

# Books I Managed to Read During 2021

Shôn Ellerton, December 31, 2021

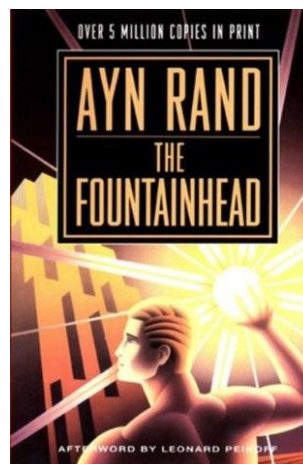
Here's a quick rundown of the list of books I read during 2021.



Another year gone by so fast!

Here I've compiled a summary of the books I've read during the year of 2021, all of which I thoroughly enjoyed.

## [The Fountainhead](#) (1943) by Ayn Rand



I've written a rather longer summary on this book than the rest that follows due to its length, message, and complexity.

During early 2021, I thought I'd take the plunge into reading this eight-hundred-page tome, something I've been meaning to do for some time. With so many references to Ayn Rand and her groundings in [objectivism](#) in many of today's

political discussions and readings, I was curious to know more about her writing.

Not knowing how the book will read, hoping it wouldn't be as cryptic as a William Faulkner book, it was pleasantly easy to read, although there were a few lengthy passages describing the thought processes by some of the main characters. However, they were generally engaging and informative.

The key message in this book is that great things can only be achieved through the acts of acting individually. For example, how could some of the world's greatest inventions be devised through group committees or panels, or in general, through collectivism? I ask myself, can I think of any substantial creation made by man, in science or art, which did not have an influential key figure at the forefront? Howard Roark, a highly charismatic figure of an architect, is that very person incarnate. He has absolutely no regard of what others think of him and cares not. He loathes the notion of seeking acceptance, to do an action because others think that's the way to do it. He hates conformity for the sake of conformity's sake and blasts traditionalism as the accepted tenet of modern life. He is a martyr to his beliefs and convictions, the most glaring example being when he blew up his own building because his design was interfered by a third party who decided to adorn the building with unnecessary classical features. The recurring theme of the inadequacies of collectivism, and, of course, the threat of communism, and how it hinders progress and stifles enlightenment and free-thinking is emphasised throughout the piece.

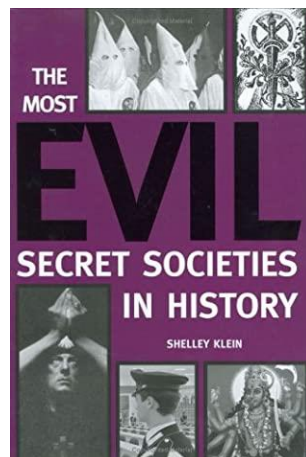
The characters are a fascinating menagerie of very different personalities. The enlightened, strong-willed, and highly independent Howard Roark who initially lives in destitution not wanting to receive any help from others through pity but would rather rot in prison or die beforehand. Peter Keating, the rival architect and 'weasel' in the room, who initially makes great strides in his career by brown-nosing the establishment to get what he wants and then to ostentatiously show off his achievements which were largely not his own, but of Roark's, only to fall precipitously when his antics are discovered by the public. Roark is the antithesis of Keating and, while Keating falls in true Icarus fashion, Roark rises like a phoenix towards the end of the book. Ellsworth Toohey, the wordy influencer who advocates that collectivism is the true tenet of how a civilised society should operate, although, in reality, he achieves nothing of true value and is ultimately humbled into obscurity. Gail Wynand, the media magnate of his fictitious *The Banner* who, having a tendency to self-harm from shooting

himself from time to time, has enormous power and influence in politics and the media; a modern-day Jeff Bezos. And of course, the most fascinating character. Dominique Francon, the sexy femme-fatale, who plays the central pivot role between all the characters by largely playing off all against the other and having various affairs and marriages with Roark, Wynand and Keating at various moments but ultimately returns to her hero and lover, Roark, representing the ideals she craves. It could be said that Ayn Rand embodied her character through Dominique Francon.

In general, however, all the characters in this book have one thing in common. They are not very pleasant people. Critics of the book harp on about Ayn Rand's love of individuality and hate of collectivism, but what she revealed in her book is that individualism also breeds selfishness, arrogance and lack of charity to others. Taking a nuanced insight into the book, the message I take away is that there should be a healthy balance of individualism and collectivism. However, the book issues a stark warning of the dangers of unbridled collectivism which brings the onset of stifled thinking, excessive conformity and state control leading up to authoritarianism and communism.

Despite its length, the political messages, philosophy, and some of the long rambling passages in the book, it is quite a good story and, if her even longer sequel, *Atlas Shrugged*, is as good as this one, I'll be reading that too at some point in the future.

[\*The Most Evil Secret Societies in History\*](#) (2005) by Shelley Klein

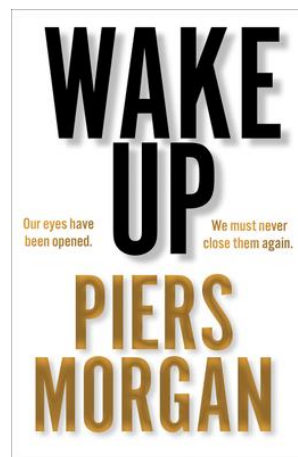


This was an interesting read covering some of the world's most notorious secret societies. No less than fifteen societies (listed below) are written about in a book with less than three hundred pages, and yet, it provides a good insight about each one. Some of these I've never heard of before and some are downright strange. The Thule Society, in which a strange white supremacist cult believes they originated from some weird fictitious island somewhere near Iceland. The Socialist Patients Collective, who seem to be one of those lefty German disruptive groups associated with Antifa. And the Muti, who seem to have a predilection in importing fresh bits of human meat from Africa. And many more.

The list of cults and societies *not* covered in the book are those which are deemed as religious, which there are so many of. For example, Branch Davidians (the Waco incident), Jehovah's Witnesses and Scientology are not included in this book.

A worthwhile read for those interested in these clandestine societies. I enjoyed it.

### [Wake Up](#) (2020) by Piers Morgan



An outspoken and highly opinionated Piers Morgan releases a book in 2020 chronicling his diary-fashion articles from January 2020 to July 2020. Morgan, a colourful character who used to be one of the presenters on [Good Morning Britain](#) until he was asked to resign unless he apologised for his commentary on Harry and Meghan, who he accused of being essentially spoilt little brats who wanted nothing better than to bring down the Royal Family. Needless to say,

Piers did not apologise, and he, indeed, resigned, and subsequent to this, the program had lost a third of their viewers.

It's not a bad little book to be honest as it raises many absurdities which have permeated the press and roused public sentiment. He certainly expels his thoughts on what he believes are issues which are making us all decidedly more 'stupid'. Social activists, fat-shaming, nutcase environmentalists, health-and-safety 'gone mad', disrespect for soldiers who had to fight in the war, vegan sausage rolls, and all that sort of stuff. On *Good Morning Britain*, Piers raised all these emotive issues and interviewed guests who condoned them knowing full well that he's not going to be swayed into changing his already galvanised opinions on them. His audience tune in to watch Piers attempt to take them down, which he frequently does, usually by over-domineering and interrupting them incessantly.

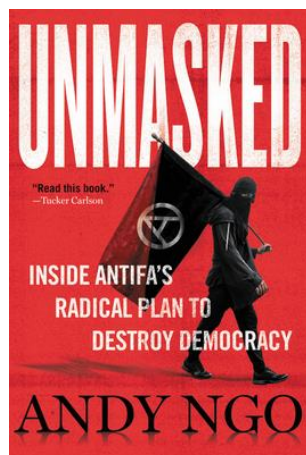
He used to be friends with Trump we are told but Piers, true to his convictions, blasted him frequently on his, what he described, appalling response to the pandemic. He has been instrumental in challenging the UK government in their handling of the pandemic, to such a point that those in office refused to be interviewed by him on *Good Morning Britain*. In general, Piers Morgan is a bit of blunt instrument, and, in my opinion, displays many of the same characteristics as Trump mixed with a little bit of Jeremy Clarkson. His interviewing technique, in my opinion, is atrocious, and anyone with a differing opinion summoning up the courage to be interviewed will most likely be in for a rude awakening. Piers seems to make out that he's the new-age Jeremy Paxman, which he is not.

Piers Morgan is a bit of a showman and likes unlimited attention, much like the very people he despises such as Harry and Meghan, and now, Trump. He is entertaining to watch, but his style of writing is rather more nuanced and is quite engaging.

The link to his column is here.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/columnist-1096452/Piers-Morgan-MailOnline.html>

## [Unmasked](#) (2021) by Andy Ngo



Next on this list is *Unmasked*, a book written by Andy Ngo, of Vietnamese descent, whose parents were one of the original boat people who fled communist Vietnam.

Ngo's book is packed from beginning to end touching on issues such as the Portland riots, BLM, fake news and propaganda, doxing and unpersoning, critical race theory, and the rise of lawlessness and chaos in the United States during 2020. His hatred of communism is certainly made clear in the book; however, based on his own family's experience in Vietnam and in his observation of similar events happening in his new home, the United States, it is not wholly unsurprising. Many older Chinese from Cultural Revolution descent have proffered similar observations and warnings of an undesirable cultural revolution taking place in the US during the last few years.

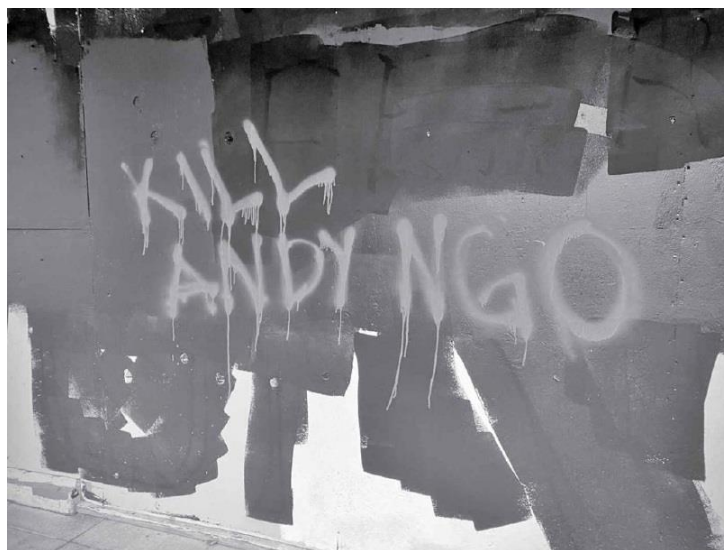
What makes Ngo a little different from most authors is that he is one of those intrepid investigative journalists who has risked injury and death by infiltrating the notorious Antifa organisation, mocked by Biden during his one-up with Trump during the election campaign in 2020 as being 'just an idea', one of the most preposterous comments I've heard. Ngo joined the ranks of Antifa but got rooted out during the later stages of his training as an infiltrator; however, he managed to gain enough interesting material to write extensively as to what happens on the inside.

In his book, Ngo expands significantly on many of the events which led to many of the riots which sprouted across the nation, particularly those of Portland, where riots continued daily for well over a hundred days. He also details how and why they occurred. The book includes several photos which

Ngo took during his time as a protest infiltrator; my favourite being the one of a protestor, who recognised him and pointed accusingly like one of the ‘body snatchers’, of sci-fi fame.



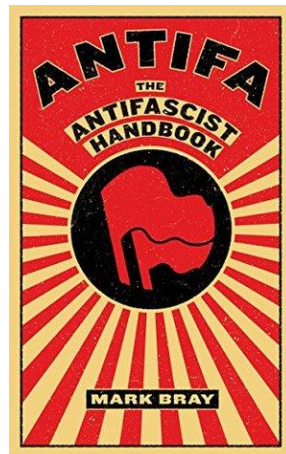
Andy Ngo was so disliked by the protestors and Antifa, that there was a sort of unofficial fatwah placed on him wanting him killed. An undeterred Ngo persevered like a bulldog regardless, often being caught out from time to time by the mob. He describes, with detail, his many experiences of being attacked and chased by the mob when his cover was blown, much like being a spy in a James Bond film.



Ngo also takes the reader into the history of Antifa, how it is organised, and how they operate in other countries in the world.

The book is well-referenced and factual, and I implore anyone who wants a better understanding of the events that took place in the United States during 2020 related to the riots, BLM and Antifa to read this book *and* the next one on this list. Sadly, much of the left-biased mainstream media have taken offence to the book—and Andy Ngo—accusing Ngo to be a right-wing supremacist only wanting to incite hatred. This, of course, is most absurd, and anyone who says otherwise, has *not* read this book.

[Antifa: The Anti-Fascist Handbook](#) (2017) by Mark Bray



Andy Ngo, in his *Unmasked* book, as described above, mentions that all Antifa candidates should read Mark Bray's *Antifa: The Anti-Fascist Handbook*.

And that is what I did.

I'm no stranger to reading, watching, and listening to material which differ from my opinions and I wish that more follow this philosophy instead of pandering to their confirmational biases. One example of such a book is Di Angelo's *White Fragility* promoting the principles of critical race theory to eradicate racism. However, unlike *White Fragility*, which, to be frank, was one of the most absurd books I've read, *Antifa: The Anti-Fascist Handbook* is, actually, quite interesting.

I would say about half the book gives an informative historical account of what antifascism is and how it came about going into great depth of its history from



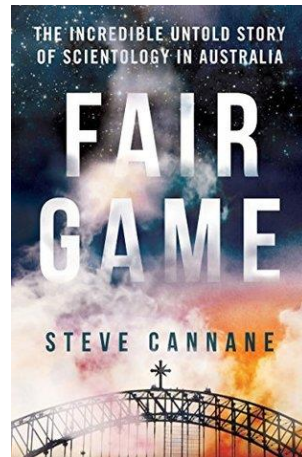
late 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe to the present. It presents the theories as set out by Herbert Marcuse, who set the trend of bringing about critical legal studies, which spawned its later offshoot, critical race theory. It discusses the rise of fascism during the world wars of last century and how the rise of anti-fascism was viewed as a necessity to counteract it. The author also writes about the many failures of antifascism, particularly that of the failure to stem the German National Socialist Party (aka the Nazis) from rising when the Communist Party (KPD) sided with the Nazis to bring down the Social Democratic Party (SPD). In so doing, it made the rise of Nazism that easier.

The book gets quite complex and does not make the easiest of books to read with references to numerous political parties and figures central to antifascism during early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Europe. After reading the first half of the book, I had been given a new perspective on antifascism, inasmuch that there was a truly valid reason for why it existed. The rise of real fascism in the case of Hitler was a lesson not to be repeated. As for Stalinism, the book was quite accurate with respect to Stalin as a ‘visionary’ veering away from the tenets as espoused by the likes of Trotsky, and rather to abandon the ‘revolutionary struggle’ in favour of fortifying the Soviet Union only to then ‘cook the books’ and swindling it out of hundreds of millions of dollars. Even George Orwell gets a mention of his fighting alongside a dissident communist party called the Partido Obrero Unificado Marxista (POUM). There is an extraordinary level of detail in the history of the rise of fascist and communist political parties during pre-WWII Europe in less than one hundred pages.

The remainder of the book centres itself around today’s anti-fascism and using non-violence as much as possible to disrupt far-right groups from gaining momentum. However, I wonder what kind of person would read this book *and* understand it. Surely not the retarded masses in the mob who throw Molotov cocktails against federal court buildings nor those rioters breaking in and looting from department stores. Certainly not those who believed that Donald Trump could have been the new Hitler, a notion I find profoundly ridiculous and hyperbolic.

Reading this book *and* the previous book on the list, *Unmasked*, gives the reader quite a thorough understanding of antifascism. As mentioned for the previous book, the reader who is in disfavour of antifascism *should* read this book to understand it from another perspective.

## [Fair Game](#) (2016) by Steve Cannane



Want to know everything about Scientology in Australia? This is the book for you. However, if you are curious to know what Scientology is about, this book is not the place to start.

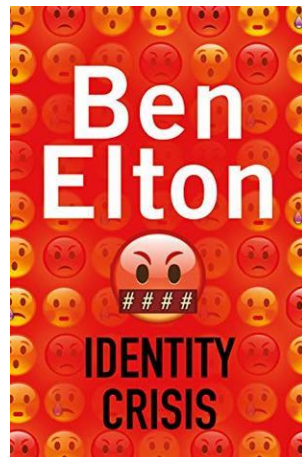
Around mid-2021, I watched the [Leah Remini: Scientology and the Aftermath](#) TV mini-series which aired from 2016 to 2019 in three seasons. This TV series gave a most detailed account of Scientology by those who escaped its vice-like grips to tell the world what it was like being in that cult. And, quite frankly, if what they said was true, this most be one of the most sinister cults I've come across.

*Fair Game* expands into far more detail of Scientology but, particularly so, with respect to Scientology in Australia outlining a series of legal cases, acquisitions, finances, corruption, failures, and successes of the cult. It is quite a long read at around four hundred pages and a little dry in places, although detailed. The book assumes that the reader will have a reasonable knowledge of what Scientology is including all that stuff about space aliens, volcanos, Ron L Hubbard, e-meters, being clear, and all that weirdness with naval uniforms and the Sea Org.

Learning something good about Scientology, from what I've read, is seldom found. However, the book does elaborate on, at least, one redeeming feature of Scientology. Scientology, not being a fan of psychiatry, uncovered some terrible abuses that took place at a mental facility in Sydney with the [Chelmsford Royal](#)

[Commission](#). Perhaps it would be interesting to read about some of the positive traits of Scientology as an antithesis to the material I've read and watched about it.

### [Identity Crisis](#) (2019) by Ben Elton

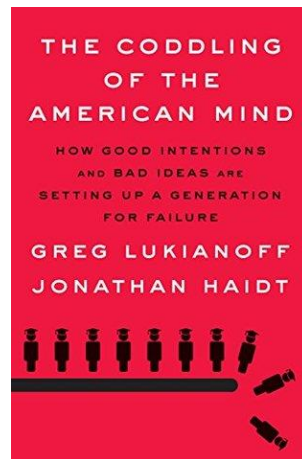


This is the first Ben Elton book I've read, and I really enjoyed it. It's one of those fictional multi-threaded stories, each centred around a politically correct issue like transgenderism, pronoun-ism, racism, feminism or any other -ism one would want to throw in. The gem of this book is that it is not only very funny, but reflects what is, in fact, happening in today's topsy-turvy politically correct world. It would make a fantastic TV series, but I fear it may be difficult to air this without being attacked by the *cancel culture* mob.

The stories are funny enough. A practical down-to-earth *non-PC* detective trying to find the killer of a murdered transgender person who, we are reliably informed, prefers to be called *zhe* by *ze*'s lover. A smart, young, and attractive girl who works for and bunks up with a media tycoon who likes nothing better to do than stir up incitement on social media while colluding with the Russians. A game show outlet that's gone so woke that they ensure *nobody* who takes part in the show can offend anyone, so they bring in a contestant from every sexual and gender persuasion resulting in essentially no action *and* no viewers. And an extremely woke activist who wants nothing better to do than to posthumously punish 16<sup>th</sup> century historical figures for being too sexist.

It's a great little book. It's funny. It's apt for the times. And it's guaranteed to offend the super-woke!

[The Coddling of the American Mind](#) (2018) by Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt



Out of all the books on this list, this one should be read by *all*, especially those parents with young children. The title is a little misleading because it applies not only to the American mind but, in general, to the mind of the West.

The authors posted an article on Atlantic with the same title as the book back in September 2015 ([link here](#)), but expanded its material to form the book later published in 2018. The book really nails many of the problematic issues which have surfaced with those generation of students which entered colleges and universities around 2013 and later. Such issues include disinvitations, ‘safe spaces’, microaggressions, triggering, intolerance, and the rise of an unhealthy dose of ‘safetyism’. These are issues I personally take seriously and quick to point out when they do occur, often at risk of being accused as a social heretic by the brainwashed mob who preach that nobody should ever be offended.

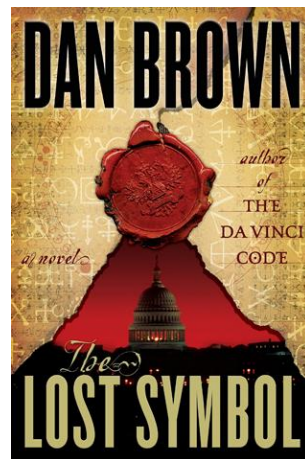
In a nutshell, the book illustrates how society has molycoddled the *iGen* or *z* generation, those born around the millennium and later fully immersed in the world of tablets and other similar technologies. How they have essentially lost the ability to be *anti-fragile*, to be able to form rational thought and think critically, to be intolerant of other viewpoints. How universities and colleges, since 2013, in an emotional context, have increasingly adopted the insane notion that they need to be safe spaces rather than places to challenge.

The book packs a big punch covering such topics like witch hunts, anxiety and depression, Trump derangement syndrome, paranoid parenting, social justice,

decline of play and many other bewildering issues which are tearing western society apart. At the end of the book, the authors make a good effort putting forward ideas which might make us smarter again, to be more tolerant and to be more resistant and antifragile.

A definite worthwhile read.

### [The Lost Symbol](#) (2009) by Dan Brown



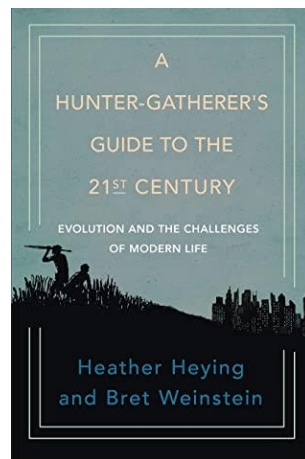
I've seen a couple of Dan Brown movies, but this is the first of his books which I've read, and I've got to say, I really enjoyed it. After reading the book, a mini TV-series was aired by Peacock which, in my opinion, was so awful, I gave up after only three episodes.

*The Lost Symbol* is quite a long book weighing in at over seven hundred pages, but it is an easy read and flows nicely. The special illustrated version sporting many great photographs and illustrations is nice and worthwhile getting if possible. The plot is simple but intriguing. The hunt by a deluded tattooed nutcase (a typical Dan Brown 'baddie') who manages to rise to the 33<sup>rd</sup> degree of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry with the intentions of getting his hands on the so-called lost symbol, a piece of information hidden within the secrets of Freemasonry to be so powerful that it could change the world.

But what makes the book shine is its virtual tour and explanation of Masonic symbolism in the great buildings and monuments in the US capital, Washington DC. Being a Freemason myself, I was delighted that he represented Freemasonry in a favourable light without alluding to unwanted conspiracy theories, so often employed by those ignorant of the Craft. I have not yet visited

the US Capitol and its surrounding monuments, but I learnt some fascinating history about them with respect to Freemasonry. Sure, there are elements in the book which are decidedly fictional, but it is, after all, a piece of fiction, and a great one at that.

[\*A Hunter-Gatherer's Guide to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century\*](#) (2021) by  
Heather Heying and Bret Weinstein



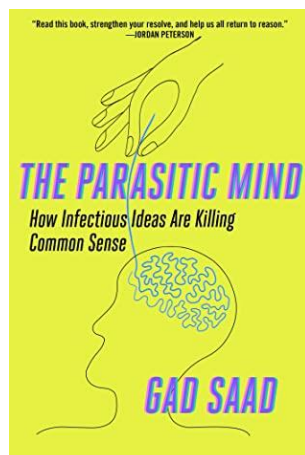
I've been following Heather Heying and Bret Weinstein for a few years, and I enjoy listening to their podcasts on subjects ranging from evolution to today's current affairs.

Their latest book delves into the world of *hyper-novelty*, in which events are taking place too quick in today's society for humans to properly evolve. It could be said that the book serves as a warning that if we continue down the path of rapid change without being given the time to acclimate and catch up, we may lose the ability to function properly as humans.

We are reminded that we should value and understand our surroundings as our ancestors have always done. The importance of food and sleep and how they interact with our lifestyles. How health and medicine should be explored holistically rather than being solely reductionist. And more, including sex, gender, youth and adulthood are all subjects which are explored through the evolutionary perspective of the Heather and Bret.

It's a worthwhile read.

## [The Parasitic Mind](#) (2020) by Gad Saad

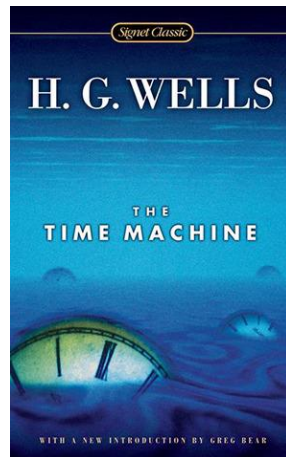


The subtitle of the book explains it all. How infectious ideas are killing common sense. And it is indeed, according to the author.

Much of the material I authored centred on many of the subjects covered in Saad's book. How reason and rational thinking is being left to fester and die in favour of groupthink and illogical narratives. How lack of courage for speaking up for fear of repercussions or being, in general, ostracised by the mob is endemic. And all the nutty ideas based on delusional thinking which have infected our institutions.

A lot of the material covered in the book overlaps with some of the previous books I read including Douglas Murray's *The Madness of Crowds* and Jonathan Haidt's *Coddling of the American Mind*. However, it is still a worthwhile read from another perspective.

## [The Time Machine](#) (1895) by H.G. Wells



I've watched the 1960s movie version a few times but never got a chance to read the book. It's a short book and can be read in day or two with ease.

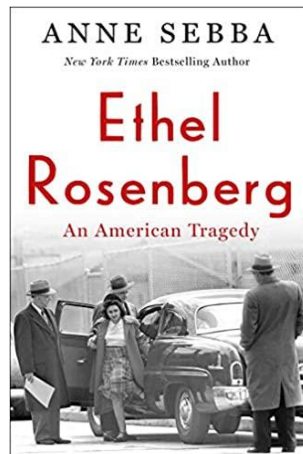
Those who have watched the movie or read the book in one's youth certainly remember the pretty and elegant Eloi and the ugly Morlocks but reading it in later years, I found the political twist interesting. How such a civilisation can exist and why.

The book describes the main character with his time machine going much further into the future than the movie does. To a time where the sun is dying and the atmosphere is changing supporting very odd lifeforms including man-sized crab-like creatures and weird things pouncing in the sea.

It's a great and easy book for anyone to read. H.G. Wells's use of imagery and colours is excellent and really immerses the reader into an alien landscape evoking images of Roger Dean's paintings or some of the landscapes set out in C.S. Lewis's *Space Trilogy*.



[Ethel Rosenberg: An American Tragedy](#) (2021) by Anne Sebba



High-profile trials for the sake of mob justice, paranoia during an existential crisis and media spin. One would think this is especially prevalent during the last couple of years. However, reading this book *could* change your mind.

For those not aware, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were taken to the electric chair after they were found guilty of selling nuclear secrets to the Soviets during the period just after World War II. During the 1950s, a deep-set paranoia of communism and the threat of a nuclear strike was set in motion in the United States hugely exacerbated by the government and the media. A staggering seventy percent of Americans conducted by a Gallup poll wanted both the Rosenbergs executed. However, and this is the shocking (pardon the pun) side of all of this. There was scant evidence of Ethel Rosenberg's direct involvement with the crimes perpetuated. Unfortunately, the media span the story in her disfavour suggesting that this was an uncaring woman who fought more for her ideology than being a loving mother. In fact, she *was* a loving mother, but this held no ground in the mindset of the mob.

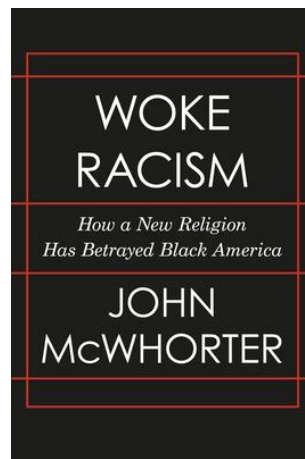
Despite worldwide protests and letters of appeal from high-profile figures including Einstein and the Pope, this did nothing to grant a stay of execution. This was during the time when the US presidency transitioned from Truman to Eisenhower. Truman didn't want to get involved and Eisenhower wanted to show that he is not becoming 'soft' in the public eye.

The execution was badly botched making this a truly horrific event in the history of the United States. It was a rather long read and got quite detailed with family affairs. But this was fascinating and tragic as well. The book revealed the

utmost treachery from Ethel's own family including her own brother who testified against her and her mother's ill-will and constant disapproval of Ethel.

The book is a salient reminder of an age of extreme paranoia that took place in the United States along with its miscarriages of justice and social brutality.

### [Woke Racism](#) (2021) by John McWhorter



This book was truly needed but it came, perhaps, a year too late. This is the antithesis to Di Angelo's *White Fragility* and Kendi's *How to be an Antiracist*.

Written by McWhorter, a well-learned black professor from Columbia University, he rails against the tenets of critical race theory and how they are, in fact, destroying the black community. His writing is refreshingly different and a little bit of a rollercoaster ride at times, but his message is stark and clear.

He posits the whole antiracist movement as nothing more than a religion with those of the antiracist 'elects' as equivalent to the Inquisitors of old.

The book cites many references to past and current affairs pertaining to racism and antiracism which, if the reader is not familiar with them, might prove to be a little taxing to read. Also, it is not a bad idea to read Di Angelo's *White Fragility* and/or Kendi's *How to be an Antiracist* beforehand to get a flavour of critical race theory and antiracism.

That said, it is book that many have waited for to offset Di Angelo's and Kendi's books and well worth the time to read.