

Fact Vs. Misinformed Philosophy

Written by Ari Iaccarino

Wednesday, 03 September 2008 02:20

- [Download Autodesk AutoCad Architecture 2012 \(32-bit\)](#)
- [99.95\\$ Adobe Illustrator CS5 cheap oem](#)
- [Download Lynda.com - Photoshop CS6 Essential Training](#)
- [9.95\\$ Lynda.com - Word 2013 Essential Training cheap oem](#)
- [Buy Cheap BeLight Software Printfolio MAC](#)
- [Buy OEM Intuit Quicken Rental Property Manager 2009](#)
- [Buy Adobe After Effects CS5.5 \(en,de,es,it,fr,ja,pt\)](#)
- [Buy Cheap IMSI TurboCAD Pro 15](#)
- [Download Lynda.com - Photoshop for Designers: Textures](#)
- [Buy Cheap Infinite Skills - Learning Autodesk Autocad Electrical 2014](#)
- [Buy OEM Adobe Edge Animate CC MAC \(Full LifeTime License\)](#)
- [Discount - Autodesk Alias Automotive 2014](#)
- [279.95\\$ Autodesk AutoCAD Mechanical 2012 \(32-bit\) cheap oem](#)



As an object lesson to the political philosophers of the United States - those "practical" advocates of "democracy" who do not have an adequate knowledge of South America, just mainstream media "information" - one need only pause and consider the recent (and past) assumptions about Venezuela to realize the profound impact ignorance has on human affairs. (See "Democracy Vs. Individual Rights", *River Cities' Reader* Issue 697, August 13-19, 2008.)

Mr. Harrington's article is representative of an ill-informed and clichéd view of President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela. What do U.S. citizens know about Chávez besides his fiery rhetoric, free oil handouts to the northeast of the U.S., relationship with Fidel Castro, and his oil revenue? Not too much, but this is not surprising. Unless U.S. citizens independently educate

Fact Vs. Misinformed Philosophy

Written by Ari Iaccarino

Wednesday, 03 September 2008 02:20

themselves about Venezuela, they will find only negative remarks in the popular media against Chávez.

Justin Delacour mentions such a phenomenon: "In presenting opinions that are almost exclusively hostile to the Chávez government, U.S. commentaries about Venezuela serve as little more than a campaign of indoctrination against a democratic political project that challenges U.S. political and economic domination of South America. The near absence of alternative perspectives about Venezuela has prevented U.S. readers from weighing opposing arguments so as to form their own opinions about the Chávez government." ("The Op-Ed Assassination of Hugo Chávez," *Extra!*, November-December 2005.)

Most U.S. citizens are unaware of the oppressive and disastrous history the U.S. has played in Central and South America for decades. Just Google "School of the Americas," "Operation Condor," or "Salvador Allende" and you will find the background role the CIA has played in the oppression of democracy and instillation of authoritarianism in Latin America. Without knowledge of a complex and disturbing past that our government has inflicted on those countries, it's hard to imagine that someone like Chávez would mention Bush as the devil. Harrington's writing demonstrates an utter lack of awareness concerning Venezuela's own past, present, and future conditions. Anybody who labels Hugo Chávez as an authoritarian ruler lacks a comprehensive knowledge concerning the man and the real oppressive history of Venezuela before his presidency. Unfortunately Harrington does not know.

Harrington refers to "the mob" in his article, implying that Venezuela has devolved into authoritarianism because of participatory democracy that President Chávez supports. Harrington does not even mention who is categorized in the "mob." The mob is the majority of the country, the brown and black Venezuelans who are benefiting from President Chávez's "mob"-like reforms, such as providing his fellow citizens with health care, education, and funding for grassroots movements. In the past this majority of the country was destitute and had no hope for the future, but those presidents who ruled at the time were heralded by the U.S. to be beacons of democracy. Harrington also fails to cite who the opposition consists of: white and wealthy entrepreneurs who now have to share the ridiculous amount of wealth in resources. Harrington does not define or classify either group, but proceeds to make a self-righteous analysis of democracy anyways.

Harrington writes: "The Venezuelans, in their ignorance of politics, principles, and history, are not having such magnificent results," referring to freedom in the United States. His bold and embarrassing statement is like a blind man with a flamethrower in a

Fact Vs. Misinformed Philosophy

Written by Ari Iaccarino

Wednesday, 03 September 2008 02:20

California forest during the middle of summer. In *his* ignorance of politics concerning Venezuela, he is not aware of the U.S.'s involvement in numerous coups against Chávez by providing money to opposition groups within Venezuela.

Bart Jones addresses the 2002 coup in his book *Hugo!*: "The United States was almost alone in the world in endorsing the 2002 coup to overthrow him [Chávez]. Its support was so blatant that following Chávez's ouster, the U.S. ambassador to Venezuela, Charles Shapiro, had breakfast with Pedro Carmona [coup leader and new president] in the presidential palace on his first full day in office after he eliminated the Congress, the Supreme Court, the Constitution, and every other vestige of democracy in the country." (Page 17.)

Between the United States' active participation in overthrowing Hugo Chávez and the biased media we see every day, it is no surprise that Harrington is misled. Maybe he also did not know that the Venezuelan media (the rich, white "opposition") helped in the coup, yet Chávez let them go free without jail time. Is he still an authoritarian ruler? No.

Harrington is not aware of the previous social stratum between the majority of Venezuelans (who were dirt-poor) and the very small minority who are rich, the biased media we read every day, and our country's involvement in a coup against a democratically elected president. Therefore, any attempt at even discussing his philosophical perspective is not even worth the time.

Here is the reality: Dictators don't give their own people Kalashnikovs, provide millions of dollars for community radio stations, allow for recall elections monitored by outside organizations, give subsidies to high-school dropouts trying to go back to complete their education, and install numerous other social programs. This isn't populism, or mob rule: This is human survival of the 21st Century. It is the idea that no man or woman is totally self-made, or so independently developed that they cannot give back what they owe to the community. Until commentators such as Bradley Harrington read peer-reviewed articles and gain an understanding of the complex world of Venezuela and Latin America as a whole, the U.S. public will continue to be the blind man in the forest with a flamethrower: Without true sight, we will burn the fragile ties with those around us, and will eventually consume ourselves in the fire.

Fact Vs. Misinformed Philosophy

Written by Ari Iaccarino

Wednesday, 03 September 2008 02:20

Ari Iaccarino is a native of Davenport who studies psychology, education, and Spanish at Marlboro College in Marlboro, Vermont.