

On “Dangerous” Books: Mein Kampf, The Communist Manifesto & White Fragility

by [Anton Balint](#) (May 2022)



Walpurgis Night, Paul Klee, 1935

Ideas make or break civilisations. It matters what we think about ourselves, about the world around, about the relationship between us and others and about God, as an idea and as a being. Ideas can be a fertile ground for harmonious and peaceful living or the chasm from which hellfire erupts. But ideas on their own are not harmful as such—they are mere abstractions, fictitious constructions that may or may not comply with reality. Ideas are not, as Hegel would have wanted to show, reality itself. However, once belief in them begins to take form and when they are put into practice with enough determination they can be useful, comforting, silly and pleasurable, as well as useless, destructive, penetrating and tormenting.

Therefore, nobody who reads *The Revolutionary Catechism* by Russian fanatic nihilist and revolutionary Sergey Nechayev can claim that the ideas presented in those pages have caused harm to them or that they became a devoted follower of Nechayev's misanthropic views. These things can happen but not simply by engaging with the ideas of the *Catechism*, even if the notions presented in it find a relatively fertile soil in that person: maybe the individual has been through situations that have shaped their view of the world or perhaps they are a hateful person who absorbs anything that leads to destruction for the sake of destruction. Still, an effort is required to develop a belief in Nechayev's ideas that is strong enough to result into actions which reflect what the *Catechism* is "teaching."

A similar thing can be said about Marquis de Sade's *120 Days of Sodom*. The book is a collection of sadistic adventures (the word "sadist" comes from this work) as four wealthy men enslave and torture twenty-four young victims for their pleasure, often with a hyper sexual focus. Can someone who reads *120 Days of Sodom* be said to have become a sadist or even worse? No. Perhaps people who harbour sadistic desires

pick up the book for their entertainment—here is the “fertile soil” we mentioned above—but whether the writings of Marquis de Sade makes them to enslave others in order to satisfy their deranged pleasures is not a link that should be made. To do so would take away the responsibility of those committing such atrocious actions. Moreover, there are plenty of people who read these books to analyse their literary value, to get insights into the psychology of their authors or characters or to understand the zeitgeist of the times in which they were written.

Therefore, when we hear people that Marxism has caused the deaths of millions of people in communist countries, this saying, morally understandable, is technically incorrect. The right version of this statement is to say *applied* Marxism has led to millions of horrible deaths. One can read Mao Zedong’s ideas without aiming to do what the Chinese communist leader did. Similarly, one can read *Mein Kampf* without becoming an adept of Adolf Hitler. Or, closer to our day, one can engage with the deranged works of post-Derrick Bell critical race theorists, like Robin DiAngelo, without becoming a modern day race supremacist or, if one is to apply critical theories to other parts of one’s identity, an Identity Marxist, [as James Lindsay calls them](#).

It is undeniable that ideas are powerful tools in shaping the world around—however, they alone are not enough: the will of those who engage with these ideas is required to put them into practice. Otherwise, the ideas themselves, with regards to “affecting” or “changing” the world are impotent.

In the light of the above observations, this publication is concerned with two questions: why read such books—deemed “dangerous” —in the first place and how to read them? In answering these two questions, we shall focus mainly on three “dangerous” books: *Mein Kampf*, *The Communist Manifesto* and *White Fragility*.

What makes books “dangerous”?

In some sense, whatever constitutes a “dangerous” book seems to depend on the age. Often, it is whatever defies or criticises the power structure of the times. For example, the monarchy in Russia, through its secret police called Okhrana, banned certain books and newspapers that were deemed subversive to the royal house’s power structure. Some of the most well-known Russian authors were censored in this way, including Turgenev who was arrested for writing and publishing an obituary for Gogol (another controversial figure during that time).

Needless to say that the communists did far worse in terms of banning and re-writing (or “adapting”, as many communists would have called this process) literary works, as well as arresting, killing and exiling authors who were deemed subversive to the iron grip of the far-left. The communists knew the power that ideas can have in shaping the minds of the people, especially the youth who was seen, and rightfully so, the most volatile and energetic part of society. For example, in *Gang of One: Memories of a Red Guard*, Fan Shen recalls how the young were indoctrinated by Mao Zedong into raiding other people’s homes, searching for “bourgeoisie” items, including books that were guilty of spreading “bourgeoisie” ideas and destroying them.

A similar process took place in Nazi Germany in 1933 when students burnt books that were deemed “un-German”, i.e. dangerous to the ideological push of the Nazi party. The Goodreads website lists over 70 books that were banned in Nazi Germany. Indeed, the practice of censoring is rather ancient and goes further back than writing itself: even orators, like Socrates, were censored, sometimes to the extreme as the famous Greek philosopher was forced to drink poison because his ideas “corrupted” the youth, or, to translate this into practical and political terms, because his views threatened

the power structure of the times.

The practice remains well alive in our postmodern times. In 2021, the American Library Association estimated that since 1982 over 11,300 books have been challenged for various reasons. In recent years, books that are deemed “dangerous” in terms of not complying with the dominant Left-leaning ideology known as Woke, or Wokeness, a combination of Communism and Nazism but with a radical postmodern overlay, have been targeted for censorship. However, the right-leaning opposition has also attempted to ban “woke” books for the same reason: they are “dangerous” –in both cases, the danger is to the society one wants to live in, or, in other words, a risk to undermine a certain type of political and cultural order.

Of course, the solution is not to get rid of any “dangerous” books but to balance them, as [Stanley Kurtz wrote for the National Review](#) in the winter of last year: if you have a critical race theory book that advocates for race-based discrimination with an ideological overlay, have a book that shows why this is not right, what happened last time such discrimination was encouraged and how to counter these efforts. It is important that books on important topics that reveal the darkest sides of our nature—supremacy of any kind, nationalism, socialism, communism, fascism and so on – are read and studied but it matters how; as such, control over the environment in which these books live and also the level of access that the reader has based on his or her maturity is key.

Nevertheless, these are examples of books that, depending on the political, cultural and societal currents of the time, have been labelled as “dangerous.” But there are also books which can be considered to be timelessly “dangerous”, those which advocate for views so anti-human that regardless of the form of government, they are labelled as such. It is precisely because they are anti-human, the by-product of our grimmest aspects of our nature, that we should engage with them, study

them—the ideas they present, as stupid, violent or erratic as they may seem, their authors and the times they were written—so we can learn to spot them today and oppose them. But learn what from *Mein Kampf*, *The Communist Manifesto*, or *White Fragility*?

Two of the books mentioned in the title have already been put into action and resulted in millions of deaths, the undermining of Western civilisation, the collapse of the moral order under savage nihilism, the creation of new regimes of oppression on scales unseen before in history—the totalitarian states—and much more. *White Fragility* has yet to produce such horrors, but it certainly has the potential, as other [critical race theory books do](#).

But learn what from *Mein Kampf*, *The Communist Manifesto* or *White Fragility*?

Why read “dangerous” books?

Primarily to learn how to identify ideas that are linked to the views presented in these books when such thoughts come to life in ourselves. We should spot these abstractions at once and be able to contextualise them and say to ourselves “careful now, you are heading towards the path of utter destruction of yourself and, potentially, of millions of people”. Secondly, we can learn how to identify currents of thought, ideologies, systems of “values”, which share similarities to the ideas related in these books and that are already out there in the world, manifesting themselves, infiltrating institutions and corrupting minds.

Let’s look at examples from the aforementioned three books. As mentioned before, two of them (*Mein Kampf* and *The Communist Manifesto*) have been the ideological bibles for the most brutal government regimes in history—the totalitarian national socialists and communists, while *White Fragility* has not, yet, led to any massacres; it is precisely because this book—and

others like it (such as *How to be an Antiracist* by I. X. Kendi) –provides ideas that can inspire race-based violence that one must read it. However, remember that ideas in themselves are not sufficient to result in any suffering: it is if and how they are applied that can give birth to atrocities.

From *Mein Kampf* we can see parallels between today's ideology known as "wokeness" that is ravaging Western civilisation and that of the Nazis, as academic Mark Avis wrote in two brilliant essays: [Wokeism: A New Fascism, Nazism or Marxism?](#) and [Comparison of Wokeism and Other Evil Ideologies](#). For example, one characteristic of the woke ideology is its critical theory approach to race. Critical theory here refers to the method of analysing *and* changing the world as developed by the Frankfurt School. I explained this concept at length in my report entitled [Creating the "New Man": Marxist Re-education under Communism and in the West today](#). Here is sufficient to say that part of Woke-ism is to see race relations as the basis of everything in society: whatever you do, is because of race, either as the oppressor (if you are of lighter skin colour) or as the oppressed (if you are of a darker skin colour); if your skin tone is dark and you do not *feel* like a victim because of that, then you are complicit in the race-power game where your feeling of confidence, independence and success participates in propagating oppression for other people of colour.

Those ideas are [promoted and defended in books](#) like *White Fragility* in which the reader can find phrases like this one: "We might think of whiteness as all the aspects of being white—aspects that go beyond mere physical differences and are related to the meaning and resultant material advantage of being defined as white in society: what is granted and how it is granted based on that meaning." Or like this one: "To say that whiteness is a location of structural advantage is to recognize that to be white is to be in a privileged position

within society and its institutions—to be seen as an insider and to be granted the benefits of belonging. This position automatically bestows unearned advantages.” In other words, for those possessed by the woke ideology, race is everywhere, just like Hitler saw the “Jew” everywhere; indeed, Hitler saw race in every aspect of German society, similarly how Woke-ism sees race everywhere in the West today.

Moreover, although *Mein Kampf* is overall a rant, one also gains important insights into Adolf Hitler’s flirtation with Marxism and how his views on the ideology created by Marx and Engels has changed over the years. In the edition of *Mein Kampf* which I have, the word “Marx” appears 257 times. Initially, Hitler was drawn to Marx’s writings and believed in their potential to transform society for the better. What made him turn away from Marxism was to a large part, you guessed it, his hatred for the Jews that he blamed for everything wrong in the world. However, he also disliked the Marxist opposition to “nation and race” and saw the ideology as a threat to the survival of the entire mankind.

Finally, we learn of the obsessions of Nazis with nature, which they capitalise. For them, as for Hitler, nature is sacred, and it is one with God: “Eternal Nature takes revenge for violation of her commandments.” As such, Nazis were pantheists who viewed God and Nature as one. It is therefore no surprise that the neo-Nazi organisation “National Vanguard” is promoting pantheism as the “true religion”. This glorification of Nature in a neo-pagan way also happens today to some extent in the most radical and loudest spheres of “environmentalism”. As I explained in [*Western civilisation and religion in a secular age*](#), “the discourse around the environment goes beyond the conservationism of, say, John Muir.”

This is not to say that to protect natural environments makes one in the same ideological camp as Adolf Hitler. We as a society have a lot of work to do in order to remedy the

destruction done by globalisation—big government and big companies—to natural habitats as well as to our own nature as human beings. But the solutions need to be pragmatic and firmly implemented, rather than manipulative, political and ideological. Thus what I want to stress is that radicalism (key word) in this direction (that distinguishes environmentalism from conservationism), which manifests through absolutist slogans like “net zero,” “save the planet,” or “we have no future,” as well as through ideas of human population control, coercion of capital allocation and sanctions for activities that are deemed “not green,” has a precedent and is not one that resulted in Nirvana!

The Communist Manifesto—first published in 1848, inspired some of the most murderous regimes that humanity has unfortunately known. So why read such a book? For the same reasons why one should read Hitler’s rant: to see if there are parallels with what is underway today in terms of ideological movements and, if there are (and there are indeed) to resist them now, while one can.

Of course, the clearest similarity we can see between the ideas expressed in the *Manifesto* and the political discourse today is the nagging about class division: the “haves” and “have nots” agenda, or “income inequality” critiques, or the “elites” and “ordinary citizens”, the “oppressed” and “oppressors” and so on. As Engels in the preface to the 1883 German edition, stated: “[...] all history has been a history of class struggles, of struggles between exploited and exploiting, between dominated and dominating classes at various stages of social evolution; that this struggle, however, has now reached a stage where the exploited and oppressed class (the proletariat) can no longer emancipate itself from the class which exploits and oppresses it (the bourgeoisie), without at the same time forever freeing the whole of society from exploitation, oppression, class struggles—this basic thought belongs solely and exclusively to

Marx.”

However, most of today’s discussion on class division, at least for now, is empty rhetoric: the Western society for the last four or five decades has steadily embraced more socialist and, in some cases, clear Marxist views and values (perhaps a reason for why economic differences have become more visible) which has resulted in the current system of power (one that imports vastly from Marx’s views, along with other murderous ideas) allowing criticisms to be made towards its “oppressive and unjust” force only to be seen as “doing the work” towards becoming a more equitable, socially just system. As examples here we can look at university professors ([who are mostly on the Left across Western universities](#)) which criticise society, especially the most important aspects of it that enabled them to held such positions—capitalism and liberal values—for a lot of money, thus creating some sort of parasitic relationship between themselves and the rest of the world in which they point out the plagues everywhere, sometimes recommending highly destructive remedies, while also benefiting financially and politically in the very world which they condemn.

Moreover, this class battle has now evolved to encompass more than just the differences between economic means: [thanks to a century of neo-Marxist writings](#), it now includes culture and, with the transformation of critical race theory into a tool of the radical Left, race and other parts of one’s identity, such as sexual orientation and sex. The main idea which resulted from the critique of Marx’s original views in the twentieth century, as many Left-wing thinkers became disappointed with the failures of communism, although plenty of them ignored the brutalities and simply lamented that the socialist utopia did not come as fast as it should, is to continuously create groups of “oppressors” and “oppressed” to have a perpetual class struggle and thus an evergreen ground for revolution.

Another parallel is between the hatred for private property then and now, as well as the “evolution” of the term

“property” to include skin colour, more specifically [“whiteness”](#). In terms of the latter mutation of ideas, we can spot the link between Marx’s writings on private property and the woke ideology expressed through critical theories applied to race and promoted through books like *White Fragility*. One can also see the links between the ideology of national socialism portrayed by the writings of Adolf Hitler in *Mein Kampf* and “wokeness” for which race-relations are also fundamental in dividing the population into “good” and “bad” people. However, a key difference is that Hitler viewed race as rooted in biology, while the Identity Marxists see race as a social construct.

Additionally, from *The Communist Manifesto* we can learn that “[...] private property is the final and most complete expression of the system of producing and appropriating products, that is based on class antagonisms, on the exploitation of the many by the few. In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.” Private property is not under attack with such violence today, but there are developments which echo Marx’s sentiments. For example, Thomas Picketty (one of those so-called intellectuals who bash capitalism for a very profitable and comfortable living) the author of *Capital in the Twenty-First century* [argued](#) for “redefining private property as “temporary” and limited: you can enjoy it in moderation, but you can’t pass it on to your children.” Eerily similar to the communist ideal of destroying private property, is it not?

Finally, another aspect of society that communists hated and still do is the family. Marx argued in *The Communist Manifesto* to “abolish the family!”, a goal taken up by the Marxist organisation called [Black Lives Matter](#) which is central to the current [“woke” devastation of Western civilisation](#).

Therefore, the answer to why read these “dangerous” books is clear: to learn from them how to identify such horrible ideas

so we can reject them explicitly, in writing or orally.

How to read “dangerous” books

As stressed before, none of these books should be banned. This, as history shows, leads to the ideas confined to their covers to become even stronger as more people are drawn towards them for all sorts of reasons, either because they see their authors as civic “martyrs” or just because they are curious to see what the authorities are afraid of.

As [Toby Young wrote](#) for *The Spectator* in his review of Jacob Mchangama’s *Free Speech: A Global History From Socrates to Social Media*, “[...] Weimar Republic [...] passed numerous laws to make the dissemination of Nazi propaganda illegal. The Nazi party newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter* was temporarily suspended for anti-Semitic excesses on numerous occasions in the early 1920s; Hitler was prohibited from speaking publicly in most German states between 1925 and 1927; Goebbels’s paper, *Der Angriff*, was suppressed 13 times, enabling Goebbels to boast it was Germany’s ‘most frequently banned daily’; and Julius Streicher, as editor of *Der Stürmer*, was sentenced to two months in prison in 1929. Far from preventing the rise of Hitler, these attempts to silence him and his henchmen only served to transform them into martyrs. It would have been better, Mchangama argues, to let the Nazis set out their toxic arguments in the public square where they could have been rebutted with evidence and reason.”

There are two criteria and methods to reading “dangerous” books. First of all, context. None of the books described above should be read without proper context—the reader ought to familiarise themselves with the authors of these books, their political interests and views on man, society and God, with the historical events surrounding the publication of these texts—the economic, social and political dynamics in which these texts were produced—and with other writings, if any, by the authors. For example, reading *The Communist*

Manifesto without reading Marx's earlier writings, especially the *1844 Manuscripts* is going to be like jumping in the final chapter of a long saga of ideas; furthermore, reading anything by Marx without at least being aware of the thinkers that have influenced him is going to leave the reader with many question marks.

Similarly, reading *White Fragility* without understanding what [critical race theory is, how it came into the world, what are its ideological roots](#) and [what it aims to do](#) will put the reader into a position of confusion or, if one has already become spellbound by the woke ideology, under a sensation of a sense of truth, although this would be a tragic illusion. The same can be said about *Mein Kampf* and any book that had or has the potential to be the bedrock for regimes of immense terror.

Second of all, maturity is essential in engaging with these texts—although, the fact that we have Marxist professors and politicians, as well as Woke academics and corporate leaders would suggest that spiritual and psychological maturity is lacking across the Western civilisation. Nevertheless, let us not lose hope in the capacity of man for seeing through the dark fog of ideology.

A child's mind however is not suited to engage with such ideas. Nor is a teenager's. Their cognitive capabilities that are prone to excessive imagination and fragile reasoning, as well as their volatile behaviour make them unsuitable audiences for these sort of books. Therefore, these text ought to be study by students at universities or in high schools under the guidance of non-political professors who are only interested in dissecting and contextualising the ideas found in these books, without any sort of personal agenda behind their teaching.

Consequently, we as a society should think long and hard whether these sort of "dangerous" books should be sold in any bookshop (although *Mein Kampf* is not while *White Fragility* and

The Communist Manifesto are sold in many places, a subtle sign of the dominant pro-socialist and, in some cases, pro-communist attitude among Western elites today) but confined to the halls of education institutions which reveal to the students the proper way of engaging with them. Of course, someone who is an autodidact may disagree with this view, and I concur: if one is prone and committed to in depth academic study, to read wide and from a diverse range of sources and to challenge one's views as often as possible, then such texts ought to be available for him or her to engage with. However, the vast majority of people are, were and will be not of this sort.

Finally, it is my sincere belief that such text ought to be made mandatory to study regardless of one's field of interest. For example, if one studies to become a doctor, a module on "dangerous" books, defined in the latter sense of the word "dangerous" as discussed above, should be introduced. The more young people are aware of these ideas and how they impact one's mind and the world around them, should one become possessed by them, the more likely it is that more people can see their anti-human essence and reject them.

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