

Wokeland

Shôn Ellerton, July 8, 2020

Can the flames of wokeness get any worse or is it at its zenith ready to die to an ember?



The year of 2020 started out with, what could have been possibly the most entertaining and scathing speeches ever given in [Ricky Gervais's Golden Globes opening speech](#). In less than eight minutes, Gervais attacked practically anything Hollywood did or made. He attacked wokeness, the bigotry and virtue-signalling by companies and movie stars, Greta Thunberg and much more. Gervais is bang on target because not many weeks later, the virtue-signalling, wokeness and bigotry is seemingly at its zenith which seems like an apt moment to springboard into the lunatic and ridiculous world of 'wokeland'.

Life isn't fair

I'll be frank here. Political correctness and wokeness is unnecessary in my view if *rational thought, kindness, moderation, respect, and tolerance* is practiced. However, there are too many of us on the planet who do not exercise these key virtues, especially that of rational thought. As a result, mankind has been marred with injustice, tyranny, greed, extremism, intolerance and cruelty, at least as far back as history has been recorded. We read about it in history books. We hear about it from the radio broadcasts we listen to while driving the car to work. We see it all happen in front of our eyes on our screens and tablets. William Golding in his book, [Lord of the Flies](#), rather sums up nicely our collective behaviour. Maroon a bunch of young teenagers on an island and see what transpires after a few months. The Japanese movie, [Battle Royale](#), is another similar example in which a bunch of schoolkids are randomly selected by lottery to fight each other to death on an island. On the subject of lotteries,

the incredibly disturbing classic short story, [The Lottery](#), by Shirley Jackson epitomises unfairness, cruelty and conformity in the space of a few pages. I won't give the story away but if you haven't read it, it is easy to find and download for free. I can say that that story jarred in my head ever since I first read it as a young teenager.

Human behaviour does not appear to have got any better from earliest history to what it is now. Inequality and conflict will *always* exist. How many of us have had their child say the words, '*It's not fair!*' And how many times do we reply with these very same words, '*Life isn't fair*'? Life isn't fair and not everything is equal. However, those who are 'woke' strive to make everything equal pulling everything from the outlying areas of the bell curve and regressing it all to a mean in the pretext that everyone will be happy.

Wokeness is irrational

Interestingly, the concept of 'woke' is certainly not a new one as it may have originated from the [Wide Awakes](#) movement perpetuated by the Republican party during the 1860 presidential election in the United States to prevent the spread of slavery. Today, the politically correct and woke community have been trying to make everything equal and address inequality across the entire social spectrum; including, sexism, racism, religion, transgenderism, and of course, anything to do with pay inequality and wealth disparities through the mechanisms of socialism and communism. Unfortunately, the woke movements of today have widened their scope to address issues which do not have a defined outcome. For example, to prevent the spread of slavery, means just that. Preventing the spread of slavery. To allow women to vote means precisely that. To allow women to vote. These decisions are made rationally and have a foreseeable outcome. However, to bring equality to all? What does that mean exactly? Defining a foreseeable outcome to that question is irrational. It is not far removed from starting a movement to make everyone happy. How is that possible? Those issues which can be achieved through rational thought, for example, giving women the vote or allowing them the same freedoms as men, I would consider a decision that requires *rational* thought because it can be achieved. I would consider the decision to enforce equal pay across all job types whether it is that of a supermarket checkout clerk or a plastic surgeon based on *irrational* thought because there is no incentive to spend decades learning to become a plastic surgeon. Likewise, the decision to select any person regardless

of sex to be considered as being a board member of a company out of merit is based on *rational* thought because you want the best person for the job. On the reverse side, making the decision to ensure that an equal number of men and women being made board members despite an imbalance of one of the sexes having more merit than the other is based on *irrational* thought. Unlike the inequalities that can be actioned through rational thought, those inequalities that require irrational thought to overcome fits neatly in the realm of the politically correct and the woke.

A vast amount of material has been written on this subject; however, one of the best-expressed thoughts of wokeness was talked about by [Jordan Peterson](#), one of the most eminent thinkers of our time, who said that there is nothing wrong if the person you are talking to you say that they would be preferred to be addressed by a particular pronoun. However, it is grossly wrong for *another* person, or worse still, the authority of the State to tell you what pronoun to use, equating to it as a form of tyranny and irrational behaviour. I could not agree more. If I want to call a blackboard a blackboard, or a spade a spade, that is my choice. Then there are those who at the receiving end. Take disability for example. My one-legged father calls himself disabled or handicapped and finds the politically correct term of *physically challenged* as demeaning. The irony is that many of those who *are* disabled consider the politically correct term *physically challenged*, to infer tokenism and the removal of agency. This irrational mentality proscribed by wokeness and political correctness, of course, extends to other areas of differences and inequality with respect to race, religion and sex.

Re-writing history, censorship and newspeak

The well-known George Orwell phrase, below, is a stark reminder as to where we are heading.

'Who controls the past, controls the future' – George
Orwell

Many will know that this phrase came from the book, [1984](#), a book of a dystopian totalitarian society I would deem as essential reading for all who values freedom of speech. In this book, the parallels of societal control,

suppression and propaganda exhibited in what is going on in today's world and Orwell's dystopian vision is becoming increasingly mirrored. Let's look at the redefinition of words. Orwell coined the term, *newspeak*, which involves the simplification, mutilation and redaction of words to make it increasingly difficult to write freely against the accepted political narrative of the day. In this society, each successive edition of the official English dictionary is reduced in size to ultimately only contain words attributable to newspeak. In practice, this is not happening, but rather, the reverse insofar as existing words are being altered, conflated and expanded upon to make it so utterly vague and incoherent as to make its original meaning useless without gravitas. One glaring example in today's climate is the word, racism, of which more will be discussed later.

Cases of censorship and de-listings from public platforms are at their highest that I can recollect in my lifetime. Wikipedia, a source I can no longer trust after I discovered that whole biographies of vloggers (online video bloggers) have been altered after they have been banned from platforms like YouTube because they did not adhere to their 'policies'. Stefan Molyneux is such an example. Although he has broadcast nearly four thousand videos encompassing a wide range of subjects including parenting, communism, economics, history, Greek philosophy and many others, he got de-listed when he stepped in too close to Chinese politics and the highly controversial theory of racial profiling. Wikipedia have completely changed his bio claiming him to be an alt-right white supremacist. Joe Rogan, although not de-listed, has been upturned by the woke brigade who claim he should be de-listed as well for material he put out nearly ten years ago. Being a popular comedian probably saved him from the chop. In Orwell's tale, the job of the Ministry of Truth is to re-write history as they seem fit. The approach many of our public platforms are taking is alarmingly close to that portrayed by the Ministry of Truth. For the woke, this is a vision of utopia.

Offensive words and names

The whole of 'wokeland' never surprises me with its invention of alternative words to replace words which might possibly give offence. One of my favourite absurdities of changing words or terms due to political correctness sprang in the early 2000s within the UK's school system in which some person decided that it would be more appropriate to rename *brainstorm* to '*thought shower*' in case it would offend an epileptic. Imagine being a schoolteacher and being told by the

faculty department that you cannot use the word, brainstorm, anymore. ‘Boys and girls! Let’s all gather around the black... (oh, pardon) *chalk* board and do some *thought-showering*’.

As for placenames, the woke society seems to make it a mission to ensure that any place, road, building, bridge or whatever name does not cause any offence to anyone. Today, the word, *slavery*, is the hot word in question. I can envisage an office full of woke social justice warriors looking up any place name and typing it into Google along with the word *slavery* to see if any results come up. Only the other day, my *alma mater*, decided to drop the name of its business school, Cass Business School, but are yet undecided as to what to call it next. I don’t know who Cass it and, I daresay, that most do not know either, but apparently, whoever Cass was, had something to do with slavery. And that defines my point with this whole ridiculous notion of positive vetting every known word tied to a place or a location. On the flipside, balance should be exercised when making these decisions. For example, giving a name to a new library in honour of King Leopold II in the middle of Kinshasa, would exemplify stupidity beyond reprieve.

Rather than learning from our history, the woke and the politically correct are content in knowing that altering it or even wiping it completely will solve all of today’s problems. It won’t.

Wokeness can be entertaining

Watching the extremely woke exercise their virtue-signalling skills on TV panel shows and online interviews does make very good entertainment whether you agree with them or not.

The best example, by far, is watching the dangerously unbalanced ultra-feminist Mona Eltahawy on Australia’s Q+A program which aired in November 2019. Mona encourages violence against men and preaches that the patriarchy must be dismantled. Another panellist on that program suggests that all police should be removed. The language is rife so don’t watch in earshot of your kids. The program was pulled off YouTube but since then, has re-emerged. It can be watched [here](#). It is fabulous entertainment.

The [Good Morning Britain](#) breakfast show, featuring the outspoken Piers Morgan, features a wide variety of short highly-entertaining interviews with total woke nutcases. Notable interviews include a guest who claims that

someone being called a nerd is a victim of hate crime. There was an interview with someone who claims there are more than one hundred genders. Another one who decries Churchill to be a mass murderer. A school headmaster who forbade any child to throw snowballs at each other. A woman in Florida who is raising her boy as gender neutral. A fat woman who thinks that being fat should be celebrated and revered. Clearly, these are put on for entertainment and to gain a following, but my question is this. Are these people for real or is it for show? I know that we should be tolerant of others, but these people are so removed off the scale of normality that it is almost inconceivable that they really exist. However, they *do* exist and if you dare to question them these days, you will have the equivalent of a woke Fatwah placed on your head.

Watching woke people can be entertaining but it can also be cringeworthy to the extreme. In the words of Frank Zappa's song, Valley Girl, as sung out by Moon Zappa, '*Like barf out, gag me with a spoon!*', here is an example of such utter bigotry and egregiousness, it is beyond description. It is the infamous [*I Take Responsibility*](#) video. This video features well-known figures Hollywood stars who, each in turn, ponders carefully and announces *very seriously* that they take responsibility as if they are confessing to something that they did not do. If anyone has seen the excellent movie version of [*1984*](#) featuring John Hurt as Winston, do you remember all the telescreens in the background of random people confessing to their crimes? '*I take responsibility for the damage done to the state of Oceania for my crimes as conspirator....*' And so on. I thought of this comparison as soon as I first saw that video posted on my social media feed.

Preaching wokeness

Many of us who exercise rational and least-biased thought tend to ignore political correctness and wokeness. Some of us might have been asked to attend a diversity and equality course at their workplace, the intention which, is to provide education on what not to say and what not to do that could cause any offence to anybody. To be fair, all the diversity courses I was asked to attend at work have been positive experiences. One I found particularly interesting and informative during my time in the construction industry in Melbourne was that of Aboriginal awareness. I have little doubt that some diversity courses, especially those given in the United States and Canada, may be delivered in a mindfully condescending way to, predominantly white people, that they need to

educate themselves and understand all about their inherent racisms. However, I may be conflating diversity and woke issues as it is entirely possible to have a rational debate on diversity and culture without any element of wokeness involved; but, I cannot discount the fact that diversity courses are being taught with woke bias being thrown into the mix by academic lecturers like Robin DiAngelo, the author of [*White Fragility*](#).

In the world of writing, book sales of political correctness and wokeness are burgeoning, particularly after the recent protests and riots that took place after George Floyd's death. One such book I recently borrowed from the library and read called [*White Fragility*](#) by Robin DiAngelo has taken this market by storm. I never knew such an incredibly divisive, destructive, self-loathing, racist and self-indulgent book could possibly exist. But there it is, all there in black and white, which ironically, is how the author portrays black and white people. I encourage anyone to read it if only to gain an insight on what makes the ultra-woke tick.

In the world of social media and memes, bizarre statements like '*Silence is Violence*' and '*You will never understand*' are platitudes very much in vogue today which, by their very meaning, cannot be refuted because if you say nothing, you are violent but if you say something which is not in agreement with what it stands for, can also be portrayed as violent. As for *never being able to understand*, that is a message that inherently states that it is not worth *trying* to understand because it will never be understood. However, on the flip side, I *do* agree that it might be very difficult to understand being in the 'boots of someone else' but to issue out demeaning statements that understanding can never happen is not conducive to anything and has no discernible outcome. If someone said to me that you would never understand what it will be like to be disabled, my response would be most likely true but telling me that I will *never* understand is simply churlish and meaningless.

Where do the woke people come from?

The question that keeps popping up with many, including me, is this. *Where* do these woke people come from? Bar a couple of friends who've kind of turned all woke-like on social media, I do not know anyone who, to my knowledge, is deemed woke. I have lived, befriended, and worked with so many different people with different ideologies, faiths, racial and cultural backgrounds but I have never encountered one who preaches wokeness. I have always been

comfortable discussing these issues directly and so were they. For those who personally know me, they know of me as one never interested in small talk. I have (or had) one friend who displays racism as defined by the Oxford Dictionary; which is,

‘The inability or refusal to recognise the rights, needs, dignity, or value of people of particular races or geographical origins.’

This is a guy I knew from school days who has turned outright Christian evangelist who once told me that he was very disappointed that the proprietor of a restaurant he often frequented was very proud to serve customers from so many faiths and religions. I was quite taken aback by his views *because* he failed to display any of the five key virtues which I described earlier: *rational thought, respect, tolerance, kindness, and moderation.*

Today, race is the hot topic and yet, the years after 9/11, it was all about religion. Perhaps it will be about fat people next. As for where the woke people are or where they come from, I can be reasonably confident that most of them are relatively few in proportion to the overall population and have never mingled much with others outside their own cultures and societies. I strongly believe that those who have widened their horizons through travel or living amongst various cultures and races around the world or be part of a multiracial family are far less likely to be woke in the context of racism and far less likely to be racist as defined by the Oxford Dictionary.

Redefining racism

As of the definition of racism, DiAngelo, and various other authors of political correctness and wokeness, proclaim that racism should be redefined to include any number of different racisms which are ‘prebuilt’ into every person making it impossible to deny that any person has a trace of racism. Furthermore, in her *Good/Bad Binary* chapter, DiAngelo makes it virtually impossible *not* to be racist if you are not of colour because, regardless of your views, anyone deemed white will be either *colour-blind*, an example being that you treat everyone equally or *colour-celebrate* (an extraordinary term), an example of living in a multi-racial family. It is zaniness to a new level. In George Orwell’s [1984](#) there was a passage in the book when O’Brien was interrogating Winston how many fingers he was holding up. It did not matter how many fingers he was holding up but rather what he was told to answer. This new definition of racism and how

it is applies to accuse others of being racist, much like a witch hunt, displays similar traits to that as described in that passage of the book. The argument can never be won. Every little nuance or the slightest trace of racism needs to be identified and dealt with.

Indoctrinating children

One of the big evils is the indoctrination of children into wokeness. Wokeness, in plain-speaking terms, is a cult that cannot be questioned for fear of ostracism, retribution or worse. As of writing, there has been an alarming rise of severe cases of social media bullying amongst teenagers in response to the BLM movement. Kids have been given verbal and even physical abuse by their peers if they are not displaying any solidarity to the woke flavour of the month. Stories of four-year-old children ‘taking a knee’ in response to Floyd’s death is utterly perverse considering that, at the age of four, it is highly unlikely that the power to make one’s own reasoning be rational and independent at will. Cases of school students grassing up on each other has a similar mentality to that exhibited by the Hitler Youth or even one from one of the stories in DiAngelo’s *White Fragility* where white people often experience peer pressure within their ‘white bubble’ to ensure they preserve the values of the white community. In short, kids have a remarkably short space of time to enjoy any trace of innocence left in a growing dysphoria in our modern interconnected and confused world. And, yet, there are some who are selfishly intent on taking that away from them.

The fires of wokeness will eventually die out

Who knows what heights wokeness will get to? I could hazard a guess that it may have reached its apex by the time this article is published based on the premise that it cannot possibly be any worse than it is.

When the shooting of an 8-year-old black girl in Atlanta starts a chain reaction of companies and media outlets pulling out support from the BLM movement.

When state authorities are starting to tire from treating activists, riots, and so-called autonomous zones with cotton-wool gloves.

When much of the American public are getting incredibly fed up with statues of their founding fathers being pulled down by indiscriminate, frenzied, and loutish behaviour of mobsters.

When it has become extraordinarily difficult which pronoun to use to address someone.

When children are actively encouraged to explore their sexuality and gender, or even to change it.

When many are so confused in bewilderment as their favourite movies and TV shows are being pulled down off video streaming services.

When unchecked censorship and cancel-culture have far transcended that of dealing with major issues like outright hate speech and the publication of nationally sensitive subjects like how to blow up the Pentagon or reveal if, in fact, Fort Knox, really has any gold in it.

When getting delisted from YouTube, Twitter, Reddit and other platforms is as easy as making a statement that it could be possible that different levels of average intelligence could exist between different cultures or to make a statement that the cure of having extended lockdowns during a pandemic could potentially kill more people in the long run due to other causes.

When radio broadcasters in the UK are suspended or fired because they did not agree with the BLM movement as in the [Isle of Man Stu Peters case](#).

When everything must have its name changed because it offends someone somewhere.

Basically, this is just going to piss off everybody and therefore, I believe, the woke movement simply cannot last for too much longer. When more of us wake up (pardon the pun), take courage and be made aware that our freedom to express ourselves without being threatened or suffer retribution is important enough, the fires of wokeness will be tempered down from its destructive force to a burning ember.

It is only a matter of time.