

Bowdlerizing History

by [G. Murphy Donovan](#) (March 2019)



The Librarian, Giuseppe Arcimboldo, 1566

Propaganda does not deceive people; it merely helps them to deceive themselves.

–Eric Hoffer

All art is propaganda.

–George Orwell

Fake news is old news. Creating and publishing false or irrelevant salacious stories is a persistent American political custom that dates back to the 18th century. The Jefferson/Hamilton feud is a good example. Ironically, with the help of journalists and historians, Thomas Jefferson's secret life of miscegenation was purposely obscured until Fawn Brodie and DNA came along in the mid-20th century.

The idea that the American press has ever been neutral or objective is itself a self-serving myth. A free press is not required for democracy so much as it is necessary to keep favored personalities, political parties, and myths alive or powerful. Partisan and free are not synonyms.

Repetition is the key to belief—and propaganda.

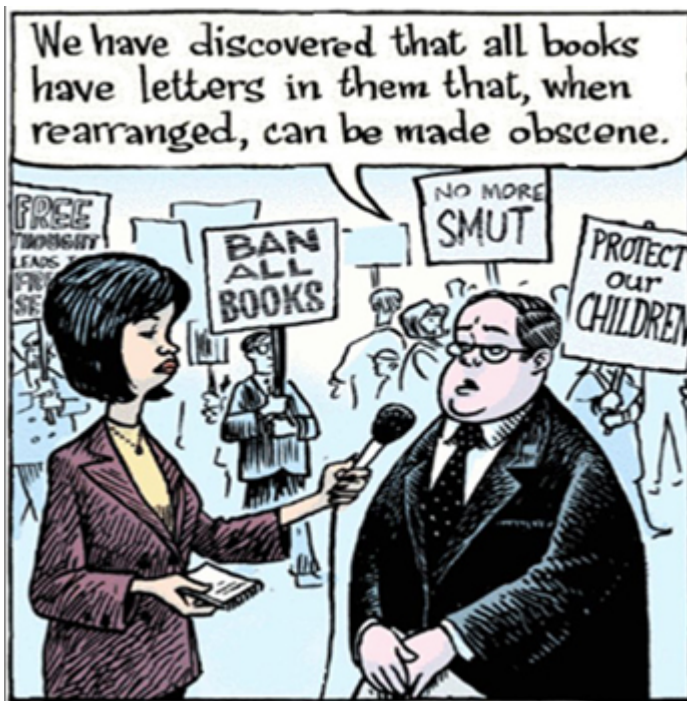
Truth for the most part is what a writer or editor thinks a reader will believe. Likewise, truth on the internet is a function of followers, tweets, re-tweets, page views, reviews, up votes, downloads, and likes.

Dot.com truth, it's fair to say, is now a popularity contest. Take a bow, millennials. Alas, social media and urban fish wrap are the two dog whistles that summon the needy, nerdy, greedy and seedy.

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Belief, after all, is the arbiter of truth. Your truth is what you believe and that includes a host of internalized posted or published rubbish and hype devoid of fact, logic, or reality.



"Going viral" is now a kind of public onanism. You can buy most anything on the internet these days including "followers," celebrity pimps, and digital dildos.

Journalism of any ilk is still the slippery shaft of history, fake or real. History in turn, like journalism, is a process of massaging facts or data in search of happy endings. History is written by winners, a process which starts with a conclusion and ends with collusion; a theory or premise followed by a comprehensive scavenger hunt for allied facts. *Who* writes history is seldom more important than *why*. Motives are seldom an issue until after the fact. Robert Mueller takes a bow here.

Nevertheless, spinning artful and palatable yarns for public consumption is as American as soap opera, gun play, weed, and STDs. The new wrinkle is technical efficiency; gadgets that merge and force-feed reality, advertising, and propaganda through the same perpetually adolescent eye balls and ear buds. No accident then that “news” and consumer goods are package deals in print, on the airways, and on the internet.

Where money walks, all manner of bravo sierra talks. The folks selling “news” have precisely the same motives as those marketing Maxi Pads, Metamucil, mascara, and Marmite.

The creep state now dines at the data buffet too in ways that would have gob smacked even Orwell or Gogol. Big brother is now a voyeur, a voracious collector of “meta-data,” your personal habits, with the help of science, consuming nitwits, and virtually every major American dot.com mogul.

A nation of internet sheep is a terrible thing to waste. Industry and Uncle Sam have successfully colluded to throw the Fourth Amendment under a bus driven by *quid pro quo*.

The grand irony of the early 21st Century is that the nexus for digital home invasion is Silicon Valley and Fort Meade, as liberal a pair of sinecures as Key West or Fire Island. Indeed, the National Security Agency and Zuckerberg globalists are now joined at the hip.

Data is now Eldorado for Uncle Sam and the vanguard of the internet proletariat. Science and art are not immune either to hustles and fakery expedited by the internet.

Even without hoax and hysteria about the environment, science is doing its part to contribute to the fake news tsunami. An iconic example comes, no surprise, from the left coast and Silicon Valley where Elizabeth Holmes and Theranos Corporation claimed to have created a procedure that would revolutionize all blood testing.

Theranos, a contraction of therapy and analysis, was a media and Wall Street darling until Lizzie's faux science was exposed and a 9 billion dollar valuation and the press spotlight vanished like morning fog in Palo Alto.

Withal, early examples of fakirs in the arts saw literature and music industries colluding too to turn real history into political fairy tales with subtexts of tumescence and violence throughout.

The elevation of comic books and video games to the "artistic" mix are recidivist examples. Adult feature length comics are now called "graphic" novels, fantasies for the developmentally challenged.

High culture for millennials is a 300 page comic book.

Perpetual adolescence, and immoderate consumption, has been

trending in America since the Kennedy era. Hollywood and Broadway were quick to see the profit in arrested development. Vintage comic book heroes are now purveyors of politically correct dystopian memes.

Newspeak is now all we speak.

The advent of black and female superheroes in Hollywood, and revisionist history on Broadway, are probative. Mercifully, pink pussy hats only lasted for one marching season. The libertine left probably noticed that cooters and cats come in a veritable rainbow of colors.

Still, putting a pink pussy hat on a Hollywood “feminist” for a Washington protest march is a little like decorating Anderson Cooper with a codpiece for a snowflake whine on CNN or CBS.

Nonetheless, genital consciousness and color coding are streaming on the Great White Way. The musical *Hamilton* is exhibit number one; probably the most egregious case of revisionism and cultural appropriation in ancient or modern theater. Surely Uncle Tom, Stepin’ Fetchit, Aunt Jemima, Buckwheat, and Al Jolson are tap dancing in Beulah Land.

White face vaudeville on Broadway is the new black face.

Historically, Puerto Ricans and Africans had little to do with the English Enlightenment or the subsequent American

Revolution. Casting Puerto Ricans or African Americans as 18th Century American heroes is about as authentic as a blond Beyoncé. Keeping it “real” on the “street” is 21st Century doublespeak.

Any “Hispanic” theme here is as false as it is pernicious. Puerto Rico was a Spanish slave economy until the 20th Century. There is nothing iconic or artistic about the Spanish conquest of the Americas—or Spanish colonial behavior south of Saint Augustine before or after Teddy Roosevelt sprung Puerto Rico.

Despots are as despots do.

The story line in *Black Panther* is bogus too, a puerile cocktail of binary delusions: great, unspoiled black kingdoms; white oppressors; superior, yet secret, black technologies; black globalism; and battalions of coifed black female Special Forces.

Good grief!

The only nuggets of cultural or historical relevance in *Black Panther* are the celebration of despotic kings and kingdoms—ironically underwritten by a genuine democracy deficit on the African continent as we speak.

The artistic leitmotif of *Black Panther*, like black Jesus and black Santa, is political not artistic. Alas, political blight

is never undone by a better fairy tale. A savior may come again, but he still won't be black until the vile lyrics and dark music of black American street "culture" changes.

Colonial-era slave trading was more commercial than social artifact, a toxic product of European and African economic collusion on three continents. The color of oppression is not black and white; it's green. The morality of institutionalized slavery did not worry American or African conscience in any significant way until Lincoln's day in any case.

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Economic servitude American style is still trending.

Any notion that rap musicals are a new *avant garde* art form is Ludicrous. Like NFL/NBA sports, the audience for live black theater is almost exclusively white. Few consumers of rap go to a Broadway show or professional games on any day, even if they could afford a ticket. On any Super Bowl Sunday, rich white men will pay thousands for a ticket to see large black men play another game of concussion roulette.

The reality of Broadway, Hollywood, professional sports, and popular music is that rich white liberal hypocrites still manipulate, profit, and control the black American cultural market basket.

Servility is possibly the most fungible commodity of American economics.

And let's face it, rap is to real music what a sad solo in the basement is to a real duet in the bedroom. Both achieve the same end, but only one is authentic, real, romantic, productive—or art.

Most rap is a kind of sponsored cultural self-abuse; thuggish, punkish, violent, crude, rude, racist, misogynist, vulgar, and trite; offal poetry and worse art. Semi-literate twerking in public is never a good look for any demographic in search of acceptance or upward mobility.

Theatrical or musical condescension, or fairy tales, are not elevated to art just because they provide profit or purgatives for Broadway or Hollywood snowflakes. Altering the heroes, genitals, hair, or skin colors of history sends all the wrong messages to young minds already enfeebled by pot, propaganda, and a politicized public school system.

Bowdlerizing history with fairy tales under a burka of art is a symptom of cultural rot, not a step forward for society, communication, understanding, or the performing arts.

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G. Murphy Donovan usually writes about the politics of national security, but he occasionally hunts in the cultural thicket when it becomes a target rich environment.

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