



Feardom: How Politicians Exploit Your Emotions and What You Can Do to Stop Them

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What do history's most notorious despots have in common with many of the flag-waving, patriotic politicians of our day? Both groups rise to power through the exploitation of fear. Sometimes the fear derives from a pre-existing threat. At other times, crises are created or intensified to invoke a sense of panic and anxiety where none previously existed.

This pattern is as predictable as it is destructive. The end result is the same: a loss of liberty. Policies that are costly, oppressive, and harmful are supported by people who abandon any interest in freedom or personal responsibility in hopes of feeling safe.

Manufactured fear, with its negative impact on liberty, is a societal plague. There have been widespread casualties. We need an antidote. Feardom offers its readers a much-needed immunization.

Feardom: How Politicians Exploit Your Emotions and What You Can Do to Stop Them Details

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From Reader Review Feardom: How Politicians Exploit Your Emotions and What You Can Do to Stop Them for online ebook

Ethan Garofolo says

If you read one book about politics or political philosophy, read this one.

Why you ask? I'd wager most people like to think of themselves as rational actors, that we consider evidence and make decisions based on the issues and candidates that most align with what we value.

Which one of us values shredding our constitutional amendments. Which one of us, though genuinely concerned about the plight of poor people, is actually happy to consign generations to poverty? Which one of us actually recognizes our support of policies that so often do the exacts opposite of what they claim?

Most importantly, why do we keep getting duped by the same faces?

The answer is fear, and fear only works when we're not aware that we're reacting out of irrational fear. Feardom will pierce that veil and bring light.

It does it by laying out a history of fear being used in American politics. It dates back to just after the Revolutionary War, and continues ever so strongly today. It was how the Nazi party got normal people to support the wholesale slaughter of the holocaust, and it's how politicians get Americans to submit to sexual assault as a condition of boarding an airplane (and be happy to do so!). It outlines how subtle uses of association lead to the public to connecting ideas that have nothing to do with each other and supporting military action based on these false connections.

Left, right, libertarian, socialist, whatever you are, this book is important, and will leave you with a healthy skepticism of those in power. While they would preach gloom and doom, you can start taking back your mental process and more carefully analyze what our political heroes are trying to feed us.

Such skepticism is a critical part of a free society like ours claims to be.

Creighton Brown says

Connor Boyack's new book, Feardom, is a triumph he can be proud of. While his previous works were more or less epistles to the people of the Mormon (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) faith, Feardom engages the entire world in a meaningful, concise discussion from which all can benefit.

In Feardom, Boyack argues that governments use the fear of those under their influence to maintain and augment their power. His thesis is supported in every chapter with examples, studies, and other relevant data. The process is scientific, but easily understood. Typical of Boyack's writing, each chapter is followed by thorough documentation of his facts. One is never left wondering if any evidence was fabricated.

Boyack knows his topic well and has clearly read a great deal on the subject. Drawing upon his studies, he constructs a clear argument and delivers it with precision. If you still trust your government, even in the slightest, read this book and you will be cured forever.

Ryan says

It's rare that I read a book that exceeds my expectations as much as *Feardom*. At 134 pages, I assumed this would be a quick but enjoyable read that would reinforce what I already believed about the use of fear by governments. It was much more than that. Boyack delves into the anatomy and psychology of fear and presents fascinating historical examples (many of them new to me) of various methods in which governments use fear to control people and to increase their own power, as well as how individuals can recognize and fight back against this control.

Every few pages I had to stop reading and tell my wife about another great story or quote that resonated with me. I was surprised at how frank many political and government leaders are about the deliberate use of manufactured fear to grow their power and influence, and I wasn't expecting the book to lead me to self-introspection; many times I found myself examining how often I've been influenced by false fear and making mental notes to avoid similar traps in the future.

Finally, Boyack's writing style is easy to read but doesn't feel cheap; the composition is mature, the flow is logical, and the language is precise. And contrary to another review I read, I felt the examples he used flowed very nicely into the points they were meant to illustrate. I had many "aha" moments, and this is a book that you will continue pondering long after you finish. Definitely recommended!

Jonathan Ettinger says

Have you heard of Clement Vallandigham? You should. He wanted to impeach Abraham Lincoln for much the same reasons that people have called for the impeachment of George W. Bush and Barack Obama. Like scripture tells us, there is, indeed, nothing new under the sun.

In his latest book, "Feardom", Connor Boyack distills and examines the human condition and its ramifications. This isn't about politics. This isn't about society. It combines both and goes far beyond either. Boyack uses and cites a multitude of varied sources from what people know, think they know and what they may likely not otherwise ever know, and he weaves a simple thread through all of it to show that it's all part of one larger truth. This truth, properly understood, can tear down walls, both real and metaphorical, and this book is a must-read guide for all people.

Countless books have been written about politics, people and history, but where others over-explain, and sometimes confound, particular events, policies, etc., Boyack drills to the core of all of them and draws attention and understanding to the often shrouded and misunderstood impetus behind much of human action and history: fear.

It's said that people don't know what they don't know. They also fear what they don't know and that fear is used against them, often with subtlety and misdirection. This book is not a call to arms, but a call to attention, an opportunity to examine and consider a side of our collective humanity we more often go to great lengths to leave hidden, unexamined and unconsidered. Best of all, it flows with ease and is an excellent, even necessary, starting point to broadening one's view and understanding of the self and the world as they were, are and could be. This is about fear disguised as freedom. This is feardom.

Sean says

Unveiling the man behind the curtain

First, the best quote, which encapsulates the book perfectly: "Fear leads to despotism; love leads to liberty." In a nutshell, Boyack explains why this is so and how to not be controlled by fear, literally.

He helped me understand fear- its history, psychology/ biology, usefulness to individuals, and (as the main thrust of the book) its usefulness to political leaders to lead us around by the nose. The basic premise is that bad things happen OR are manufactured/ exaggerated, fear is propagated through propaganda, then our political masters offer much sought relief from fear through safety, largely through wars and increased government controls. But it's not all doom and gloom here; it's more empowering and enlightening as actual risks are brought into context. Love is set forth as the ultimate anecdote.

The pace of the book is about right, giving you enough useful details and largely avoiding redundancy, to keep it engaging. While he doesn't really pull any punches, he could've gone a little further, although there's a fine line between blowing the whole cover and 'loosing' the average person. Any new ground breaking is done through a "connect-the-dots" logic, with some intelligent thinking. I found at least a dozen profound ideas here. Last, it's well documented for the most part, with notes and quotes to support the claims.

Pull the wool off your eyes and help others do the same. This will encourage you along in a way that's not so over the top that you sound like a fanatic to your friends, but bold enough to give you staying power in the battle for liberty in America or wherever you live.

Anne says

This book is not terribly long or complicated, and has an over-all message that definitely needs more "air time" in today's propaganda-fueled world. Given the messages constantly bombarding Americans in particular, I'm often amazed that there are any Americans without anxiety issues. Boyack's book is filled with credibly documented examples of our fear being exploited to manipulate the masses. Let me say that again: his examples are extensive and credibly documented. This is not the stuff of conspiracy theory podcasts and websites.

I began this book with gratitude in my heart that it had been written, because I know specific family and friends who could benefit from a book that points out how they are being manipulated and how to avoid it. Such a book would bless their lives considerably, though it would mean they'd have to find something else to talk about over dinner than the myriad ways they are on the edge of being killed by some poor farmer who lives 12,000 miles away or a virus that is almost impossible to catch.

However. While I agree with Boyack's message and his proof and his solutions, I do not feel like this is a book I can hand to just anybody. First of all, after a powerful, rallying-cry introduction from Tom Woods, the book proper starts with an overview of the physical processes that our body goes through when it experiences fear. It functioned like a giant brake in momentum and the writing quality was nowhere near the

quality of what came before or after it. I had to make myself push through it, and I was excited for the book. I can't imagine the effect it would have on my Mom if I handed her a copy and asked her to read it. Not only that, but in the third chapter, Boyack branched out into some topics that few long-time libertarians would take any issue with, but anyone new to the movement or just interested in the specific message of the book would take issue with to the point of chalking Boyack up as a whack-job and putting the book down permanently. (One does not crucify Lincoln before the eyes of the uninitiated.)

So, how do I feel about this book? I love the message. I love that it is another voice out there saying I don't have to be afraid and it really is ok to love people because they are people and not because they have been approved by a government agency, to take informed risks, and to trust others to behave properly. However, this book just isn't what I hoped it would be. I want something I can buy a dozen copies of to give to my friends and relatives for Christmas, regardless of party. This just is not that book. I think it wanted to be that book, but it missed the mark. Between the unnecessarily controversial digs, the wonky start, and some occasional grammatical issues with clarity and word choice, it's not the book that's going to end up under a bunch of my people's trees this year. I would, however, recommend it to or buy it for libertarian friends or those who are lib-leaning or people who specifically express to me that they are sick of being told they aren't scared enough.

Ben says

Connor Boyack has done it again with an amazingly accurate depiction of what he set out to do in his newest book 'Feardom'. If you ever thought you were not being led into a state of fear due to media and politicians, you need to read this book to have your eyes opened to the reality of what is out there that is both subtle and not-so-subtle.

My eyes were opened to many historical events and the truth surrounding those events to make them what they were. "We should make every attempt..." possible "...to become a more informed people" so that we are not "bleating like sheep for security." With every little bit of security we demand, we knowingly or unknowingly give up freedoms and liberty.

This book had me asking myself the question, "What more can I do to be more informed as an individual and then educate those around me to help them be more informed?". Reading this book is the first step to becoming more informed and it will make you want to get off your duff and take action. No matter how many times someone tells you that a square is a circle, it is still a square! Let us not be "hopelessly enslaved..." by "falsely believ(ing) we are free" and let us do something about it.

Thank you, Connor Boyack, for your inspiration and for writing this book in the manner that you did. This will make its way to my shelf.

Thomas Dyches says

There's no question that Connor hits the right notes in his latest work *Feardom* although the passion behind why he wrote the book is somewhat hard to discover, as is the intended audience.

The book starts off with a brief analysis of what fear is and how it works within the brain. And an ample

connection is drawn throughout the book between the fear response and government propaganda. There are also a decent number of examples of government-induced paranoia influencing voters.

The book really shines when it examines specific historic examples of the extent that propaganda will push a citizenry to accept gross tyranny, all in the name of security. The most powerful example being that of the German people in the book, "They Thought They Were Free," by Milton Mayer. There are also other examples such as the actions of Lincoln, FDR, Edward Bernays, and outright lies by military types such as Don Rumsfeld.

Another strength is how Boyack highlights that liberty is often tumultuous versus despotism which can be very calm. This was the most enlightening concept for me in the book. The concept offers an important reality-check for those in the liberty movement who promulgate that the free market would be some sort of Utopia (albeit better than corporatist system we have now). True freedom can be some bumpy waters hence the reason most Americans fear it. Boyack makes this very clear.

The challenge I had while reading the book is where is the passion towards liberty? And for whom is the book written? Clearly libertarians, monarchists, capitalists, and even anarchists (on some points), could agree with the general premise of the book - although they may differ on how said liberty is implemented. But is the purpose of the book to convince so-called liberals or conservatives or a different crowd? When those two parties dominate the political landscape one wonders how this book will convert them to the liberty movement. The initial introduction to what fear is and how it works is not the direction I would have gone if I wanted to get the attention of the masses.

In summary, it is a short, enjoyable read and one that will serve to reinforce a viewpoint that the likely readers already have. It also offers some good examples that one might use in conversations with friends and family that bolster the liberty-perspective. But as a tool of conversion for those who are clearly deceived by government propaganda, this book may fall short. More stories and more passion could have gained the attention of those who need the book most. Would have liked to seen more writing as found on pages 110-111 to increase the relevancy of the content. There's no question that Boyack is a sincere patriot who loves liberty. However, the content and book cover design needs a little marketing adjustment. ~ TD

Sam Young says

It is sad that we live in a world where a book like "Feardom" is necessary. Connor Boyak is definitely among the few that are willing to tell the "inconvenient truth" about the world around us. One could easily dismiss many of the topics covered as conspiracy theories, but the evidence is far more concrete as "conspiracy fact." There are errors, and as with any bold topic, room for debate, but the author as very clearly done his research to produce a tight and concise argument from beginning to end (a nice two-day read).

The oft-repeated "truth shall set you free" is appropriately a major motif and popular hits like "The Matrix" are used for dramatic (and motivating) effect.

"Feardom" would make an excellent gateway book for those willing to do their own research to verify Connor's (potentially life-changing) findings.

Regardless of political affiliations "Feardom" is a worthwhile read that will entertain, enlighten, and hopefully spark a reader's interest in the propaganda they may unknowingly face each day. Read his book, and take the "red pill," reality is often hard to face, but in the end it is the only thing that is

really real.

"Whoa..." -Keanu

Tian says

Feardom is the first book by this author, Connor Boyack, that I have read. All of the information is very insightful and educational. From the first chapter in which the definition of fear is given to the subsequent chapters and their examples of fear being trumped up by media and governments and then exploited to enact policies that further enslave us. Clear to the end of the book in which we are given an answer as to how we can change our thinking, or lack thereof.

I learned so much from the writing but also because of the excellent notes at the end of each chapter. I really enjoyed the lessons from history that are used as examples and have already started studying some of the other sources listed in the notes.

This book will open your eyes to what is going on in the world around you. Read it and then enact the five steps for treating the sickness of fear that are listed in the conclusion. Become at first a "truth seeker" and then a "truth teller". It might be what saves our country and the world.

Josh Chesnik says

The emotion of fear is universal. How we process and allow it to affect us becomes our test. As human beings we long for and desire to live in a world free of pain, chaos, and fear - the path of least resistance. Events beyond our control that disrupt this peace entice us to seek shelter to quell that fear. The greater the fear the more paralyzed and vulnerable we become. If our fear is great enough we become objects that can be manipulated and acted upon. In these moments of turmoil we seek for anyone or any solution that will offer to restore perceived order and peace. Throughout history cunning men have harnessed this power of fear to manipulate and control their fellowmen and bring them into subjection.

In his latest book Feardom Conner Boyack illustrates the cognitive reality of fear and how it is masterfully used by evil men to manipulate our emotions and convince us to seek for order and peace on their terms. This course ultimately and ironically leads to a very real and far worse fear than that which we fled. Conner sites historical examples of how real and manufactured events incited fear and that though this chaos is born an order that increasingly diminishes our liberty and freedom - thus the clever title of the book - Feardom.

Ignorance is fear's greatest ally. Knowledge is power to overcome fear and act for ourselves rather than being acted upon. Feardom is a must read if we wish to gain a better understanding of the realities of the world we live in - a world increasingly governed by the power of fear.

Kevin Burke says

Al Qaeda! Weapons of Mass Destruction! Bird Flu! Global Warming! Over the past decade, these specters have grabbed headlines, and politicians have gladly grabbed the spotlight (and our liberties) in the name of saving us from them. Today, as ISIS! and Ebola! and other threats take their place the headlines, Connor Boyack's Feardom is timely.

This is the first book I've read of Boyack's, and it didn't disappoint. As a whole, it's a straightforward and solid treatment of a topic that is much needed in the American conversation.

Breaking the book down, the Tom Woods forward and the Introduction were strong. I liked the explanation of what fear is and what it does to us (physiologically and psychologically) in the opening chapter, although I would have liked to see those concepts carried through sooner or more strongly via examples of past or current events and the effects of fear resulting from them.

Fear and Ignorance, the second chapter, does carry through on that idea, although it was a little slow for me. But mostly because I had already covered the same ground several times over in my own reading elsewhere. It may be more compelling for others, and would probably be particularly relevant for those who may still be giving the mainstream media and the establishment politicians the benefit of the doubt on their handling of whatever the topic or crisis of the day may be.

The last two chapters were the most compelling for me-- While reading, I found myself wanting to share quote after quote from both chapters, and then realized that I'd be much better off recommending the book as a whole so those passages could be framed in the context that Boyack has put them.

While I initially found myself wishing the last chapter had been a little heavier on "what you can do about it", on further reflection I think most people will be well-served first and foremost by having had the previous chapters bring them to an awareness of the use of fear by media and politician-- To recognize the weaponization of fear is to disarm it.

While there's something in Feardom for both the well-informed liberty-minded individual and the average American who watches the evening news alike, if you've found yourself at all anxious or concerned over recent headlines such as ISIS or Ebola, I highly recommend this read.

Daniel (Attack of the Books!) Burton says

I've long followed Connor Boyack's career. A libertarian and out of the box thinker, Boyack has never been afraid to defend his conclusions, and he does so with articulation and passion.

His latest literary foray is no exception.

In Feardom: How Politicians Exploit Your Emotions and What You Can Do to Stop Them, Boyack fervently argues for greater individual responsibility in the face of growing and often deceptive government communication and behavior. The argument is timely. Trust in government, whether it is Congress, the White House, the Supreme Court, or even police, is at a record low.

Nor is the government alone, says Boyack, finding that the press occasionally take common cause with the government. As headlines fill with threats from ISIS and Ebola in the weeks before the election in October 2014, then quietly take a backseat to other news after, it's hard not to support his point. The press seems to be either complicit, as manipulated as average person, or unaware.

While I don't agree with all of the examples that Boyack cites--his examples stemming from Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War are especially jarring when weighed against the result of ending slavery in America--I am sympathetic to his message. At the heart of the book is a message of increased individual responsibility, urging the reader to take control of their life, to become aware and informed beyond short

media sound bites, and to be willing to live with risk in order to maximize liberty. I doubt this is a message that anyone of any political stripe with an interest in a more civic minded population would argue with. Better informed people make better decisions, elect better representatives, and create stronger communities.

To that point, then, Feardom is a thought provoking call to arms. Not of guns or of violence, but to self-activation and participation in communities and our country.

There are those that will note that fear does at time have a very useful function, warning us about danger and encouraging us to take action to remediate or avoid the harm. I agree with them, but I think that Boyack--an Latter-day Saint Christian--would note that knowledge and faith triumph over fear and allow individuals to stride forward confident in spite of risk. In that sense, I would expand Boyack's thesis and message beyond just a polemic against the political machinations to anyone that attempts to use fear as a tool. Hackers recently shut down the release of a motion picture by threatening, probably in futility, terrorism. Special interest groups email blast their followers with threats of government action if they don't send money soon.

Yes, sometimes it is fear of the government itself that is levied against us just as the government and politicians weld fear to take us to war, raise taxes, or expand governments reach. In short, we ought to be wary of anyone--politician, journalist, or citizen activist--who oversimplifies an issue with an aim to provoking us to action for fear of a result.

In the end, I agree with Boyack's message, even if I don't necessarily find the evidence he portrays as robust or fully persuasive. Remember that even Winston Churchill was for a decade portrayed as a fear-monger by Neville Chamberlain, even as Adolf Hitler rearmed Germany with an eye to conquer the world. Fear has a place, but it needs to be answered with information. Churchill knew what most of England did not, receiving and reading reports on Germany's radical changes that were not available to most Britains or even much of Parliament. In the early 21st century, we have access to information in a way that should allow us to form our own opinions without resort to cable news spin doctors.

According to the "authoritative" Urban Dictionary, feardom is "the state of having freedom, but being afraid of expressing it." Connor Boyack's new book, may not spell it out quite that way, but it's a sentiment that I am sure he would agree with, and I believe that he would argue that only in the willingness to exercise that freedom in the face of potential repercussion can Americans fully enjoy, and expand, the liberties once guaranteed to them by virtue of their citizenship.

Brent says

Disclaimer: I received a pre-release copy in exchange for an honest review.

The central premise to Connor Boyack's "Feardom" is that those in power use fear as a method of control, a way to convince the masses that giving up freedom in the name of security is the rational thing to do. "Just do what we say," preach the government and the media, "and you'll be safe from whatever we claim is threatening your very existence." Inevitably, politicians and their sycophants turn fear from a way to herd us into a weapon to terrorize us. That fear can hold us hostage (and sway us to seek safety by losing liberty), or it can push us to lash out, seeking to eliminate the "threats."

Connor does an admirable job citing examples from world history and leaving no doubt that politicians and other power brokers purposefully use fear to control others. Connor proves his premise with evidence that

will make your blood boil. It's the deliberate and calculated use of fear that makes me furious and reveals the contempt the rulers have toward the ruled.

One of my favorite sections was about propaganda. So much of the fear-mongering in the U.S. is overt: "We don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud," Condoleezza Rice said about Saddam Hussein's "nuclear weapons program," for example. But propaganda is harder to detect and refute because much of it involves obscuring the truth and creating uncertainty (hence, fear) rather than openly identifying a threat. How difficult is it to combat something you can't identify because you don't have the information you need? (Like the true nature of Saddam's weapons program.) Connor's highlight that propaganda is subtle and a source of fear was something I hadn't considered before.

I also enjoyed Connor's argument that the tempestuous sea of liberty is preferable to the calm of despotism. We give up so much liberty because we're afraid of the potential chaos. Liberty, as Connor says, is not a utopia, and I agree. The tumult of freedom is so much better than living life as a sheep to be herded in one direction or another out of fear.

Connor's suggestions about how to combat fear--rationally and deliberately--include becoming your own personal fact checker, seeking alternate points of view on all issues, being skeptical of those in power, keeping an open mind (you might not be right about something all the time), and living the Golden Rule. Don't let fear or hate lead you to dehumanize the "enemy." I endorse these solutions, even though putting them into practice may be time consuming and difficult. It's worth the struggle!

Where this book fell short for me was the way it lacked cohesive transitions between analysis and anecdotes. I thought Connor jumped from one to the other haphazardly instead of guiding readers more explicitly with explanations about why certain events were relevant and how they supported his premise. Also, the prose could have used an editor to cut out a lot of wordiness and awkward construction. One pet peeve: the phrase is "sound bites" instead of "sound bytes." (pp. 42, 108)

Overall, "Feardom" is a book everyone should read; just be prepared to work a little at extracting the key ideas from a bit of a jumbled work.

Darrylb says

Connor Boyack's 'Feardom' contains an excellent description of how political leaders can use our innate fears and uncertainties as tools to suppress our liberties and enlarge their power.

He starts with a description of what fear is, and our natural tendency to seek immediate solutions to deal with it. He then points out how fears can be blown out of proportion to the point where people are ready to go to great lengths to avoid something which has a likelihood of happening less than being struck by lightning. He shows how complicit media outlets along with a propaganda-based storyline are so successful at distributing half-truths in order to achieve the desired response.

No political party or government agency is immune to Mr. Boyack's critiques. A whole range of presidents from Adams to our current U.S. President and his advisors, along with an alphabet soup of federal agencies have all had a hand in taking away our liberties in exchange for an elusive promise of security.

This book is not a conspiracy theory novel. There are so many well-documented instances of the abuse of our

liberties that the author has drawn on to make his points that he did not need to pull in the more obscure ones that might make a government-trusting reader cry 'foul'.

My favorite part has to be the deconstruction of the saying "...only thing we have to fear is fear itself" along with the the policies of the president who stated it. There are rational fears out there, and we need to make sure we are responding appropriately to them.

What's the solution? I'm not going to offer a spoiler here, because I think that it needs the foundation built for it, as is done in the book. It's simple, effective, and even biblical.

Read this book, and the next time there's a health emergency, economic crisis, overseas bogeyman or natural disaster you'll be less inclined to buy into the products of the soothsayers and fearmongers.
