

All.Net Analyst Report and Newsletter

Welcome to our Analyst Report and Newsletter

Defeating propaganda in the public media

Many of the subjects and factual basis for things herein are provided in “Frauds, Spies, and Lies – And How to Defeat Them” and other related subjects available online. For today, the question is how to counter the rapid pace of false socially propagated information spread in the Internet. Of course the simple answer is that whatever solution is attempted it will be imperfect, but defense against propaganda is not an option. It is a survival necessity.

How bad can it get? Hearts and minds!

Pretty damned bad. The battle for the hearts and minds of the world is underway.

At the end of the day, controlling what people think about (i.e., focus of attention), and what they think about it, can lead to the widest range of changes in the human condition. Here are some examples of things going on today that should trigger serious concerns, possibly leading to society-wide actions limiting the unfettered freedom of speech:

- **The “post-truth” environment:** Serious researchers on a global basis are now starting to struggle with how to deal with the “post-truth” world. By “post truth”, they mean an era in which records, even official public records, are not reliable or authentic:
 - Reliable means reflective of reality.
 - Authentic means unaltered in their meaning from inception to use.

Records that cannot be relied upon as reflective of reality and unaltered in meaning can be thought of in terms of rewriting history. We see it in the destruction of physical evidence and records of historical events to destroy proof of the past and the creation of new falsified records to generate the new scenario of the past. The Romans did this in their conquests, the Christians did this in Spanish inquisition and more broadly in the Crusades, the Nazis did this in World War 2, it was done as part of ethnic cleansing in Africa and elsewhere, the Spanish did it in South America, the Dead Sea Scrolls reflect the rare surviving record of earlier conflicts, and it was likely done in earlier societies, perhaps so well that we haven’t recovered evidence of it. We see it today in the middle east, and it is spreading in the post-truth era in the US, where the cry “fake news” is used to cause disbelief in the real news, and actual fake news is the substitute pushed to many believing readers.

- **Propaganda directed at children:** Advertising dollars today can be targeted toward media very specifically aimed at children. They are the most vulnerable to influence as their brains are forming, and as such, they are the long-term targets of societies seeking to misguide for advantage. Every oppressive society uses these sorts of techniques against their children, but the recent trend in Western societies driven by money rather than force of political hierarchy is that people with money buy influence over the future. Cigarette advertisements directed toward children were illegalized in the US some years back, but with the use of the Internet and association of age, race, income, education, etc. with user identities, these campaigns have become far more

sophisticated. Directed specifically at children influence tactics are being used to infiltrate young minds to think of things in the way the advertisers want them directed. And while selling soft drinks is one thing, selling hatred based on race, and lies about reality repeatedly pushed into young minds (and older ones) ultimately goes beyond free speech to the heart of society. Ruby Ridge is an example of propaganda used by both sides, and views of the truth of what happened is still biased by preconceptions.

- **The use of artificial intelligence for automated influence:** Come AIAIAIAIAI!¹ The methods of big data exploitation and machine learning are now being applied to automating propaganda and social influence. Not just to sell more dry goods, which I guess would be OK, but to influence society and the body politic. This is not so surprising, but the automated generation of convincing lies pushed into social media so as to optimize influence should be a concern to us all. Information weapons used against civilian populations should be illegal, as other weapons of war used against civilians are illegal. Except of course they are not. As I write this, I read today about the allies use of massive paper booklets dropped in Mosul and other cities in Iraq to tell civilian populations that the invasion is coming and to get out for their own safety or shelter in a way that reduces their chance of being killed. Of course this is not necessarily a lie, and the question comes about whether it should be illegal only to lie to influence people as a form of information warfare. Of course booklets are also very different from individually directed messaging exploiting specific beliefs and cognitive limits or biases. One-on-one messaging is like classic con artists, on a global scale!
- **Video, sound, and image editing:** As we advance the quality of multimedia editing, it gets harder and harder for most people to tell the difference between real-world and generated content. While forensic science has so far been successful at detecting such things in many cases, we obviously don't know how many false images have not been detected. And such investigation takes a lot of time and effort. The obviously deceptive pictures of planes headed for the World Trade Center were debunked. But technology has progressed a great deal in the last 15+ years. The combination of rapid falsification and slow debunking makes realistic deceptions increasingly problematic. And the folks who would perpetrate such hoaxes have no moral problem with it. Indeed they often believe that the ends justifies the means and that they are doing the moral thing. When Ronald Reagan falsely attributed a bombing in Germany to an Arab nation, the meme stuck for a long time. It took months for the truth to start to catch up, and plenty of people still bought the lie as the truth years later. Now imagine that same concept augmented by falsified real-time images on global news media. The mental picture of Muslims cheering at the 9-11 attacks from Trump was bad enough – debugged only to a limited extent by the failure to find any actual videos across the media – and not a definitive refutation. Now consider what would happen if a video was generated in near-real-time, pushed out to media outlets, and made the air around the World. We now have hundreds of millions of “eye witnesses” who will claim to have seen it in real-time. And the media will end up saying, in effect, “Who ya gonna believe, me or your own eyes?”²

1 Pronounced eye eye eye eye eye (a common expression similar to “oy gevalt”)

2 “But I saw you with my own eyes.” - “Who ya gonna believe, me or your own eyes?” - “Oh....Your Excellency, I'm sorry, but this excitement's too much for me.” - Groucho Marx from Duck Soup (transcript), 1933. Later adapted by Richard Pryor (“me or your lying eyes”) and used in various forms in a wide range of comedies.

“Oh what a tangled web we weave When first we practice to deceive”³

While other things are going on, these examples verge on the direct use of information warfare against civilian populations. And at some point we will likely need international treaties and a global regimen for their enforcement if we are to have a global civil society. But then a global civil society is exactly what many of the folks undertaking these campaigns are opposed to.

How long does it take?

On the good side, it may take a while to influence a generation. Education takes tens of years today, but apparently, ignorance can be produced far faster. And ignorance is not bliss. Wars have been started by single incidents, when the underlying situation and tensions have been pre-loaded. All of the talk and bombast sets up the actions that spark physical conflict. Indeed almost every war was started with deception as a run up, hatred without actual basis, artificial conflicts exaggerated, then a spark that ignites the extreme violence.

In the US, a significant portion of the population has felt as if the education system has been used against their beliefs for many years. And of course this is true. As progress moves forward and new perspectives take hold, it is almost inevitable that religious views based on older religions will be challenged by new views. But these new views are not necessarily right or better, just because they are newer.

There is also an underlying conflation of these “liberal” views:

- **Science-based information:** When it comes to things like climate change, the science is getting more and more definitive. More people now believe the world is flat than scientists believe that climate change is not being caused by human activity. As this is settled science, it seems like it is unreasonable to call it “liberal”. In fact, it seems to me to be more “conservative” to take well studied science as fact for decision-making. Not because it is always right, but because it is historically almost always right.
- **Non-scientific cultural changes:** The notions of trans-sexual people having access to bathrooms for various sexes is somehow an issue in the US today. But this is not a scientific issue or necessarily a liberal or conservative issue. It is a side effect of science progressing to the point where people can have medical procedures to change sex. I am unaware of any science that says what bathrooms people should use.

The politicians have drawn lines to get votes against the best interest of the population they are supposed to serve. They have used the terms “liberal” and “conservative” to influence voters to get votes, gain money and power, and bring more money and power to the people who fund them. By conflating different views and labeling them, we both confuse the issues and dehumanize group members. This makes it harder to tell the difference between fact and opinion, and easier to ignore, deprecate, and do violence to the “other”.

The underlying problems

The mechanisms of spread of mental viruses (memes) is essentially no different for truths than for falsehoods. But the ability to generate lies at a rapid pace far exceeds the ability to detect the difference between truth and lies. Generating the truth is not required, as it

3 Sir Walter Scott (Marmion, 1808)

generates itself, but communicating it does require the truth to take place, be observed, and be accurately reported. Testing ground truth requires actual effort and time as well as a trust and attribution mechanisms if each individual is not to have to verify it on their own.

Telling the truth is a fundamental responsibility of an honest government, but the US has apparently lost that at this point (and indeed some long time ago). The 4th estate, the media, then becomes the public face of the truth, and the government has to act against the media to get propaganda to operate effectively. As we see today, this is underway – undermining the media – and the media is participating by its financial bent, replay of advertising and paid media over reporting, ownership by the oligarchs, biases, failure to ask the hard questions, and failure to train and educate a generation of reporters. The universities and their educational approach to reporting has also aided in the deception we see today.

Social media has, of course, changed the game. Flash mobs are enabled by the social media, and instant releases to large numbers of people based on popularity, as a substitute for importance or trustworthiness, has turned entertainment into the basis for what becomes widely known. And sensation is popular because, if it bleeds it leads, and sex and fear sell. The lessons learned in the previous few years are being applied in practice by those with resources to take control over the Internet, not in the obvious direct way, but by the force of money used to produce high volumes and create false popularity as well as self-asserted trustworthiness, driven by control over and exploitation of the algorithms used to rank that comes from lots of money properly applied.

There is little chance for the truth to get out, and if it does get out, it will be swamped by the lies forced upon us by the monied interests. Before long, the game may be over, and the truth for the vast majority of people will be gone for a long while. Not that this is anything new. The media covered up Roosevelt's polio and Kennedy's philandering, while overplaying Benghazi and Trump, suppressing the truth and inducing falsehoods. This has long been true, but today, there is little apparent truth left to find in the flood of deception.

Finally, those who wish to fight for the truth are unable or unwilling to face these issues and use their resources to change the game. They will give to charities that work against the physical illnesses of the world, but won't pay to address the global mental illness of deception.

The solutions may be undesirable – and necessary

As in the case for computer viruses, spread of memes can be limited by limiting sharing, transitivity (the ability to retransmit what you received), or functionality (the ability to use what is received). But if the goal is not perfection but rather reduction, the spread of infectious disease can be slowed by a range of other approaches, including reducing the infection rate, slowing the movement of carriers, selective isolation, reduction of susceptibility, rapid detection and response (e.g., with antimemetics), changes in motivation, reputation combined with attribution, and traceability combined with compensating correction. Presentation of such results is also important and combinations of these are also applicable.

- **Limiting sharing** – Limiting sharing would remove the capacity of the Internet to allow anyone to communicate with anyone else. It is averse to the concept of freedom of speech and unlikely to be applied.
 - **Slowing sharing down:** The instant nature of sharing is what enables rapid popularity and mass movements in viewpoints in short time frames. Slowing

sharing reduced the acceleration rate of information in the overall society, which in turn makes it harder to spread a meme. The trick is to slow the deceptive information and not the reliable information. A simple 1 second delay per copy transmitted would have a dramatic effect on the spread of information. The problem is determining which information to slow down and which not to. In order to counter deceptions, the truth has to at least “catch up”. This difference has classically been played out in the media, which has far faster dissemination than ordinary people. But the Internet has largely changed that. By giving more speed to more trustworthy sources (based on history) a surrogate for truth becomes trust. But trust misplaced or taken advantage of can be even more destructive (think Colin Powell and the WMD briefing to the UN). Another approach is to limit the number of things that can be expressed by an individual over time. For example, no more than one new thing can be said per 30 seconds. This would slow automation down if attribution to the single source could be made, but it makes mailing lists and other groups of large size problematic. Think of this as similar to limiting the size of a group that can collect (many oppressive societies limit the size of unauthorized public gatherings).

- **Limiting transitivity** – this would limit the utility of sharing and reduce the network effect of sharing networks. As this is one of the key components of explosive growth of businesses (think Pokemon Go) it will also inherently limit the ability to market through the network effect.
 - **Slowing transitivity down:** For example, retweets are slowed compared to tweets, unless and until the truth of the tweets has been verified to desired levels of reliability and accuracy, etc. Transitivity sharing slowdown has the advantage of limiting the value of repetition of information from others, forcing in some sense, those who wish to be heard to come up with their own information and opinion. A problem with this is that transitive information sharing, when not strictly a copy or reference, is hard to differentiate from other sharing. This comes down to automation for detection and is problematic in that it produces false positives and negatives and is amenable to subversion by insiders, those in power, and those with skill in deception.
- **Limiting functionality** – this is infeasible for memes as people may interpret them as they perceive them in uncontrollable ways. However, in the technical sense, sites used for social networking can limit mass activity. But this is averse to their business model which is all about mass sharing and popularity leading to more flashes of light from the screen hitting users and causing them to act, paid for by advertising.
- **Reducing infection rate** (e.g., reduce the number of connections per person). There are various ways to reduce the rate at which people come to believe a meme. Reducing the primacy and recency of specific memes can reduce their effect, and making information harder to cognitively process slows its injection into the mental state. But this is effectively the opposite of what people try to do when they practice to deceive. They intentionally create scenarios intended to both (1) bring about the strategic or tactical goal(s) of the deception(s) on the target(s) and (2) cause the memes to be readily infused into the minds of the targets.
- **Slow the movement of carriers** (e.g., reduce the speed with which those with more

connections can share). Like Typhoid Mary, some people who connect to many other people are more able to spread memes. The competition in the Internet of popularity is to get more audience and thereby more money and influence. The network effect is that the more people you are connected to, the more want to connect to you, and so over a threshold, growth in network accelerates until saturation levels are reached. The countermeasure is to make it harder, more expensive, etc. to communicate to more people. As you get better connected, slowing your movement in this sense is reducing the number of things you can communicate. Think of it in terms of setting a cap on total flashes of light exposed to your direct influence. If you can only communicate 10,000 messages to individuals per day, then that limits your influence. Most people never get close to this volume of communication. For those who do, they then have to choose who to communicate to and what to message them, and this leads to advantage to better communicators. Of course freedom of speech would limit the ability to do this for governments under that regimen, and some individuals would likely end up selling their unused communications to others wishing to have more influence.

- **Isolate specific actors** (e.g., find and stop sharing for some people). People who lie repeatedly are often detected and their lies pretty much definitively identified as such. In these cases, they can be prevented or severely limited from communications, at least relative to the Internet through specific social media channels. Even “free speech” governments allow for this level of control (you cannot cry “fire” in a crowded theater unless there is a fire, and inciting a riot or violence or crime is not legal), and private companies can certainly have terms of service and enforce them. However, again, it is important to make certain you are actually stopping the liars and not those with a particular point of view. Deception is not the same as being wrong, propaganda is not the same as lying, and private behavior in small groups is not the same as public behavior to influence a society. The blunt instrument of banning individuals seems excessing in all but the most severe cases.
- **Reduction of susceptibility** (e.g., inoculate people against belief in memes). This goes to the reduction of cognitive errors in the presence of deception. It tends to be a side effect of learning more about the mechanisms of deception. In this sense, education and training are a solution. But forced education of a society en mass by government is also a path for propaganda. Seeking to enforce facts on education and control curricula has proven problematic in the US. Even the theory of evolution, which is universally accepted in science, has been problematic in parts of the US educational system, while comparative religion and various views of the origin of people under different views have also been suppressed when those ideas were inconsistent with the prevailing religion. It seems that the very nature of truth is under challenge, even when it comes to the simplest thing, like whether people can believe what they see. An example is the use of a picture of a colored dress with different lighting effects used in the run up to the election to show that your eyes can fool you with respect to color. The analogy is that you cannot believe what you see, which is part of enabling deception by seeding self-doubt in the individual and favoring social influence over ground truth.
- **Antimemetics** (e.g., detect and respond to falsehoods in time to mitigate potentially serious consequences). This goes to the tractability of detecting the difference between truth and falsehood and reacting, perhaps by labeling falsehoods as such. The

simplest part of this problem is that it's easier and faster to make up lies than to detect them. Without delaying or otherwise deprecating the dissemination of unverified information, there is no realistic hope of preventing lies from spreading and their meme volume overwhelming the volume of truth. Automation is, however, very good at tracking things, and to the extent limitations are in place, there are methods to detect liars and the lies they perpetrate.

- **Reputation combined with attribution** – This is exemplified by identifying sources of falsehoods as unreliable or inauthentic, attributing reputation to them, and associating reputation to products. When we attribute liars to their lies, automation can prevent the spread of lies or otherwise deprecate or counter them. But there is another challenge, that of attribution. Unless and until we can reliably and accurately attribute lies to the liars involved, the use of reputation falsification and related methods will allow the liars to deprecate the truthful sources and bolster their own deceptions.
- **Changes in motivation** – For example by changing the financial incentives of more social influence. In large part, the increase in rapid spread of deception in the Internet is the result of reduced cost of communication. Physical mail costs at least 25 cents per communication and takes days to get there. Electronic messaging now costs less than \$0.001 per unit, so why not use it at high volume? Power corrupts. People in power wanting to stay in power corrupt others through power and money and the honest people among us eventually learn, as they are learning today, that lies are advantageous. With religion breaking down as motive for honesty, the social contract being broken are asserted as broken, and deception the norm, society will break down. Motivating people toward honesty, away from pure capitalism, away from power and influence, and away from deception seems to only work after society breaks to the point where lots of people suffer and die. Those wishing to avoid this can seek to stop the cancer of a deception society before it metastasizes, but in today's world it may be too late. The liars are winning and using their power and influence to win bigger.
- **Traceability combined with compensating correction** – This goes to tracing where information went and then correcting resulting misimpressions to all who viewed it, with that correction being all the more emphatic, repeating, and cognitively overriding so as to adequately compensate for the primacy of the original false information. The counter to deception is truth, awareness, understanding, and identification and deprecation of deceptive memes and those who perpetrate them. Because lies come sooner and faster than the truth gained by investigation, the result of the investigative process must be enhanced in its memetic effect in order to compensate for the primacy and solidification of the lies. Repetition and recency may be applied as countermeasures, but people don't like to change their minds, think, or rethink. So it pretty much has to become a new social norm with shunning and marginalizing of those who refuse to accept the truth. Note that the question of "whose truth" becomes an issue when there no longer remains a concept of objective truth. The "Bowling Green Massacre" meme is a great example of the contortion of words – nobody was killed – so it's not a massacre by the dictionary use of the term (a dictionary definition is "an indiscriminate and brutal slaughter of people"). The deceptive path forward is to change the popular meaning of "massacre" to suite the meme – just as ethnic cleansing is used instead of genocide and the term "Holocaust" is used in other contexts – in order for those

wishing to deceive to get away with it. If the word is wrong, change the meaning of the word rather than admit you lied and deceived. The media, which largely controls the vast majority of communications (twitter and facebook and so forth included), can of course help this situation by reducing the time they give to liars or stopping their long ramblings, interrupting them (perhaps with an airhorn to the ear) every time they spew a lie, calling them a liar, and pushing back hard, I then asking about all of their previous lies, one after another, until they admit to them (which they never will), then asking why anybody anywhere should believe anything they or the people they represent say from now on. It's never too late to start, but then the liars don't have to worry – they keep getting more and more time, based on the false notion that exposing their lies without calling them out explicitly will somehow deprecate the effect. The media needs to come to understand that lies repeated become surrogates for the truth – repetition leads to credibility.

- **Presentation issues** – Presenting results has to provide the means to differentiate between falsehood and truth, reputation, or other relevant metrics. Symbols used to portray reliability and accuracy of information and sources present a problem in symbology. In the US media, the term “lie” and “liar” are rarely used. Somehow the polite society of the news media wants to not speak the truth so directly. But there is a larger issue in the science of presentation here. If people are to quickly see the difference between truth and lies, there must be readily recognizable clues in the context of the society. One reason frauds are successful is that they appear honest. They practice this, perfect techniques, and apply them at will. In some societies, the story of Pinocchio, a wooden boy whose nose grows longer as he lies, might be effective as a symbol for a liar, with the length of the nose indicating the extent of their reputation as a liar. But remember also, if this carries over to physical appearance, those with big noses will be thought of as liars by the society, even if subconsciously. Finding presentations that have the proper effect at rapidly discerning fiction from fact is critical to effective control over the understanding of what is said by whom. And symbols differentiating liars from truth tellers is critical to reputation approaches.
- **Example combinations** – As an example, slowing transitivity of information flow from actors without track records of deception, prioritizing search results to favor historically reliable sources, and only indicating trust of results when the combined reliability of the sources exceeds thresholds. Clearly, combining methods can be used to overcome many of the problems of individual methods. But which combinations work in which context have to be learned by experiment and experience.

Objective truth and reputation

Regardless of perspective, there is objective truth. To find this out, anybody can perform a simple experiment. One at a time, blindfold 100 people. Spin them around slowly, eventually pointing them in a random direction within an area with a wall in half the directions and open space in other directions. Tell them to walk forward. Half of them will bump into a wall. If the ones walking toward the walls pass through those walls, then their perception, which lacks any information about the existence of the wall, is the reality. If they bump into the walls, or those not walking toward walls bump into walls, then perception is indeed truth. Does anyone believe that people will walk through walls based on their perception?

Objective proof applies to many things, including whether there was a massacre or not. Look for the bodies and the witnesses and the lack of people who previously exited in public and private records, the bank accounts no longer used, the relatives and families, and so forth. You will find none in Bowling Green. But it takes time to make certain of the facts.

Objective truth applies when a President claims that the media didn't report almost 50 "terrorist acts" while hundreds of millions of people can personally testify that these acts were covered extensively in the global media and records of the real-time coverage exist in multiple redundant and consistent forms under the control of a wide range of different parties of all different views. But it takes time – even if a few minutes – to make certain of the facts.

Objective truth applies when convicted felons are subsequently found not guilty by a court of law based on suppressed evidence of another party being responsible for those rapes. And this truth remains the truth despite the claims of a Presidential candidate.

Objective truth goes to reputation. After any person lies again and again, it becomes incumbent on the rest of society to act against them. For example, the reputation as a liar can be attached to them through memes - "lying Ted Cruz", "the Dishonest media", "Lying Hillary" - all examples of believable deceptions perpetrated by "Traitor Trump". The objective truth about the lies told in the 2016 Presidential campaign was reported extensively in the media, part of why Traitor Trump had to claim "the Dishonest media" so often. The objective truth was demonstrated by replaying actual information from real-time events for all to see and adding testimony from eye witnesses and other redundant sources. But it took time. Hillary lied something like 1/4 as much as Trump according to the analysts, apparently Hillary's numbers are about average for modern politicians. I haven't looked at the research on Ted Cruz. But the objective truth of their lies was not attached to the candidates very well.

The attachment of the meme to the name creates the linkage in peoples' minds, and as repeated comes to replace the original name. If the meme is repeated enough, even if not true, it becomes embedded in the minds of the listener and part of the way they think about the person. "Fearless Fred" was a name given to me by my friends in college because of my lack of control over bidding in bridge games, but it became embedded in my reputation and psyche and is part of the directness I still have today. People who are told repeatedly that they are worthless start to develop feelings of low self-worth. But some are strong enough to overcome that meme and build up ego defenses against them. But I am not a psychologist.

Expertise properly applied

To execute on these notions and approaches, requires people with skill properly applied to the challenge at hand. If the frauds, spies, and liars outnumber or out resource the experts seeking and presenting truth, the deceptions will win in the popular mindset. Because deception has an advantage of speed of meme spread, particularly in the Internet of today, in order for the truth to win out, more resources must go into the truth than the deceptions.

Today, liars and those wishing to cause false perceptions by the use of memes are far more resourced than those wishing to seek and spread the objective truth. Indeed this happens at many levels and across a broad spectrum.

Those wishing to take advantage of others by deception and "perception management" spend a great deal investing in research and its systematic application. Those seeking to promote the truth spend very little and so so poorly.

- Advertising is one area where this is pushed, but the line between “legitimate” and “illegitimate” keeps moving. What was once illegal “false advertising” is now treated as indistinguishable from the truth. While Joe Isuzu was pretty much humor, political advertisements are about as far from the truth as it gets.
- Even a few hundred thousands of dollars to start a school for honest journalism is very hard to find today, while the same individual seeking to do this can readily find work for far more than this in politics for helping one side or the other with their image and feeding stories to the media.
- Funding for offense in all areas of the information world far exceeds funding for defense. This even holds true in the multi-billion dollar “computer security” industry, where surveillance and related technologies get far more funding than more secure systems (the equities issue) and there is enormous funding for offensive perception management operations compared to operations funded to seek and spread the truth.

Freedom of speech, particularly political speech, is important to a free society. But unless and until we adequately resource truth and counter-deception, we will apparently fall further and further down the deception trap. Perhaps we will fall so far that it will be ages before objective truth returns, and perhaps we will kill ourselves as a race before we finish. Deception about climate change, disease, nuclear weapons, pollution, food, and water, and mass extinctions, may cause the extinction of the human race.

Conclusion

Memes can be controlled by injection and suppression of information reaching targets. When applied to lies, this is another name for deception. To benefit truth, selective suppression of deception and induction of truth is required. Who controls the selection mechanism then controls the spread of memes, and this is power over the thought process of the body politic and ultimately the society writ large. Today, memes in the Internet are used largely to induce falsehoods and suppress truth in target audiences.

Regardless of the question of “whose truth” that may be asked by those offering “alternative reality”, there is objective truth. But as a society, objective truth is largely ignored over more interesting stories and more exciting “programs”. The truth costs more and takes longer, while deception is more highly funded and supported. “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”⁴

It is a matter of belief based on and backed with evidence, that the truth is more beneficial to more people than lies directed against them by those who would use these lies to gain power, influence, and riches for themselves at the expense of others.

There is no such thing as a benevolent dictatorship. Power corrupts.⁵ And paraphrasing Jon David, even if there were such a dictator, their idiot son would eventually wreck havoc.⁶

I have tried to provide some guideposts to defeat propaganda and lies. But it’s not up to me. It’s up to you. Fight for truth and justice or suffer the consequences.

4 Edmund Burke.

5 “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men.” John Emerich Edward Dalberg Acton, first Baron Acton (1834–1902). See <http://all.net/Analyst/2013-09.pdf>

6 Actually, Jon said, in effect, that even if by some miracle you got all the protection settings right today, without a plan to manage them, by tomorrow, many of them would be wrong.