



"Being truthful, when you know it will cost you, is the true test of honesty."

—Dave Weinbaum

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Reality Narcolepsy

A local radio talk-show host frequently uses the term "reality narcolepsy" to describe the human condition of being asleep—and thus blind—to the truth of what is occurring. This self-blindness—sometimes unwitting, often intentional—is responsible for much of the national, political and cultural hypocrisy that has infected this nation. And where there is blindness to reality, the wrong response is virtually guaranteed.

Consider, for example, the pathetic example of the conservative punditry berating certain Hollywood leftist-types for not wanting to raise their children in America. One Hollywood actress, Gwyneth Paltrow, stated her reason for avoiding these shores: "At the moment there's a weird, over-patriotic atmosphere over there, like, 'We're number one and the rest of [the world](#) doesn't matter.'" Michelle Malkin, a conservative columnist, sarcastically observed,

Pity poor Paltrow. Having grown up in her privileged little bubble of "gypsy of the world" artisans, this delicate thespian must tremble

with unbearable fright at the thought of her little one being accidentally exposed to Americans who fly the American flag on their front porches even when it's not Independence Day...

Later in her piece, Ms. Malkin posits that Paltrow must think it "positively creepy" that "there are so many of us in America who actually do believe this is the greatest nation in the world...."

Please do not misconstrue this essay as a defense of Hollywood and all that it entails. On the contrary, Hollywood is a significant factor in the moral plummeting of this nation. But Hollywood, as well as the fashion and entertainment industries in general, deliberately turns a blind eye to the gross immorality of what it produces under the guise of "art." "We're just giving people what they want," the Industry assures us, as they crank out ever-more debased material that we never knew we wanted. Pretending to be asleep to the consequences, the actors and actresses are happy with their "artistic expression," the executives and producers are thrilled with the profits, and the next generation of American citizens sinks a little lower in the mire.

Which brings us back to the written and vocal champions of this "greatest nation in the world." What is being defended here? Is it the Supreme Court-given "right" to murder unborn human beings that is so cherished? Is it the burgeoning homosexual agenda of which we are so proud? Is not Hollywood part and parcel of this great nation? If you look closely, it is the same conservative columnists who criticize these and other aspects of our Petri-dish culture that take [offense](#) when someone from the Left Coast dares to toss in an additional criticism or two.

If Paltrow wants to raise her conceived-out-of-wedlock child on foreign soil, it is doubtful that anyone here will stir. Millions of others, citizens or not, still see this nation as the most viable country of residence. There is still a little freedom of speech left here. It is still easier for the average worker (and even non-worker) to provide for a family here. Most importantly, our freedom *of* religion has not yet metamorphosed into freedom *from* religion.

But regardless of what political jersey we may wear, let us wake up to the reality of our condition: This nation has some deadly problems. Recent national polls indicate that the majority of this country is pro-life—by a

margin so slim as to be almost negligible. Another poll indicates the majority is just barely opposed to homosexual "marriage." Is this slim majority what makes the "greatest nation" title worth defending? Which other nations are we so eager to be "greater" than?

It is an exercise in futility to play king-of-the-hill in a world so universally sinful.

These perversions, as heinous as they are, stem from something even worse: gross idolatry. The most basic cause of all of these ills is choosing something—anything—over [God](#). Our idols have become the sports stars, the entertainment icons (is it not telling that we have a show named *American Idol*?), our houses, cars, gadgets, and careers. Perhaps easiest, and most insidious, we worship ourselves and demand that the true God conform to our image. All of these things distract and blind us to the true nature of God, which many will not recognize until this great nation falls. Without a clear picture of the Almighty, we have no way to make a contrast with our own condition.

Yes, this nation suffers from reality narcolepsy. We do not nearly take [sin](#) seriously enough. This is the greatest threat to our "national security," because it is the first step in repentance—and [repentance](#) is the only thing that will save us.

- David C. Grabbe

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[The Sin of Self-Deception](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

In our relationship with God, we must emphasize principle over pragmatism, because pragmatism inevitably leads to idolatry. Jeroboam, in setting idolatrous shrines and festivals at Dan and Bethel, appealed to the carnal desire for practical convenience (I Kings 12:26-33). These practical compromises eventually led to the desecration of the Sabbath and the holy

days, ending in the captivity of Israel. When doctrine is diluted, it turns into outright idolatry. Like ancient Israel, we have to guard against the tendency to gravitate toward ministers speaking smooth and pleasant things at the expense of turning from the truth. If we are led into deception, it is because our carnal nature wanted it that way (Jeremiah 17:9).

From the Archives: Featured Article

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by Richard T. Ritenbaugh

The 1990s has seen the rise of militant homosexuality and government sponsorship of the gay agenda. What are God's views on the subject? What does this mean for America?

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