

Seeking Truth in a Country of Lies - Critical and Lyrical Essays

Book Review

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

*In the introduction to "Seeking Truth in a Country of Lies - Critical and Lyrical Essays" **Edward Curtin** writes,*

"...We live in the era of massive fraud where the transnational wealthy elites, led by the American war and propaganda machine, continue to try to convince the gullible that they are the saviours of humanity even as they lie and cheat and murder by the millions."

The subtitle 'critical and lyrical essays', added another meaning as being mostly philosophical essays in nature. That is both right and wrong as while it has many lyrical and literary references it also has a hard hitting...persona...seems to be the word to describe it, a book that argues with your mind and presents its arguments from a variety of perspectives.

For that reason it makes a great read, neither history nor current events nor philosophy but all of those in essays ranging from mostly critical to mostly lyrical and even whimsical but all involving elements of each. For some readers the literary and lyrical references may be a bit obtuse although the manner in which they are presented helps the not so philosophical-literary reader understand the meaning within the given context. It challenges all manner of topics and modes of thinking as indicated as well in the introduction: "propaganda, wars, government assassinations, work, nature, time, the CIA, poetry, digital dementia, etc."

Towards the end of the book, Curtin states it quite obviously about what the book reveals,

"...the truth that...the United States is the greatest purveyor of violence in the world and our society rests on keeping the poor poor and under the vicious thumbs of the rich."

Propaganda and ignorance

The main theme is propaganda and how it is used by the government, the deep state, and the media that is all part of that. Curtin brings it from the era of Bernays to the current digital era of communications technology, the latter creating a state of detachment from reality caused partly by the profusion of perspectives, but also largely due to its diversion of the self from the real world it is living through. The digital world is one of "suspended animation", "historical amnesia and digital dementia", a "mediated reality". In essence we are not living authentic lives in a world based on propaganda and the many devices -

psychological and physical – that keep us from contemplating the nature of our self, between suffering and joy, nothingness and infinity. “The high tech companies together with the national-security state are grinning with glee at our stupidity.”

One particular phrase that has become common is from Chomsky and Herman, “manufactured consent.” From that comes the idea of “wilful ignorance” wherein people may either know what is happening and simply choose to deny it, or know that something is happening but refuse to find out what it is all about. For Curtin that becomes “a turning away from...truth and to ignore its implications can only be described as an act of bad faith and culpable ignorance, or worse.”

The “worse” could be another derivation of the term, ‘contrived ignorance’. It is the situation in which one knows the truth about what has been done or what is being done, yet figures out a way, a preconceived rationale, that allows it to be ignored, pushed away and denied, and then if questioned, to find all sorts of contrived reasons why the subject is of no or little consequence and need not be explored further, or has been dealt with fully and the answers already supplied.

The CIA and its creation of the “conspiracy theory” meme is a prime example of this, and applies to the CIA actions with the assassinations of JFK, RFK, MLK, and Malcolm X (among many other actions) and the subsequent highly improbable if not impossible official accounts.

Lyrical and whimsical

The lyrical and critical are intermingled both in sequence of the essays and within the essays themselves. Few are purely critical as Curtin draws in a mixture of literary and philosophical considerations for different perspectives on a given topic. A few essays begin seemingly entirely whimsical but through their lyrical references and associations with some of the oddities of life and society become more critical and pointed.

Curtin draws upon Serpico, Vincent van Gogh, Albert Camus, George Orwell, Walter Thoreau and other writers and artists in order to define his perspectives on many aspects of personal life and historical realities. Discussions about time, falling in love, walking in the rain, and poetry all add significant meaningful ideas to his overall theme.

Back to reality

In order to end where this all started, with propaganda, allow Curtin to end with the CIA and the JFK and RFK cover-ups. In citing Lisa Pease, author of “A Lie Too Big To Fail”, it is recognized that “We’ve come perilously close to losing democracy itself because of fake, CIA-sponsored stories about our history.”

That loss of course, could be a reference to the Trump presidency,

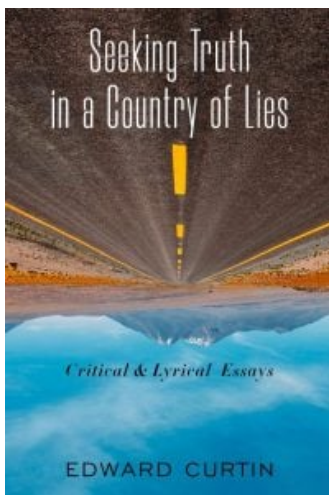
“He’s us. Did it ever occur to those who fixated on him that if those who own and run the country wanted him gone, he’d be gone in an instant?but as long as he protects the super rich, accepts Israel’s control of him, and allows the CIA-military-industrial complex to do its worldwide killing and looting of the treasury, he will be allowed to entertain and excite the public,” [opposed by the Democrats] “whose intentions are as benign as an assassin’s smile.”

In short a complex, challenging, wonderful read. Take some time from your digital world and find a copy of “Seeking Truth in a Country of Lies – Critical and Lyrical Essays” to read in a quiet place where the individual essays may be read at leisure, and your mind is entertained, informed, and challenged all at the same time.

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Jim Miles is a frequent contributor to *Global Research*.



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