

LIVING HISTORY

A Foreword

to

US History Uncensored: What Your High School Textbook Didn't Tell by Catherine Austin Fitts

I resisted learning real history for many years. Instead I satisfied my curiosity about the past with the socially acceptable version of history that was taught in school and easily purchased at most bookstores. It seemed to me that the darker side of things was an unpleasant topic. Delving into it ran the risk of attracting the negative. I had precious little time to master the socially acceptable version. Who had time to search out information that was difficult, even dangerous to obtain and depressing if indeed you found it? Why bother looking into the gruesome details of things like narcotics trafficking, money laundering and genocide?

Then, as corruption in the financial markets and in government spread in the 1990's, circumstances forced me to rethink my traditional attitude. Suddenly, I needed to understand the darker side of life. It was a matter of both personal and professional survival.

And so in 1998, I began a process of speed reading over a thousand books and watching hundreds of videos trying to map out the covert cash flows and networks that truly govern resources on our planet. Not satisfied, I networked and published and helped others do the same, hoping to collaborate on building a deeper and richer understanding of how my world really worked.

It was an unpleasant process. A lot of the books and videos were full of anger. The quality of information and writing was all over the map. Various experts were fractured into different specialties or activist interests and overwhelmed from government interference and lack of resources. They could be depressing and draining. There was a huge amount of data to sort through and to integrate. At the same time, the more I learned, the harder I found it to be around people who did not know or care about what was really going on. For a time, I felt alienated from many of the people that I loved.

Then one day, something marvelous happened. Everything I learned clicked into place in a practical way. Suddenly, I had a new framework. I had a new map. My map worked. I could pick up a corporate newspaper that was full of misinformation and omissions and read in between the lines to see what was really going on. I could watch a documentary that only told a story acceptable to the official history, yet intuit what was really happening behind the scenes.

No longer did I feel alienated from people who had not steeped themselves with this knowledge. I felt no urge to share with people information they did not want to know. Rather, I now had a map that could help me help them navigate their risks in a much more timely way. As I moved through the flow of events and people in my day-to-day life, I could see the real opportunities and risks with much more clarity. I started to make better choices. I found a new way to be useful to those I loved.

Something else happened. I started to understand my family and my own past. I could see our histories in the context of the covert activities that had touched our finances, our places and us. For the first time, I started to count up the total cost to my family and me of being naïve about who was in power and how we were being manipulated. It was

staggering. It was also staggering that we had simply written it off to bad luck, market forces or fate, and gone back to work to create and build anew. Imagine what could have happened if we instead had an accurate map of how our world worked and the knowledge to navigate the risks in our environment successfully. Suddenly, I appreciated why families that had access to this type of information and quietly handed it down from generation to generation did so much better than those who taught their children to believe the popular explanations of things.

What was happening to me was the process of acquiring an authentic personal power that comes from understanding my history in an intimate way— whether it is the history of my planet, my people or my own family and myself. This is a power many of us desire. We live in dangerous times. Our world is full of predators. We need to be able to see them and evade them. We need to see where our leverage is, and how to use it to withdraw our support from those who would do us harm and invest our time and resources to build support for those who promote the rule of law and the creation of real wealth.

This starts with understanding history—the history of our country, the history of our place, the history of our family and the history of our friends and the organizations with which we interact.

It was about this time that I met a historian and professor of history, Carolyn Baker. Carolyn helped me to understand the strategic importance of building a curriculum that could help teachers ensure that students achieved such power as part of the normal educational process. Inspired by her example and the importance of what she was saying, I wrote a case study along the lines used in business schools called *Dillon, Read & Co. Inc. and the Aristocracy of Prison Profits*. My hope was that it would help Carolyn and other professors teach their students how business and government really work. If enough young people learn this, they will have a much better road map to navigate their careers and their responsibilities as citizens. This type of transparency is essential for a free and economically strong people.

For Carolyn, history is not in the past. History is alive. We study history to understand our world so that we can live our lives integrated into the flow of history. It reveals how the world really works and that we have the power to help shape that world. A people who understand where they came from, their connection to the land, animals and living things in their lives, how the systems and resources around them are governed and where their true opportunities and risks lie— such people understand how to write the history of their time and their future.

The Buddha says, “With our thoughts, we invent our world.” Inventing our world is what we do when we live history. That happens when history stops being something separate from our lives—as official history is —and becomes a pathway to connect with the authentic—with what is real. Living history is the way to understand ourselves and those we love within the flow of time, the panorama of events and the age old squabble over resources. When we engage in a living history, we emerge as participants to create and influence the history being created now.

A living history is a history that turns the pupil from student to player. To rise from the level of pupil to player requires looking into our collective shadow, letting go of the official myths and seeing things as they are. It requires unlearning what we have learned. It requires forgiving those who taught us things that turned out to be not true, or failed to tell us what was true. It is not always a pretty picture. It is, however, a real one. When mastered, it starts the student on a journey of taking life with both hands to create something truer and more beautiful. Each of us can say, “I am part of a great story and that story is not over yet—I have something to say about how it goes.”

While I am not one to look back and regret the past, what I would not give to have had Carolyn Baker as my history professor in college; it would have saved me a lot of time, but as you can see, I am making up for lost time. You can too.

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