Boomer's Journey



By Steven Yates

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"Fifty years is ample time in which to change a world and its people almost beyond recognition. All that is required for the task are a sound knowledge of social engineering, a clear sight of the intended goal – and power." –Arthur C. Clarke, *Childhood's End*

"I'm trying to free your mind, Neo. But I can only show you the door. You're the one that has to walk through it." –Morpheus, *The Matrix*

A year ago I adopted the practice of penning a piece on what I'm trying to accomplish with my writing, whether here or generally. This is in the interest of transparency, given that people are supporting my work with small donations. They deserve to know what they are getting.

Also last year – in a trilogy on my blog ([here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)) – I developed three core values guiding my work: telling the *truth* as best I can, defending *freedom*, and mastery of *self*. As for the first, I'm not convinced that truth – real, honest-to-God *truth* – will necessarily make us happy. As Ecclesiastes says (1:18): "For in much wisdom is much grief, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow." I've learned things that on sleepless nights I wish I *hadn't* learned.

Believe it or not, as a Boomer growing up in the '60s and '70s, I was probably a liberal by the standards of the times.

My mother liked the Kennedy's (except for Ted whom she couldn't stomach). She told me late in life she thought the country would have gone in a entirely different and much better direction had Bobby not been assassinated. I've no idea if this is true or not. The civil rights movement might have taken a different course had Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lived. I was one of many who came to regard Dr. King as a heroic figure. Yes, he had flaws and blind spots. All such people do. This means they are human. Liberalism got things wrong. But the liberalism of the '60s wasn't destructive like the left is today.

As a philosophy student in the '80s, what I wanted most was a permanent teaching position at a liberal arts college with a good reputation, a home base from which to contribute meaningfully to my discipline. I wasn't expecting anyone to give me a job. I assumed I had to earn it. I did the work, publishing four articles in refereed journals while still a graduate student, and gaining teaching experience at my alma mater before getting my doctorate.

When seeking teaching positions, I noticed: white *women* were leapfrogging over me. Usually they had less (sometimes no) teaching experience; no publications. Some didn't even have doctorates in hand. Yet they were being given teaching positions I'd not even being interviewed for. I nosed around. I wasn't alone. Other "ordinary" white guys were telling me the same thing. Someone at a university where I'd applied leveled with me. His voice lowered, he told me: his department was under intense administrative pressure to hire women.

Was this *right*? What was going on?

I immersed myself in the literature on affirmative action. My specialties expanded to include political and economic philosophy as I studied the greats (Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Bastiat, Mill, etc.), weighing and considering competing philosophies of society in light of this problem which was

wreaking havoc on many professions.

One result was my first book, [*Civil Wrongs: What Went Wrong with Affirmative Action*](#) (1994). It was one of a flurry of exposés on the subject that appeared during the late '80s and early '90s. I'd like to think that what set mine apart was connecting the perceived need to defend these programs from legal pushback and mounting criticism, not all of it coming from white men (think of Thomas Sowell), with rising political correctness – the primary tactic of which was to “deconstruct” critics as motivated by racism/sexism, and silence them by whatever means necessary.

As a guy who'd been teaching courses in logic and critical thinking, the fallacy seemed self-evident! I could not believe that some of my fellow professional philosophers supposedly with more training in the subject than I had were committing it!

One of the criticisms of affirmative action is that it gets jobs for the unqualified: and in my profession, the majority of beneficiaries were white women. There just weren't many black applicants. In 1960 the percentage of blacks in academic philosophy was around 1.5 percent. What was the percentage in 2000? Around 1.5 percent. The irrational push to hire women, however, would satisfy diversity bureaucrats, and so had increased their numbers by leaps and bounds.

It also increased the overall amount of crazy in academia (I discuss examples [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)). These were not idle academic exercises. They were doing real world harm. Claims had appeared (e.g.) on how one in four college women were raped. Sometimes the figure was one in six. Either claim misuses statistics. But if a guy was accused, he was presumed guilty until proven innocent. An accusation was potentially ruinous. Lives were permanently altered by [the notorious “gang rape” hoax](#) at the University of Virginia, in a scurrilous *Rolling Stone* article in 2014, retracted in the face of

multiple lawsuits as its claims fell apart under scrutiny.

Be all that as it may, you challenge academic leftists at your own risk. More than one faculty member was driven to seek other employment to end nuisance harassment and bullying by resident feminist militants.

What had struck me back in the early '90s when it might have been possible to oppose this juggernaut was how no one wanted to talk about it. I once read a paper outlining and evaluating various defenses and criticisms of affirmative action at a humanities conference (this was the Southeast, mind you). Women listeners took potshots at *me*, some of them personal. They insinuated that *I* was the one who wasn't qualified, that with minorities and women rising in influence, we "privileged" white guys weren't getting the jobs we thought we were entitled to. Now we were crying foul.

I wanted to shout, *But what about the issues?! Affirmative action in academia was barely benefiting African-Americans at all; its beneficiaries tended to be radical feminist women who engaged in just these kinds of fallacious ploys! No one could really, seriously believe these women had been discriminated against! We had entered a period in which white males really were at a disadvantage in job searches!*

Eventually I all but dropped the subject and moved on. Rational discussion had proven impossible. Far more dismaying was how conservatives handled the matter – or, rather, didn't handle it. Organizations like the Heritage Foundation gave me the silent treatment. I'd worked on a project for the Chicago-based Heartland Institute, but as I attempted to press the case for a more organized strategy of opposition to political correctness, they dragged their feet and the relationship I'd tried to build with them collapsed.

I was learning the difference between *conservatives* and *neocon* – or, more bluntly, between the former and RINOs.

If the politically correct were motivated by power, those I'd tried to trust and ally with came to strike me as cowards. The average Republican was (is) terrified of being called a racist. This gave the PC crowd power.

All this made me realize: the basic problem of political-economic organization is not, *What is the Ideal Society?*, but *How do we constrain that sociopathic minority that is fascinated with power, while accommodating the self-interest and insouciance of the majority?*

One morning, though, I awakened with a more disturbing question: *was affirmative action the only topic on which an official narrative was being imposed by weeding out dissenting voices?*

What if what I'd encountered with affirmative action and political correctness was not the *exception* but the *rule*?

Academia, it turns out, is full of orthodoxies. Ultimately it is a very controlled enterprise. The implications matter.

Why do *public schools*, and *public universities*, exist at all? Writers like John Taylor Gatto – an award-winning teacher in tough New York City schools who walked away when he couldn't take the BS any longer – tells us. As have others from various points on the ideological spectrum, left as well as right. I strongly recommend his treatise [*The Underground History of American Education*](#) (2001).

The education industry – from grade schools to graduate schools – exist not to communicate knowledge or a defensible moral philosophy but to instill narratives. Grade schools instill them in children, while acclimating them to control systems. Children are forced to sit in the same place all day, for the same hours every day, be quiet during those hours against all their natural inclinations, study the same subjects as all other children, and in the same way. At least that is how the system was designed. Like most such systems,

today it has basically collapsed. What I hear from teachers is that most public schools are now anarchic.

I recently encountered a [study](#) showing differences in children's curiosity and willingness to ask questions. This tendency is very large when they are small; small children are naturally curious about everything around them. This diminishes gradually in school. By the time they finish high school, their natural curiosity is all but gone. "Educated" out of them, with obedience "educated" in.

The situation may be worse. I was once given an assignment intended as *punishment* for some minor-league infraction: "I want to know about Socrates," the teacher said. "Write me two pages on Socrates."

I'm not joking!

Research and writing assignments were handed out as punishment by this teacher (and by many others in my elementary school).

If it wasn't turned in the next day, the length doubled!

What message did that send children? Did it incentivize or disincentivize independent thinking and learning?

(For whatever it's worth, I skipped a day and turned in four pages on Socrates, and this probably became my introduction to philosophy! I was already marching to a different drum, but guys like me were few in number.)

That was the 1960s. Do I even want to know what kinds of disincentives to independent thought are being handed out by today's products of education colleges?

Even before *The Matrix* (1999) came out, I was toying with the idea that the primary purpose of nearly all formal education and nearly all mainstream media was political-economic and cultural programming. Small wonder that film resonated with those of us who began to think of ourselves as "red-pilled."

Conspiracies?

Conspiracy is a standard category in any legal and criminal justice dictionary. It has been used against some of the January 6 political prisoners.

Once you've done a little homework, read or listened to the right people, you realize, *the idea that wealthy and powerful people have never conspired against the public interest to gain power is absurd!*

Who I'd read? Gatto is a good place to begin. He puts his finger on the Rockefeller cabal, who have had their hands in everything from education to pharmaceuticals. I'd then consult Antony C. Sutton, Carroll Quigley, Patrick Wood, G. Edward Griffin. I'd go online and search out James Corbett, Catherine Austin Fitts, Whitney Webb, a few others.

An entirely different history of the past two centuries emerges!

The CIA weaponized *conspiracy theory* in the 1960s to protect the Warren Commission Report from those poking holes in its narrative, that JFK was shot by one man acting alone. Prior to 1967, you never heard the phrase, not even when Sen. Eugene McCarthy was alleging Communist infiltration of American institutions. Richard Hofstadter criticizes conspiratorial thinking in his classic essay ["The Paranoid Style in American Politics"](#) (1964). He never uses that exact phrase, not even when describing the granddaddy of such notions: the Bavarian Illuminati of the late 1700s.

Conspiracy theory is an intended discussion-stopper. Just as are *racist*, *sexist*, *homophobic*, *transphobic*, and other words now routinely used to protect respective narratives.

It's sleight-of-hand, but it works! It is very effective against a cowed population whose critical faculties have been dulled by a dozen or more years of public schooling!

Ludwig Wittgenstein, easily the greatest philosopher of the last century, counseled: "In philosophy the question, 'What do we actually use this word or this proposition for?' repeatedly leads to valuable insights." Not just in *philosophy*, but in *life*. Wittgenstein spoke of a "battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language."

Words and phrases are weaponized and used to gaslight us. They are instruments of thought control, drawing listeners/readers either into certain narratives or away from unwanted ones.

Thus the upside-down nature of the New Normal. Truth-telling is demonized as "conspiracy theory," "election denial," or "misinformation." Political leaders both in the U.S. and around the world who are trying to free their populations from the insidious influence of globalism are called "fascists," "autocrats," and "threats to democracy." *Democracy* has to be the most powerful and pervasive propaganda word out there! But when was either the Federal Reserve system or the income tax placed before the public, which was informed about them and allowed to vote on them. Was affirmative action ever voted on? How about any of the recent wars, such as the disasters in Afghanistan and Iraq? How about Obamacare?

Neither the U.S. nor any other Western powers are really democracies: governments by, and which answer to, We The People. A *real* democracy would be a major threat to those with *real* power. Western powers are plutocratic oligarchies: rule by fabulously wealthy power elites, many atop global corporations well represented at confabs like the one the World Economic Forum is holding in Davos as I write this. Regional branches of GloboCorp control major political parties through the power of the purse. This is why there will never be a successful "third party" in America. Financial resources are not the end-all, be-all, though. Narratives able to capture thought, incentivize, and control human mass behavior are what enable the few to dominate the many.

And sometimes narratives collapse: lose credibility. Large swaths of the American public no longer believe the major narratives of the left (“all white males are privileged,” “America is inherently white supremacist”), nor that of “movement conservatism” (i.e., neocons, “we need a ‘muscular’ foreign policy with ‘theater wars’”), nor the idea that “globalization” will make us all prosperous.

Narrative collapse in the U.S. got Donald Trump elected president over the far-better positioned Hillary Clinton, who answers to GloboCorp and its war machine. Alternatives to leftist-globalist narratives still aid leaders such as Hungary’s Viktor Orbán.

The powerful struck back in 2020, as I’ve recounted in numerous articles. GloboCorp won some big battles, but not the narrative war. Not yet. We may see another narrative collapse with the covid mRNA shots, now that somewhere between a thousand and two thousand previously healthy athletes and celebrities most in their 30s and 40s (a few even younger) have dropped dead from cardiac arrest. The elephant in the front room: we can be sure that all were “vaccinated” because their team, contract, what-have-you, required it.

If the narrative that the “Covid-19 vaccines” are “safe and effective” collapses, it might bring down the entire house of cards built by Fauci, Gates, the WHO, the CDC, and their Big Pharma and Bidenista cronies. Combine this with the mounting evidence that Big Pharma and biotech corporations were hard at work on *something* before anyone knew about a “novel coronavirus,” and given the damage this episode has done, heads might roll. Literally.

There are words and phrases that will *free your mind*: especially after almost three years of plan-demic (see what I just did?). There are mindsets and behaviors I now advocate, derived from the ancient Stoics who distinguished what we can control from what we can’t control (example [here](#)). None of us

can control what GloboCorp does. But we can exercise clear thought about it and learn how to minimize our contact with the institutions it controls. We can take charge of our own health, e.g., by eating nutritious food (and cutting the sugar!), by taking vitamins and supplements, by exercising, and doing all of this consistently.

Notice that none of this is taught in public schools, or in most private ones.

The idea of being an educator in a broad sense, to help fill this gaping hole, still seems meaningful to me.

My being able to work for an American university again, however, seems about as likely as the coffee in my cup spilling upwards and striking the ceiling, should I accidentally knock it over.

One can only go forward. This is what I've been doing, learning what I need along the way. As a conservative thinker, I've consulted with other conservatives, with the voluntarist who designed and directs the [Philosophy of Responsible Freedom tutorial series](#) in which I am a leading consultant and participant, and begun work on another book (rough draft should be completed by early spring).

"Movement conservatism" is dead, however. Real conservatives – who have some grasp of what they want to conserve – may need to separate in the manner I've described, should the Great Reset prove unstoppable. Schwab, Gates, and their henchmen have enormous resources and momentum. The fact that the mostly insouciant American public sees nothing amiss is working in their favor. My readers are not part of this insouciant public, however.

The Great Resetters could stumble on their ambitions, committing mistakes narcissistic control freaks usually make, trying to control what they can't control via centralization, surveillance, and "nudges." (Yes, Virginia, the Stoic rule I

mentioned applies to the power elites as much as to us.) GloboCorp cannot control our desire for freedom, such as the freedom to refuse the vaxes and solve our problems creatively and productively.

Thus despite the past three years of fearmongering and power grabs, there is a lot of dissent out here. Big Tech censorship has not been able to quash it. Will another and still heavier shoe drop, to silence us? I don't know.

The Austin, Tex. based Brownstone Institute has just published [an admirable piece](#), however, arguing that GloboCorp's planned techno-feudalist, technocratic dystopia is impossible.

It will run up against political-economic reality.

What author Robert Blumen, an engineer and "avocational" economist (which means he has sense), contends is that the Great Reset will cause a collapse of productive capacity and large scale cooperation necessary for an advanced civilization to function, and that this will make the globalists' own immense wealth and power system impossible to sustain. They probably imagine that continued investments ("money making money") will sustain them forever – if they really believe in pseudoscientific "modern monetary theory": credit expansion via money printing creates real wealth.

Blumen argues compellingly that this is wrong, and in greater detail than I can recount here. The bottom line, however: even should GloboCorp gets its Great Reset by 2030, its days will be numbered. What will number them is a collapse of all those things AI and robots can't do – what encounters I've had with AI have left me unimpressed – and what centralization cannot accommodate. The lockdowns have given us a preview of this by causing borderline-destabilizing supply line disruptions, now augmented by the war in Ukraine. (Wars, it should be noted, are almost invariably instigated and directed by powerful elites wielding propaganda and financial resources, not by the

peoples of the world most of whom have no reason to fight one another.)

Centralized political-economic planning, moreover, has never been effective on a *national* scale without promoting dislocation and dysfunction. How can anyone not completely blinded by their fascination with power believe that a central control grid can be made to work on a *planetary* scale?

Thomas Sowell distinguished between *constrained* and *unconstrained* visions (in his magnificent *A Conflict of Visions*, 1984; for a brief discussion go [here](#)). Constrained visions, of which American conservatism as originally conceived is the best example, recognize limits imposed by reality, including human nature. Unconstrained visions, such as Marxism-Leninism and the globalist-planned Great Reset, do not. The Great Resetters imagine Utopia no less than Marx did, cloaking it in pleasant sounding phrases like “sustainability” and “stakeholder capitalism” (review Wittgenstein and myself above on language bewitching our intelligence). With dangerous accumulations of fake wealth at their disposal, the Davos culture schemes to build the latest Utopia even as I write. Their efforts, argues Blumen (and many others before him), will crash and burn.

But since no one in the Davos culture appears amenable to reason even were they accessible by us peasants, avoidance may be impossible, and the damage they will do when reality exacts its consequences and their Utopia destabilizes will be incalculable.

As the 2020s’ New Normal continues, therefore, getting the word out about what these sociopaths are up to, and working out real solutions, has never been more urgent. That, more than anything else, is what I am doing here and what keeps me going.

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](#).

While admittedly the real world can be scary enough, he has also written a novel of cosmic horror. *The Shadow Over Sarnath* will be published soon.

The [Patreon.com](#) campaign I have been running improved a little last month, with one new Patron since my last article. The reality remains: people are exiting such sites, often for reasons beyond their (or my) control. I might still have to return to pursuing copywriting, copyediting and ghostwriting clients as a source of income in this era of roaring inflation.

Thank you, "Joe Biden"!

This would mean reduced visibility on NewsWithViews.com. It might even mean a “farewell” piece soon, even if only temporarily. Those are the breaks. I am *not* independently wealthy. To reverse this while there is still time (i.e., before a new client accepts my offer), please consider pledging today by going [here](#) and signing up.

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