

## Spitzenbewertungen aus Deutschland



Flutlicht

### 2,0 von 5 Sternen A Techno-Totalitarian Lovestory

Rezension aus Deutschland vom 31. August 2020

Verifizierter Kauf

I bought this book to gain some knowledge about the mindset of globalists, who are the selfproclaimed "elite" of this world, while nobody has ever voted for them to govern our lives. This book is good evidence that these people are living in a bubble, having lost all connection to reality. I will now summarize the main problems I have figured out about the author's perception of reality depicted in this book:

1) The free market is responsible for all evil, what we need is stronger governments, preferably such a 'democratic' one as in China. Consequently, the book is full with praise for the Chinese way of life. An assumption which cannot be made by reasonable people who want to live in a free and sustainable world in which the individuum's rights are protected, and not exposed to constant surveillance, which we have in Chinese communism today. Here are some quotes from the book:

"[The situation might provoke changes such as] an augmented search for the common good as a policy objective, the notion of fairness acquiring political potency, radical welfare and taxation measures, [...]" (p.18)

"the Confucianism prevalent in so many Asian countries places a sense of duty and generational solidarity before individual rights; it also puts high value on measures and rules that benefit the community as a whole." (p.88)

"The Covid-19 pandemic has made government important again. Not just powerful again, but also vital again[...]" (p.89, the author quoting John Micklethwait)

"Acute crises contribute to boosting the power of the state. It's always been the case and there is no reason why it should be different with the Covid-19 pandemic." (p.89)

"[...] the role of the state has shrunk considerably. This is a situation that is set to change because it is hard to imagine how an exogenous shock of such magnitude [...] could be addressed with purely market-based solutions." (p.91)

"On the dial that measures the continuum between the government and the markets, the needle has decisively moved towards the left." (p.92)

"For the first time [...] governments have the upper hand. [...] Rather than simply fixing market failures when they arise, they should, as suggested by the economist Mariana Mazzucato: 'move towards actively shaping and creating markets that deliver sustainable and inclusive growth.' " (p.92)

"A significant element of new "bigger" government is already in place with the vastly increased and quasi-immediate government control of the economy." (p.92)

"Looking to the future, governments will most likely [...] decide that it's in the best interest of society to rewrite some of the rules of the game and permanently increase their role." (p.93)

"the role of the state will increase and, in doing so, will materially affect the way business is conducted. [...] business executives in all industries and all countries will have to adapt to greater government intervention. [...] Taxation will increase, particularly for the most privileged" (p.94)

"While in the past the US was always the first to arrive with aid where assistance was needed, this role now belongs to China" (p. 123)

2) The author is also totally in love with the concept of mass surveillance. He writes:

"The containment of the coronavirus pandemic will necessitate a global surveillance network" (p.33)

"We will see how contact tracing has an unequalled capacity and a quasi.-essential place in the armoury needed to combat Covid-19, while at the same time being positioned to become an enabler of mass surveillance." (p.153)

"An important lesson can be learned from the countries that were more effective in dealing with the pandemic (in particular Asian nations): technology in general and digital in particular help. Successful contact tracing proved to be a key component of a successful strategy against Covid-19." (p.159)

"Contact tracing and tracking are therefore essential components of our public-health response to Covid-19" (p.160)

"China, Hong Kong SAR and South Korea implemented coercive and intrusive measures of digital tracing. They took the decision to track individuals without their consent, through their mobile and credit card data, and even employed video surveillance" (p.160)

"The digital tracing solution most lauded and talked about was the TraceTogether app run by Singapore's Ministry of Health. It seems to offer the "ideal" balance between efficiency and privacy concerns[...]" (p.160)

"No voluntary contact-tracing app will work if people are unwilling to provide their own personal data to the governmental agency that monitors the system" (p.164)

"[...]the corporate move will be towards greater surveillance; for better or for worse, companies will be watching and sometimes recording what their workforce does." (p.165)

"[...] any digital experience that we have can be turned into a "product" destined to monitor and anticipate our behaviour." (p.166f)

"Then, when the crisis is over, some may realize that their country has suddenly be transformed into a place where they no longer wish to live." (p.167)

Even after mentioning all the dangers of constant surveillance, the author concludes that "the genie of tech surveillance will not be put back into the bottle." (p.171)

He also really thinks that "Dystopian scenarios are not a fatality."(p.171)

How we can avoid this dystopia, he does not explain in the book. But that does not seem to be the aim of the book anyway - it is rather a praise of mass surveillance and privacy does not concern the author very much.

At the same time the author admits that "the consequences of Covid-19 in terms of health and mortality will be mild compared to previous pandemics. At the end of June 2020, Covid-19 has killed less than 0,006% of the world population." (p.247) And admitting that "the average age of those dying of Covid-19 is almost 80 years [in Italy]" (p.221) But that does not change his mind, he still propagates mass surveillance and the necessity of lockdowns.

4) While I understand that it is good to also see the advantages to this worldwide disaster, the author is using surprisingly positive language during his analysis of the situation:

"The possibilities for change and the resulting new order are now unlimited and only bound to our imagination" and "We should take advantage of this unprecedented opportunity to reimagine our world" (p.19)

Later he even uses phrases like "not letting the crisis go to waste" (p.145 or p.142f) and "making good use of the pandemic" (p.145). My personal impression is that the author is very happy about the coronavirus and its induced opportunities. He even says that this crisis is "accelerating progress towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals" (p.248f). He is

certainly not concerned much about the whole situation.

5) Paradoxical are also the author's statements concerning unemployment, work and poverty. On one page he is praising the new jobs created by the crisis in the digital/online/robotic industry, but on other pages he also sees the danger of millions of people being put out of work. But his book does not sound like a warning, it sounds like an advertisement for the first group of industry which is profiting from the crisis. It sounds like this: "It is good that the ship is sinking, because we will create some jobs, when the shipwreck has to be lifted out of the water."

During the whole book the author keeps talking about "social safety nets" necessary to prevent uproars and riots, because of all the unemployment, which will be the result of the lockdowns. The idea sounds good, but who is going to pay the safety net when huge amounts of people rely on the state? The powerful state, propagated in this book needs massively high taxes anyway, which is putting even higher pressure on the working population. It does not look realistic to me. The book does not really give different answers to all the massive problems, except for "the state saving us". Which I personally find ridiculous, because the state never cares about individuals as we can clearly see in China.

6) The underlying message of the book is: We need a global governance to be better prepared for such situations. The virus, the CO2 problem, climate change etc. could only be tackled with a global leadership. The idea sounds ridiculous to me - how would a world government have changed the spreading of a virus? By more surveillance and more lockdowns? How would it reduce CO2 emission? By forbidding certain industries and putting 80% of the world's population into unemployment? How would this reduce climate change? By more laws and regulations? I think these are all just excuses to install a world leadership and many people can see that by now.

7) While writing about how the virus and the lockdown messed up the "whole world", he completely forgot to mention countries which did not have a lockdown at all. Many of his theses can be debunked by simply looking at Sweden. This country has successfully avoided destroying its own economy while having no lockdown, no masks, no social distancing etc. at all. No need for surveillance, technology etc. It is no surprise that the author does not mention this country a single time in the whole book. On page 45 he is talking about two studies that "modelled what could have happened without lockdown", instead of simply looking at the real example of Sweden, I guess it did not fit the narrative.

8) The author often talks about "clean energy" (e.g. p.145) and he is obviously condemning fossil fuels, while wishing for a future full with (electric) sensors and "remoted devices", surveillance cameras etc. which all need energy. He nowhere explains where this energy should come from. Solar and wind power are long debunked. They are inefficient and not stable sources of energy. Nuclear and coal most probably are not appreciated by the author either, so what is left? (Maybe the author knows something, we do not know). I also like to remind the fans of electric devices how batteries are made, with huge environmental damage. Here is one more quote about the author's idea of energy supply: "A group of green activists could demonstrate in front of a coal-fired power plant" (p.149)

9) The author is so entangled in his vision of the future, economics, numbers and science, that he makes a lot of unreasonable assumptions in this book. Especially when it comes to human, social behaviour. Here are some of them, which are particularly entertaining:

"As consumers may prefer automated services to face-to-face interactions [...]" (p.55)

"changing course will require a shift in the mindset of world leaders to place greater focus and priority on the well-being of all citizens and the planet" (p.58)

"The idea [of helicopter money] is appealing and realizable" (p.68)

"[Central bankers] will have to define an upper limit at which inflation becomes disruptive and a real concern." (p.69)

"The post-pandemic era will usher in a period of massive wealth redistribution, from the rich to the poor [!!] and from capital to labour." (p.78)

"In America as in many other countries, African Americans are poorer, more likely to be unemployed or underemployed and victims of substandard housing and living conditions. As a result they suffer more from pre-existing health conditions like obesity, heart disease or diabetes" (p.80f) (Obesity, heart disease and diabetes are mostly caused by overeating, bad diets, or unhealthy lifestyle and not by social inequality.)

"the three things that matter most to a great majority of us: housing, healthcare and education" (p.96)

How about family, friends, peace or a good job?

"calls for more spending (and therefore higher taxes) will get louder" (p.99)

"An increasing number of scientists have shown that it is in fact the destruction of biodiversity caused by humans that is the source of new viruses like Covid-19" (p.138) (of course it has nothing to do with the Wuhan lab...)

"bicycling and walking instead of driving to keep the air of our cities as clean as it was during the lockdowns, vacationing nearer to home[...]could lead to a sustained reduction in carbon emissions." (p.142) (I can already imagine the author on a bicycle... Well, I guess it is only the solution for the poor masses which cannot afford a car any longer due to taxes and green unemployment?! It is also ironic that the author mentions somewhere else in the book that most carbon emission comes from the industry and other sources anyway, not from cars or home applications - as long as you do not have a smart house full of sensors, I guess...)

"[Mobile devices] helping us on many different fronts, anticipating our needs, listening to us and locating us, even when not asked to do so..." (p.152) (Sounds like a great "help" to me...)

" [Instead of] driving to a distant family gathering for the weekend" using "the WhatsApp family group" which "is not as fun but, again, safer, cheaper and greener" (p.155)

"[Robots] saving nurses as much as three hours' work per day." (p.159) (Which leads to more unemployed nurses)

"just as the terrorist attacks of 9/11 triggered greater and permanent security in the name of public safety." (p.168) (So that's what it was good for, thanks for letting us know.)

"This won't happen, because it can't happen." (p.173) (Author talking about industry leaders which might want to go back to the old way of making business.)

"It is likely that the markets or the consumers, or both, will punish those companies that performed poorly on social issues (p.188) (Good example is the big website on which I publish this review)

"Simple pleasures like smelling a melon or squeezing a fruit will be frowned upon and may even become a thing of the past." (p.198) (For the sake of hygiene...)

10) The author's ideological understanding of human beings is also very interesting:

"if, as human beings, we do not collaborate to confront our existential challenges, we are doomed. Thus, we have no choice but to summon up the better angels of our nature." (p.217)

On other occasions the author is talking about man as "a social animal" showing a Darwinian mindset, but here it sounds quite religious. A typical contradiction of utopian thought. He further speculates: "if in the future we abandon the posture of self-interest that pollutes so many of our social interactions, [...]" (p.224) This has not happened for the last thousands of years and no ideology will change this. I therefore highly question the author's knowledge about the character of human beings and ask him to be more realistic, please.

11) After elaborating on the devastating psychological effects of isolation and fear, because of the lockdown, incl. high suicide rates, depressions, mental disorders etc. , he still dares to see something positive in that:

"What the pandemic has achieved with respect to mental health [...] heightened public awareness of the severity of the problem. [...] In the post-pandemic area, these issues may now be given the priority they deserve." (p.231)

What a great comfort for all the mentally sick people. Especially, when the unemployment rate is going to be so high, that most people will not be able to afford getting professional help. (But I guess the state is going to finance that with helicopter money, because money solves all problems...) Maybe there will be a "kind" robot "listening" to their problems? But the author gives us even more reasons to "cheer up":

He writes that in times of high pressure and need a lot of good world literature has been written, because such times are so "inspiring". (No joke, see p.234f)

Afterwards he reminds us of the good effect of having more time now, since many of us are unemployed or in home office (p.236f) and how some of us might learn to appreciate being in nature again. (For those who forgot about the forests out there - they still exist.)

Then he is advertising a minimalistic livestyle (Marie Kondo style), which most probably soon will not be the free choice of some people, but an obligatory adjustment to poverty.

But it is also possible that I am all wrong in my criticism and instead of living in a "dark future of techno-totalitarian state surveillance" (p.170) we are all going to enter "a new era of prosperity" (p.249)

12) Problems with the printing itself. The font has bad quality (you can easily see the resolution of the letters, which makes it harder to read the book). On page 24 there is a graphic which is supposed to be in colour, because the text says that certain elements are represented by red, green, purple and so on, yet the graphic is black and white, rendering its description quite useless. Another graphic on page 199 is hard to read, too, because of bad printing resolution. This does not look very professional.

PS: I would still encourage you to buy this book. It will be a valuable witness of contemporary, utopian madness.

Weniger lesen



79 Personen fanden diese Informationen hilfreich