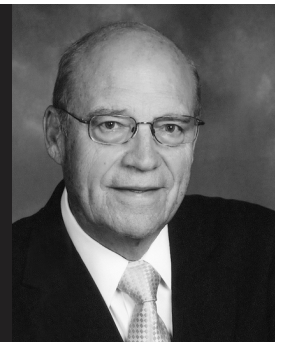




Dr. Fred Schwarz

The Schwarz Report

62 Years Defending Our Christian Faith



Dr. David Noebel

May 2022

Thomas Sowell: Philosopher and Literary Giant

by John Dale Dunn

Maverick: A Biography of Thomas Sowell by Jason L Riley 304 pp, 18.69 Hardcover 16.69 Kindle, ISBN-10: 1541619684 (Basic Books 2021)

Thomas Sowell is an American literary and philosophical icon—a prolific genius who has graced us with his presence and his extraordinary essays, books, and lectures for more than 50 years. Consider that his career as a writer and public intellectual was delayed by a tumultuous youth and service in the Marines, so he didn't even get started on his life's work as a remarkable economist, philosopher, social scientist until he was almost 30.

My personal appreciation of Thomas Sowell began at least 30 years ago when I realized any adult American is obligated to understand economics and Thomas Sowell was an education on economics. But then he became an education on so many other areas of importance that I began to wonder: how is this man so good at what he does?

When I saw that Jason Riley had composed a biography with Sowell's cooperation, a biography that is comprehensive and intelligent in scope and content, I was compelled to tell American Thinker readers that it will not only be salutary and enlightening to read the biography, to know of Thomas Sowell but the biography will also give you a well-developed exposure to the Sowell oeuvre of more than 40 books, along with an excellent narrative of Sowell's life and career.

Mr. Riley, a conservative commentator and columnist for the *Wall Street Journal* and fellow at the Manhattan Institute, summarizes the life and times of Dr. Sowell, but focuses on his literary and intellectual achievements, how others assessed his work and why he is a monument to effective intellectual inquiry—a man whose whole life has been about the search for truth and insights into the nature of the human experience.

I was attracted more than 3 decades ago to Sowell because he uses economic analysis as a jumping off point for his far-ranging scholarship in the social and political sciences. He is a master of economics, but also has become such a respected intellect because he has expanded his scholarship to intellectual history and social science using the University of Chicago economics empirical approach—gather and analyze the pertinent evidence if you want to answer the questions. Sowell benefits from the fact that economics provides important reliable information (evidence) about human behavior. Economics provides good social science metrics. The great Austrian school free markets economist Ludwig von Mises titled his master work *Human Action* for a reason.

Thomas Sowell used his superior and thorough economics knowledge and research to range far and wide in the social sciences and become one of the great social scientists and philosophers of his time—not just an accomplished economist. It is impossible for me to adequately describe Sowell's achievements here, but the Riley biography is more than adequate, it is brilliant. Mr. Riley has functioned in the same role, in a way, as Sam Johnson's famous biographer James Boswell. Sowell's wonderful story deserves a good biographer.

Sowell was the 5th child born of a widow in Gastonia, North Carolina in 1939, raised by his great aunt who moved to Harlem when Sowell was 9. He was smart enough to be admitted to the academically very selective Stuyvesant High School in Manhattan (alma mater of 4 Nobel laureates) but dropped out after 1 year at age 16 because of behavior problems – a bull headedness that would be a valuable characteristic in his adult life.

At that point he was also estranged from his great aunt, so he lived in homeless boys' shelter and worked various jobs. He became a Marine during the Korean war at age 21 as a pistol instructor, and completed high school, entered Howard University in DC after the war, grabbing an iron hold on academics, matriculating later at Harvard then Columbia and finally a PhD at University of Chicago. His teaching career spanned the 1960s and 70s at Rutgers, Howard, Cornell, Brandeis, and a 10-year stint at UCLA from 1970 to 1980. Since then, he has been at the Hoover Institute at Stanford University, where he has been one of their most prolific, prominent, and recognized fellows, writing books and columns

but also making public appearances as an advocate or subject of interviews advocating his opinion on matters of policy and economics. Right-on Dr. Sowell.

The best thing I can do is to summarize the important areas of inquiry for Dr. Sowell and assure you that Mr. Riley does a fine job of giving an overview of the work of a giant—a real challenge that Riley took on with energy and a fine touch. Riley is an excellent writer and has the right attitude for a biographer—tell the story of the subject and his life and accomplishments, focus on the subject—the book romps along because Sowell’s life is full of action and achievements.

The subjects that best summarize Sowell’s professional inquiries are

- * economic theory and economics issues—distribution of values, impact of government policies and the realities of economics that should not be sacrificed on crackpot ideas driven by intellectuals

- * race and ethnic minority problems with a focus on inequalities and discrimination as well as the effect of quotas and affirmative action, again with a liberal dose of criticism of social scientists who hold inane and, in many cases, destructive theories

- * intellectual history and history of ideas (philosophy) as played out in the political arena with a generous effort to the mindset of intellectuals and how they try to dominate society

- * a focus on ethnic cultures, strengths, weaknesses, inequalities between and within groups that create strife and polarization but also drive counterproductive policymaking that actually increases strife and conflict

- * pedagogy, learning and language development and a deep dive into the ethnic/racial IQ debate as well as the mistake of affirmative action quotas in higher education and forced bussing in primary and secondary education while ignoring the decline of the education establishment into progressive nonsense.

Sowell was influenced by Friedrich Hayek in many ways, and he adopted the free market economic theory of cumulative economic knowledge as the basis for his dissection of the matter of political actions and political theory—after he gave up his Marxist ways.

The theme of *Knowledge and Decisions* can be stated as: the cumulative knowledge of society is often more likely to be correct than the theories of intellectuals and political actors, who are perversely motivated by a desire for power and control. Sowell’s concerns were to warn of the tyranny of the power-hungry elites. The idea itself is simple. He already had determined that knowledge is radically dispersed among millions of human beings who are ignorant of others’ tiny fragments of knowledge.

Hayek criticized the enthusiasm for central economic planning, an incredibly stupid idea that reinforced the oligarchs’ sense that they should make the big decisions on economic matters, not the market itself. This insanity was inherent to Marxist ideas and agendas that were spreading from the Soviet Union throughout Europe. Sowell captured the stupidity when he opened his book *Knowledge and Decisions*: “Ideas are everywhere, but knowledge is rare.”

Sowell provides a panoramic view of how the world works that will inform any careful reader’s thinking on just about everything.

Sowell’s many books on racial issues are focused on empirical analysis and not sloganeering and noisy rhetoric. A student of Stigler and Friedman and influenced by Hayek, Sowell eschews rhetoric and focuses on what they always emphasized at University of Chicago—the data, the evidence, empiric methods.

Related to the race and inequality issues as well as the discrimination against minorities around the world are his trilogy on migrations and migrant minorities—just another angle that strengthens his position as a level headed scientifically driven researcher who debunks bad ideas regularly and displays insights that are critical to intelligent analysis. In matters of ethnic differences and ethnic migrations Sowell did his homework and traveled the world twice to study minorities in other countries. His ethnic studies are on display in his work on other subjects, but his focus on minorities, affirmative action, and the experience of minorities in other cultures is found in books on policies around the world, minorities in America and other countries, the particular experiences of minorities in America.

Many years ago, he wrote a trilogy on migrations and migrants -- some people would consider that a career—he just did it so he could pursue his ambition to inform and educate and maybe stop harmful policies that set back things for society and the targeted minority. He didn’t stop at discrimination, he provided an excellent analysis of the harmful effects of affirmative action and quota policies or special favoritism. Just as a prize for reading Sowell you learn things you may never have known otherwise—how Chinese Mainlander migrants to other countries have a remarkable record of achievement and prosperity. Sowell shows that it’s the culture of the minority that determines success, and policies intended to provide social justice are sometimes poorly conceived and executed.

Sowell’s books on race and racial issues were written because he was obligated to weigh in, but I think Riley is right to emphasize the most important achievements of Sowell’s career—his work on economics and the philosophy/history of ideas/politics/ and the influence of intellectuals. The ideas he espouses on philosophy and

economics and their intersection are all through his essays and books, but there is a trilogy that is foundational and make him the go-to guy on ideas and politics, *A Conflict of Visions* (1987), *The Vision of the Anointed* (1995), and *The Quest for Cosmic Justice* (1999).

Here I have to take a break and explain why Sowell is a go-to guy, and it is because he uses examples and plain talk that will elevate your thinking but not put you down. Sowell believes that wisdom is all around us and he is, in practice and theory, very leery of intellectual pretensions, so he writes so that a truck driver can get it. I liked that the first time I read him—talk plain. If you can't explain your theory to a bus driver, you don't understand your theory (that's borrowed from the great Physics Nobel Laureate Richard Feynman).

As an example of why Sowell is so interesting and readable, he asserts in his first book of a trilogy on Ideas that there are basically two types of people and two attitudes that result in two people similarly informed and well intentioned would always be on opposite sides. It's that fundamentally different visions of human nature divide people. There is the "constrained" tragic vision that humans are imperfect and flawed and the "unconstrained" feel-good utopian vision that is based on the perfectibility of man and the victory of good intentions. The politics and attitudes of people divide that way and are the motives we see in the American Constitution of 1787 as opposed to the French Constitution of 1793.

The three books on ideas and political philosophy use this basic premise to explain real world politics and government and approaches to economic and social problems. *A Conflict of Visions* sets out the theory, *begins* with a series of chapters describing this underlying theory and then shifts to chapters showing the realities and the consequences. *The Vision of the Anointed*, deals with the unrestrained mindset that poisons the intellectual and political elites, who think they are smart enough to actually direct societies to produce a utopia. Sowell pulls no punches taking down the elites/oligarchs/ intellectuals and how they are tyrants in waiting. The last book in the trilogy *The Quest for Cosmic Justice*, explains the trap that "social justice" advocates have laid for society, and he expresses his concerns and contempt for the utopian social scientists who want to impose their will on society and who will create an Orwellian nightmare.

Sowell's analyses of so many problems have been more lucid and cogent than most of the so-called public intellectuals in America—and it's because he is, first of all, a serious researcher and second a disciplined analyst. Most of what he has said in the past 3 decades completely discredits the claims of current noisy and

popular blowhards. Decades ago Thomas Sowell was debunking stupid arguments now popular in all the popular progressive publications and media outlets.

Knowledge and Decisions, along with so many other books by Sowell, exposed the inanity of so many contemporary "experts" long before they wore long pants. More than 30 years ago I read *A Conflict of Visions* that exposed the poseur intellectuals and their silly ideas before they had a chance to articulate them. Thomas Sowell is head and shoulders above the intellectuals of this society in the past century—no one comes close. As he would say, look at the evidence. Read the brilliant biography by Mr. Riley.

—*American Thinker*, March 30, 2022

Nuclear Energy: Safe and Clean

by Laurence F. Sanford

Carbon-free nuclear energy is an essential component of America's energy security and clean energy program of reducing carbon emissions in order to reduce global warming.

Fossil fuels (coal, oil, natural gas) power 60% of the electricity produced in America, emitting 5,000,000 tons of carbon dioxide. Nuclear energy produces 20% of the electricity and emits 0 tons of carbon dioxide.

Ninety-three nuclear reactors in fifty-six plants are located in twenty-eight states. The average age of the reactors is thirty-nine years. Currently, there are only two nuclear reactors under construction in America in Vogtle, Georgia. Twenty-three reactors are shut down or are in various stages of decommissioning: Illinois (9), Pennsylvania (8) and South Carolina (7) lead the nation in number of nuclear reactors.

Carbon Free Nuclear Energy Advantages

The Biden Administration is cautiously embracing nuclear energy to meet its green goals. The administration's climate advisor, Gina McCarthy, states nuclear power reactors are "absolutely essential" in meeting Biden's climate projections of a net-zero carbon economy. Congress passed an infrastructure bill which devotes \$8.5 billion to fund advanced nuclear reactor development, funding of small modular reactors (SMRs), and financially compromised existing nuclear plants.

The most reliable of all energy sources is nuclear energy. It is available 24/7/365 and does not depend upon sunshine, wind, water levels, or fossil fuels. The

wind does not always blow and the sun does not shine at night. Maintenance and downtimes are minimal with nuclear energy. A small quantity of uranium powers nuclear energy. Uranium is a plentiful mineral throughout the world and the US. It is easily and securely transported.

A solar panel farm kills thousands of birds, requires 450 times the land area of a nuclear power plant and is effective only when the sun shines. Wind farms also require large tracts of land, kill thousands of birds and provide intermittent power. Battery storage technology for renewable energy is not capable of providing sufficient and sustainable electricity to meet society's needs. The primary source for solar panels and windmill blades is China.

Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) are safer and less costly than large conventional nuclear fission reactors. They are designed and manufactured in modules at a plant and transported to a site. This reduces cost and speeds up construction time.

Nuclear fission reactors power all nuclear plants today. Fission occurs when one atom is split into two resulting in the release of energy. Future nuclear reactors will be powered by fusion which combines and fuses two atoms into one atom releasing energy and leaving little radioactive waste. At present there are no working fusion reactors because of the inability to control the process. Advanced computer models and other technologies will soon make a laboratory model into an industrial-size reactor.

Nuclear energy offers over 150,000 steady, high-paying jobs and is a significant source of local tax revenue. Technological spinoffs enrich America's industrial base and improve daily living. By reducing air pollution, nuclear energy saves millions of lives. Nuclear radiation fights cancer and sterilizes medical instruments and food packaging.

Nuclear reactors are the safest of all energy sources, there have been no known deaths from nuclear accidents in the United States. The Navy has utilized nuclear power since the launch of the submarine USS *Nautilus* in 1954. Currently the entire US submarine and aircraft carrier fleet are powered by nuclear energy. Sixty-five years later, there have been no safety or health issues raised by the Navy's nuclear energy use.

Nuclear Power Disadvantages

All the nuclear waste ever produced in the US. can fit on a single football field in 50-foot-high solid stack containers. Coal plants generate the same amount of waste every hour and its disposal/storage is a serious environmental issue. Natural gas methane flaring and mining of rare earth metals for solar panels and windmills are also serious environmental issues.

Fear is a powerful emotion. A phobia is an unreasonable fear of something or a situation. Nuclear energy and the resulting waste should be feared but not unreasonably. Fear of nuclear energy in a military weapon is a reasonable and justified fear. But fear of nuclear energy in producing electricity is unreasonable—effectively “nuclearphobia.”

Environmental, green, and progressive organizations, with annual budgets of over one billion dollars, promote green energy and oppose nuclear energy. Excessive lawsuits and regulations discourage nuclear energy development. The risks of nuclear energy are greatly exaggerated and the risks of renewable energy are minimized or not even mentioned. A significant portion of that billion dollars, in conjunction with an active membership, has a significant impact on public perception and political action.

Nuclear energy is the safest, cleanest, and most reliable of all energy sources. For a carbon-free future and a growing industrial civilization, nuclear energy is an absolute necessity. Currently eighty-five percent of the world's energy is provided by fossil fuels. It is impossible for wind and solar power in the near future to totally replace nuclear and/or fossil fuels. An intelligent combination of energy conservation, renewable energies for local low-intensity applications, and nuclear energy for large-scale electricity production, are the only viable methods to meet future civilization energy needs.

—*American Thinker*, March 17, 2022

Facing Food Shortage

by Anony Mee

A concatenation of events is dropping on us like an imploding building and there's not much we can do to stop it. However, we can mitigate some of the potential damage through our individual efforts and need to get started now.

But first, one bit of good news. H. Douglas Lightfoot and Gerald Ratzler have published a paper, “The Sun Versus CO2 as the Cause of Climate Change Projected to 2050,” that thrashes the IPCC's global warming model.

However, the paper also kicks off this food shortage discussion. The authors say the earth “is now in the early stages of cooling that might be similar to the Dalton Minimum and last for three or four decades. Average temperatures can drop by up to 1.5 degrees C and increase the rate of crop failures that have already

started. It won't be easy to maintain the benefits of the recent warm phase of the Sun during the upcoming solar minimum." That's 2.7 degrees F, and significant.

Lightfoot and Ratzler confirm that we've already entered the Modern Grand Solar Minimum (GSM) and that negative impacts on crops are already occurring. We've seen harvest shortfalls in a variety of crops around the world over the past couple of seasons. Coupled with these shortfalls, a few countries have limited or halted exports of staple products, mostly grains and legumes.

For two years and continuing until today, there have been interruptions in commodities for sale. A number of factors contribute to this stuttering availability of commercial goods. Labor shortages in picking, packing, processing, and transportation led to gaps on some grocery shelves. Delayed imports of raw materials for canning, bottling, and bagging due to shutdowns in countries of origin will likely continue, especially now that China is locking down whole cities again.

Because of recent crop failures and lackluster harvests, many regional grocery warehouses, which usually have about 18 months' worth of packaged and frozen food in stock, are practically empty according to a friend whose family owns a large chain of stores. Low stocks of livestock feed and hay due to drought are reducing meat, poultry, milk, and egg production in some areas.

Monica Showalter's excellent article the other day—Biden is about to get caught flat-footed on another crisis: Ukraine war-generated global food shortages—examines the impact that Russia's war on Ukraine is having and is expected to have on global grain and fertilizer availability, as well as food production.

Besides the drought hitting the mid-plains and potentially causing the abandonment of this year's winter wheat (that's for flour) crop, the La Niña system is expected to bring above-average rains to the eastern and southeastern parts of the US, potentially delaying planting and harvest. If California continues to value a practically nonexistent smelt over its people, there will be little water for the Sacramento-area rice farmers. They've already pulled down avocado and almond orchards due to restricted water allocations elsewhere in the state.

Farmers are being hit hard by shortages and skyrocketing inflation, just like the rest of us. Anhydrous ammonia, used to fertilize most grain and many row crops, has had a massive jump in price from \$487 per ton in 2020, to \$746 in 2021, to a record-breaking \$1,492 per ton the first week of February this year. Demand for fertilizer is expected to grow, but high prices in Europe for natural gas (from which the

fertilizer is made) caused a slowdown in manufacturing last winter.

Agriculture production runs on a very tight margin, with producers taking all the risk for seed, livestock, machinery, and labor, along with weather, with no guarantee of success or profit at the end of the year. Some farmers and ranchers, faced with such increased costs, as well as insupportable costs for fuel and repair parts to run farm machinery, are looking elsewhere.

Opportunities currently exist for farmland to be put into paid conservation easements or fallowed into carbon credits. These require no inputs other than an occasional mowing but produce a guaranteed payment. Some farmers have taken advantage of these already.

I had recommended before that folks begin to stock up on long-season pantry items like grain, pasta, oils, and the like to carry them through the worst of the GSM. Variable weather is the hallmark of these cyclical events.

Christian over at Ice Age Farmer pulled together a compendium of disasters that occurred during the Maunder GSM of 1645 through 1715. It shows that colder and harsher weather resulted in a patchwork of drought, flood, hard winters, and famine throughout the minimum. We need to remember that, of the general population in the late 1600s, about 90% were engaged in farming. Today, less than 1% of Americans are farmers and ranchers, and only 2% of us live on farms.

Already we are hearing about food rationing in various places in Europe. We've seen some of that during the worst of the pandemic shortages, but it's been managed by local vendors. It's likely to get much worse before it gets better.

Let's Go Brandon's expertise lies in making the worst possible decision given any type of choice and regardless of the number of options available . . . that much is painfully obvious. We can rest assured that, when the government wakes up to this problem, it will be too late.

The demands of equity will ensure that those at the head of the food and farm assistance lines are the ones with the most victimhood points. Even if the food we are used to is available, the cost will be close to prohibitive for those on a budget. Also, it's very likely nothing will have been done in the meantime to secure our food stocks from the depredations of the export market. It will be another case of the political class waiting until the last minute and then going overboard trying to react.

So, we must take care of ourselves as best we can. Most of us can't grow sufficient grain or press enough oil to meet our needs, so we need to set aside what we can for future use. We should begin to produce as much of our own food as possible though. It's time to Make Americans Gardeners Again.

Potatoes, other root crops, and winter squashes are tasty, good for us, and are calorie-dense. They are fairly easy to grow and store. Greens can be grown year-round with a little help from inside lighting. Dwarf fruit trees are attractive, produce early, and can be sheltered fairly easily during harsh weather. We can preserve the rest of our produce by dehydration, canning, pickling, and many other ways. The time to buy seeds is now.

Backyard chickens take a little more effort and input, but more recent breeds will lay 200 to 250 eggs or more a year. One hen will need about 90 pounds of feed a year; less if supplemented with garden and kitchen scraps, and moved around the yard for fresh greens (Look up chicken tractors.) Hens are multi-purpose: they provide eggs, meat and, with a rooster, perhaps even a fresh crop of baby chicks. They will clean up the late summer garden and eat all the bugs they can reach. Again, the time to buy chicks is right now. Vendors will happily help anyone get started.

It's up to us. We The People must demand that our government secures our bounty for hard times coming. We must also be prepared to be ignored. Home gardens, community gardens, urban farming, and school and workplace food production will be our generation's Victory Gardens. Let us pray that we prevail.

—*American Thinker*, March 17, 2022

Define Woman

by Chris Banescu

During day three of the confirmation hearings for Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson, a disturbing exchange occurred between Judge Jackson and Senator Marsha Blackburn. Sen. Blackburn asked the nominee to define the word “woman.” Judge Jackson refused, then stated that she’s “not a biologist” as a justification.

Jackson’s ridiculous response is a brazen gaslighting attempt, concocted to dupe the Senate committee and all of America. We’re not buying it. She’s not fooling anyone.

Here’s the relevant exchange from the confirmation hearings:

“Can you provide a definition for the word woman?” Blackburn asked.

“Can I provide a definition? No. I can’t,” Jackson responded.

“You can’t?” Blackburn replied.

“Not in this context. I’m not a biologist,” Jackson said.

We are supposed to believe that Judge Jackson, a highly educated woman and a mother herself, doesn’t have a clue about what it means to be a woman. Of course she knows. She’s a woman. She is a wife. She’s been married for 25 years. She’s also a mother. She gave birth to and raised two children. She was also picked for the Supreme Court position specifically because she is a woman. She knows exactly what a woman is.

The “I’m not a biologist” explanation is preposterous. It’s an insult to our intelligence. By that line of reasoning, only veterinarians can describe the characteristics of a cat or dog, only mathematicians can provide the solution to 2+2, and only meteorologists can tell us whether it’s raining outside.

So why didn’t Judge Jackson answer the question? Why did she pretend she didn’t know? Why did she use such a ridiculous excuse to avoid answering a direct and simple inquiry?

I suspect that Jackson did this because answering the question truthfully would undermine her entrenched leftist ideological belief system; upset her supporters; and contradict the transgender dogmas that currently dominate American culture, the left, and the Democrat party.

Jackson is beholden to the left and the Democrats. She cannot challenge the insanity of the transgender propagandists and expose their anti-woman agenda. She does not want to alienate them. She does not want to deviate from the party line.

Providing an accurate description of a woman would destroy the fiction that a man could ever transform himself into a woman. Defining womanhood truthfully would reaffirm the biological reality and scientific truth encoded within DNA and the XX chromosomes of every single cell of a woman’s body. Properly describing a woman would contradict the transgender delusion that men with breast implants wearing dresses and high-heeled shoes are actually “women.”

In refusing to answer what defines a woman, Judge Jackson shows herself to be an Orwellian leftist. Like most radicals, she believes that reality is whatever she decides it must be, truth, biology, and common sense be damned. We know this because during these same hearings, Jackson defended her decisions to drastically reduce the jail time of convicted pedophiles. She justified her outrageous actions by claiming that the speed of internet access made it too simple and convenient for these monsters to view and share pictures of horrifically abused children. Yet she herself is a mother!

We already have several current US Supreme Court justices who have abandoned truth and common sense. Their decision to define “marriage” as whatever the state says it is and give “gay marriage” the same

legal standing as real marriage set the stage for greater destruction of individual freedom and the increasing assaults on marriage.

I wrote back in 2011 that if marriage can mean anything, it will ultimately mean nothing. If “woman” can be defined as anything that Judge Jackson or any other judge wants it to be—regardless of biology, truth, and science—then womanhood will ultimately mean nothing.

The addition of another Supreme Court justice who’s willing to defy reality and undermine our legal system to suit her left-wing ideology would be catastrophic. America would move farther way from sanity, morality, justice, and truth, and more rapidly devolve into an Orwellian nightmare.

—*American Thinker*, March 25, 2022

Testing Ideas

by Rael Jean Isaac

While many have criticized the current enthusiasm for judging the past by the standards of the present (and condemning those past leaders who did not meet them), few have noted how many currently dominant beliefs are totally disconnected from reality and have a profoundly destructive impact. I propose to discuss two of them here: ideas about the nature of mental illness which have produced what Charles Krauthammer called “an army of broken souls foraging and freezing in the streets” and the conviction that our planet is in existential danger from human-induced climate change. The latter has led to a wholly unwarranted, hugely expensive crusade to eliminate fossil fuels. The chief effect has been to strengthen the leverage of those countries, many of them enemies of the West, that continue to produce these fuels, which remain essential to the functioning of industrial societies.

In the 1960s, a mad idea was born, the notion that there is no such thing as mental illness. Incredibly, it would become the foundation for public policy. The idea sprang independently from two maverick psychiatrists at opposite ideological poles, on the right US psychiatrist Thomas Szasz, an unsparing libertarian, and on the left the British Ronald Laing. Szasz disposed of mental illness by verbal sleight of hand: “Mental illnesses do not exist; indeed they cannot exist because the mind is not a bodily part or bodily organ.” (Never mind that the brain is the bodily organ that malfunctions in mental illness.) Psychiatry is “a form of quackery because it offers cures for which there are no diseases.”

Laing treated schizophrenia, the most disabling mental illness, as a “voyage of discovery”; “we find that a person who is labeled insane is often the sanest member of his or her family.”

Laing was culturally more influential, a guru of the New Left much enamored of his variations on the theme that schizophrenia was a “rational way of healing our own appalling state of alienation called normality.” But it was Szasz who reshaped care (or more accurately, failure to care) for the mentally ill. The judges who ruled in the major cases that resulted in the massive shutdown of mental hospitals and the inability to treat unwilling (eventually even willing) patients except in extreme circumstances had read neither Szasz nor Laing. But they did read the law journal articles written by members of the emerging mental health bar, whose ideas came straight from Szasz. Bruce Ennis, the bar’s pioneer, has described how he taught himself about mental illness. Asked in 1968 as a young new hire by the New York Civil Liberties Union to start a project on the rights of the mentally handicapped, Ennis says “I went to a library and I looked under ‘law and psychiatry’ and found some books by a man named Thomas Szasz... I decided it was an important enough subject to devote a lot of my time and life to so I did.” Szasz would write the preface to Ennis’s 1972 book *Prisoners of Psychiatry*.

Soon entire issues of law journals were devoted to demolishing all psychiatric claims. What was labeled mental illness was simply an alternative lifestyle. Treatments, including anti-psychotic drugs, were all side effects, no positive effects. Indeed, they were a form of torture. We know that the judges who ruled in the major deinstitutionalization and right to refuse treatment cases read these articles because they quoted extensively from them in their decisions. While the need for treatment had traditionally been a basis for treatment, only a quasi-criminal dangerousness standard survived. Intervention was legitimate only when someone was an “imminent danger” to himself or others, and this was defined so narrowly that the individual had to be on the verge of suicide or murder. Even then, in growing numbers of states, he was presumed competent to refuse treatment, undercutting the very purpose of involuntary commitment.

Don’t miss a minute of the news and analysis by David Noebel.

Check out our blog at:

www.thunderontheright.wordpress.com

The tremendously subversive implications of these ideas only became apparent in the 1980s. American society was helpless to deal with an enormous social problem destroying the quality of life of its cities. It still is.

The notion that our planet is in imminent danger of becoming uninhabitable because of man-made emissions of carbon dioxide is more recent, dating to the late 1980s. In *The Age of Global Warming* Rupert Darwall also traces its roots to two men, Swedish scientist Svante Arrhenius who, in 1896, wrote a paper predicting that a doubling of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere would increase temperatures by 5 to 6 degrees centigrade, and Guy Callendar, who, over forty years later attributed a global temperature rise from 1934 to 1938 to a rise in CO₂. Unlike Szasz or Laing, neither have been celebrated in global warming circles, probably because, as Darwall writes, both men thought rising CO₂ levels were a happy development, contributing to plant growth and staving off a rapid return to an ice age and “deadly glaciers.”

For all that believers constantly invoke “the Science!” “the Science!”, Darwall makes the crucial point that today’s global warming theory is not science at all. He reminds us that the sine qua non of a scientific proposition, as Karl Popper pointed out, is that it can be disproven. But the theory of dangerous man-made global warming is immune from falsification, with any real-world departure from expectations (e.g., a decade of flat temperatures prior to 2009 despite a steady rise in CO₂ emissions) explained by some untestable ad hoc hypothesis. Darwall observes that global warming theory is “scientific” in the same sense as Marx’s theory of history, Freud’s psychoanalysis and Alfred Adler’s “individual psychology.” In the case of all three, as Popper pointed out, advocates find only confirming evidence, and that they find wherever they look. (In the case of global warming, believers point to every instance of “extreme weather” as confirming evidence.) Such theories, Popper said, were prescientific, depending for acceptance on the appeal to authority. This is glaringly apparent in global warming theory, which firmly rests, we are repeatedly told, on the almost universal “consensus” of scientists.

The attitude toward critics is key. A scientific theory welcomes efforts to test it against empirical evidence. Pseudoscience, depending for its “truth” on consensus, is deeply hostile to challenge. Marxists accused critics of

false consciousness or class interests; Freudians dismissed them as in need of treatment. Former British Labour leader Gordon Brown’s disposal-by-insult of those who dared to question the global warming apocalypse is typical: “We mustn’t be distracted by the behind times, anti-science, flat earth climate skeptics.”

No one points up the absurdity of the entire enterprise as well as MIT emeritus professor of atmospheric science Richard Lindzen. “Future generations will wonder in bemused amazement that the early 21st century’s developed world went into hysterical panic over a globally averaged temperature increase of a few tenths of a degree, and on the basis of gross exaggerations of highly uncertain computer projections combined into implausible chains of inference proceeded to contemplate a roll-back of the industrial age.”

As the western world seeks to cut off Russian oil and gas in the wake of Putin’s invasion of Ukraine, the harmful strategic consequences of its obsession with this terrible idea have become obvious. Pouring vast sums into unreliable wind and solar in pursuit of the will o’ the wisp of “net zero emissions,” Europe has forfeited development of its own fossil fuels. Biden is embarked on the same course here. Thus, there is the mind-boggling spectacle of Biden scrambling to enlist rogue regimes like those of Venezuela and Iran to provide the West with oil while doubling down on his efforts to cripple oil and gas development in the US.

While there is a plethora of other prevalent terrible ideas in the ascendant, such as changing the purpose of corporations from promoting the interests of shareholders to those of society (as defined by woke activists), an especially corrosive new idea is now in danger of emerging triumphant. This is the notion that any differences in outcome between groups can only be explained by “racism.” For proponents, if eliminating differences requires overturning our educational and professional institutions, banishing tests and considerations of merit or competence, so be it.

China, which this month implicitly expressed its opinion of the climate change apocalypse by vowing to expand domestic coal mining by 300 million tons a year, and has no intention of changing the nature of math so that everyone can master it, awaits the results.

—*American Thinker*, March 24, 2022

Founded in 1953, the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, under the leadership of Dr. Fred C. Schwarz (1913-2009) has been publishing a monthly newsletter since 1960. *The Schwarz Report* is edited by Dr. David A. Noebel and is offered free of charge to anyone asking for it. The Crusade’s address is PO Box 129, Manitou Springs, CO 80829. Our telephone number is 719-685-9043. All correspondence and tax-deductible gifts (CACC is a 501C3 tax-exempt organization) may be sent to this address. You may also access earlier editions of *The Schwarz Report* and make donations at www.schwarzreport.org. Permission to reproduce materials from this Report is granted provided that the article and author are given along with our name and address. Our daily blog address is www.thunderontheright.wordpress.com.