

The Stupidity Saga  
Eric Pepke 16 March 2019

By the end of the day in "The FBI Saga," I had figured out the important elements of the case. There were some details to be worked out later, and I have obtained evidence for a few. The core remains, and nothing since then has contradicted it.

The government targeted me for my writing. They fabricated vitriol and mud to sling at me. They tortured me into pleading guilty to a subset of the bogus charges. At least so far, up to the magistrate level, they have denied me any due process.

To sum this treatment up, I can find no better word than "bullshit."

I have tried to find a more decorous word and failed. I do bow to convention and use "bogus" in court documents. Even that raises some eyebrows, but it is in the official law dictionary on the computer and appropriately defined to boot.

What the FBI and all the rest poured on me with such glee and confidence resembled nothing more closely than the piquant concoction of blood, urine, and feces into which well dressed Englishmen dove, bobbing for pound notes, at the end of The Magic Christian.

However, as my friend and fellow prisoner "Moosmeyer" animatedly asked, "Are you the only one on Earth who has seen these movies?" He had a point. "Bullshit" is the closest vernacular.

That it was all bullshit is pretty obvious. Why did I not already know it?

The answer is equally obvious. I am stupid.

There is no dishonor in this, and I have no shame in saying it. Stupidity is the start of intelligence, and you cannot have the latter without the former. As Frank Zappa pointed out, there is no point in getting angry at people for being stupid, because everybody is. Those who admit it and learn to accommodate the effects of stupidity are generally better off than those who pretend to be immune. Stupidity is an incurable disease, but it can be treated. You just have to figure out how to make stupidity work for you.

I was trained as a scientist, and though I am no longer paid to work as one, it's in my bones. Richard Feynman called science a "satisfactory philosophy of ignorance." That's pretty good, but it's a bit stupid. The history is replete with believing common-sense stupidity, like the idea that all clocks tick at the same rate regardless of motion, and that events both cause other events and definitely happen or don't. Science has no way to avoid stupidity, and the process may even require it. It is good at overcoming it on the basis of new evidence.

The FBI had given me an enormous amount of new evidence.

I previously had a kind of stupidity called "socialization." This is what people learn to get along in a society. It has so-called civilized concepts like fair play, good faith, trust, hope, decency, tolerance, peacefulness, and so on.

All of law and enforcement consists of taking advantage of socialization and exploiting it as a weakness to hurt people. Abilities that are functional are forced to be functional. An elaborate set of strategies and techniques are taught, learned,

and applied for that purpose. The Subjunctive Game is a clear example of one, but there are many others, and the attitude this is not only legitimate but the one right way pervades the system.

The FBI turned my socialized willingness to help out of civic responsibility into their smug proof of my guilt. (Of what? ~~Writing~~ Writing as I write now.) That I did not write what they said is irrelevant.

Nor does this process end at imprisonment or even "release," an entirely meaningless term given a lifetime of supervision and registration. This is why so many "justice-involved" people cannot function in society and wind back in prison. This is exactly what is supposed to happen. The system specifically targets, punishes, and seeks to destroy all qualities that enable people to live together in peace and harmony. Americans call this "justice."

This is what Reagan meant when he said that prisons were to punish, thus reinvigorating a trend that Biden and Clinton (and now Trump?) would continue to eliminate that pesky rehabilitation.

Every cop, prosecutor, judge, and defense attorney knowingly plays this antisocial game. I rare few play it reluctantly, even disgustedly, with the idea of subversively working within the system to promote un-American concepts of justice (or as they think of it, simply justice).

But these blips are not only swamped by the overwhelming evil; they seldom last long. The disgusted few wind up leaving or being converted to cynicism. Even if they remain, Hebbian learning ensures that the conventions they have to follow and the compromises they have to make pollute their thinking, and they find themselves facilitating without consciously having chosen to do so, like a heavy smoker who "wants" to quit but "cannot."

The system cannot be reformed because it is not broken. It works perfectly as it was evolved to do. I say "evolved," not "designed." There is no mad supergenius, which is a bit of a shame, because even the most evil tyrant has some humanity left.

The system is a mechanized horror, run by people but in no way of or for people. It is a Rube Goldberg of parts, each of which makes perfect rational sense, at least from some viewpoint. The function smoothly together as a monstrous hole. It is good and getting better all the time. The only problem is that the result of this well oiled machine is pure, plain evil, which just happens to be exactly what those in power want.

The United States truly is the Finest Flower of Democracy. The status quo is not in spite of but because of this fact.

The United States has achieved the American Dream® beyond Orwell's darkest nightmares. There is no need for Big Brother because Americans so eagerly oppress themselves. It is all voluntarily chosen, and majority rules.

Sure, the government tortured me, so there is still Room 101. There was no ludicrous but lurid rat cage on the face (all the rats I have gotten to know were rather cuddly). Instead, the government used what the Supreme Court, back when one existed, called "the most effective torture and certain to produce any confession desired." Ashcraft v. Tennessee, 322 US 143, 174 n. 6 (1944). It worked great, especially with a dozen times more than Ashcraft got, which is what they did to me.

But I was a special case. The FBI admitted to having read

my criminal discovery. My writings showed I was unlikely to be intimidated by words. Even the "Dead Man" lunch box did not affect me much, but I have since learned it wakes others up a bit.

Sometimes you just gotta do what you just gotta do, even torture. It's not as if the judiciary has shown the slightest interest in such matters.

Nor does anybody, least of all the press. If what the government did to me had happened in Nazi Germany, Pol Pot's Kampuchea, Stalinist Russia, or even the modern-day Russia, China, North Korea, or Iran, we would all be going deaf from the hue and cry. But when it happens in the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave®, nobody cares.

This is a huge advance over overtly totalitarian regimes. A few who notice do not matter, so long as the number is small. It does, after all, cost money to torture too many people, and people might object to a budget. Information blackouts and oppression of the press also cost money.

It is much more cost-effective for the press and the American people simply not to care, so long as they can tell themselves it will never happen to them. This is the American innovation. As the bubble-headed bleach blondes on FOX gush, that's why America is the greatest country in the world!

Bad things only happen in those bad countries. Like that one that used nuclear weapons on two cities. The one that put its citizens in concentration camps for their ethnicities. The one that kept a bunch of black men untreated for syphilis to see what would happen.

What was the name of that bad country again? It's on the tip of my tongue.

I had not entirely sloughed off the stupidity of believing there was anything left of American ideals before the FBI had the generosity to shock me out of it. It was later confirmed, after I sent out hundreds of letters with only a handful of responses, and none at all by the press (though some Maoists printed an edited version of my press release). At the time, I only knew that the FBI couldn't be acting so blatantly and openly in violation of the First Amendment without full consent, cooperation, and encouragement by the American people.

Conventional wisdom might once have suggested that the stultifying education system, popular media, and the poltroonish press might one day ensure that embarrassments like me simply do not happen in the first place, thus diverting thought from important issues like Cynthia Nixon's bagel toppings. The internet was once seen as a possible bulwark against this process, and it might have been if people had used it for anything but sharing funny pictures of cats. (And oh, by the way, a picture of an elderly cat on a summer day does not magically become child pornography with the title "Hot 12-Year-Old Pussy!!! Even the courts, bad as they are, recognize this.)

The latent, unrealized potential of the internet doubtless explains the government's escalating obsession with datacrime, merely the high-tech version of thoughtcrime. Once they kept social stratification and a permanent underclass alive by imprisoning en masse largely uneducated drug dealers and users. Now they are primarily targeting educated people with computer skills. Whether this turns out to be as safe and effective strategy as raiding ghettos remains to be seen.

My office at the Supercomputer Computations Research Institute at Florida State University was right across from a Thinking Machines CM-2 with floating-point coprocessors. The air conditioners grew an ineradicable red slime I believe gave me Legionnaire's disease or something very like it every couple of weeks. I appear to be difficult to kill, and I endured it and the low pay (40% of my first salary when I left academia for industry) because I thought it was good.

By some measures, it was the fastest computer in the world, for about six months. Then a certain government Three-Letter-Agency (TLA) got a bunch to use against the American people.

I know of two and suspect one more TLA effort to recruit me. I wanted nothing to do with that. I wanted to do good for people, including Americans. I didn't want to harm people's civil rights or spy on them.

I was even proud of the fact that I was on the faculty of the only 100% open, unclassified, peaceful, non-oppressive, benefical center for supercomputing run with money from the government. I enjoyed working with scientists from all over the world, including Soviet and Eastern Bloc countries with no politics at all, on projects to advance pure science for the public good.

I know, I know. You are rolling on the floor at my utter stupidity. I really believed it at the time. I should have taken the money and run. I would not have been tortured into prison, my humanity destroyed, facing a remnant of life alone as a reviled, broken man. I would be comfortable and respected, in the Right! Now I know better. The paucity of responses to my nearly 700 letters has proved that Americans neither want nor deserve anything I considered good, but the FBI started my revelation.

I also stupidly believed in reasonableness (and reason, which is not quite the same thing) but is just as stupid). I had previously had some suspicions that the federal government was trying to do something about me. After all, I did go to a High School, Pine View, which a couple of years previously the only federally funded program for "the gifted" (how I hate that term, as if there were no work or costs involved!) in the United States. It had a huge TLA presence, as Sarasota is well known for TLA retirement. There I got top score in the MAΘ=(M-A-TH, get it?) test two year in a row.

Much later, after I encountered a classmate at a 15-year reunion and married her, she suggested that one does not do that without getting a file with the federal government. I was a nerd who did not do drugs, but she had been socially connected and did. She said that the LSD at the school had a TLA origin. She also told me how a TLA parent she knew had died, and his widow was trying to figure out what to with all the C4 he had left in the garage.

At the time, she was wearing her psych nurse hat and was working at G. Pierce Wood mental hospital in Arcadia, Florida. I infected her with my stupid desire to do good. We started what I later learned was only the second program in the world to teach English as a Second Language to residents of a psychiatric hospital.

The results were amazing. Not only did our students learn English; they became saner. Our class had a discharge rate twice that of the hospital at large.

We won the Florida Department of Children and Families Volunteer of the Year award for that, and I was proud of it. Almost immediately, the hospital administration instituted rules that made it nearly impossible for us to get students. Formerly, we took anybody who wanted to learn, but the rules required a prescription. We had to disband the program, as only one resident ever got one.

There she met a psychiatrist/neurologist formerly of the Mayo clinic. He told me about the dopamine blocker the government used that made costly physical torture obsolete. (This was before the waterboarding fiasco, and it tipped me off that such torture must only be done as a recreational activity for staff. The dopamine blocker requires injection, which is maybe why they didn't use it. I always wondered how it would affect me, but I guess I'll never know.) His other interest, apart from working at the hospital and my wife, was in inducing electrical currents in the brain with strong alternating magnetic fields. He said it could induce seizures.

He eventually arranged a cherry job for my wife at the Meninger clinic. She went off with him and divorced me. I noticed her handwriting on the divorce papers was very different. My mother said she had talked to her (I was making a clean break) and she was not aware her handwriting was any different. She thought it was as always, or so my mother said.

Much later my mother told me that my ex-wife had to have a large portion of her brain removed due to a tumor. When she was studying to be a nurse, people told her she was too smart and she should be a doctor instead. She wanted to be hands-on and was talking about becoming an ARNP. But the surgery made her not intelligent enough to work as a nurse any more.

I moved on with my life. I decided to continue political writing. I received my Top Writer T-shirt from Quora on the very same day they suspended me the first time for being unpleasant. They eventually banned me, but by then I was already on the Quora Top Writers Facebook group, and Quora couldn't remove me.

It was there I saw that the head of Quora wanted to make Quora the safest place for writers. This made me laugh and wretch at the same time. Writing is never safe. That is the point. Helen Keller said, "People do not like to think. If one thinks, one must reach conclusions. Conclusions are not always pleasant." (At least she said this according to Lies My Teacher Told Me, which a prison book project sent me.) The entire purpose of writing, at least when it is true, is to force people at least to think about those unpleasant conclusions.

I did, however, feel safe from the government's torturing me into prison. That was stupid of me. The FBI disabused me of that stupidity. It was only much later that I found out that I was stupid to believe that there was any recourse in the courts or that the press cared.

But the FBI did something even more personally valuable. They demonstrated that, however stupid I was, I could not possibly ever be considered paranoid. I don't look good in a tinfoil hat.

I stupidly believed in reasonableness. If paranoia means anything, it must necessarily include excessive and unwarranted suspicion. The FBI proved I could not be suspicious enough. They said I must be guilty because I did not suspect them enough to refuse to talk to them. I was tremendously relieved by this revelation.

There is no way I, untrained in administering a police state and inflicting police brutality, could or can ever be suspicious enough to protect myself. This is especially true when the goren government can torture its citizens with complete impunity and immunity, not even slowed down by the judiciary or the press.

Even before my arrest, I had already been pretty impressed with cops. I had developed the Three Laws of Cop Mentality. I had written about them many times, and I have no doubt they are in my criminal discovery and the FBI had read them thoroughly.

Cops think like this:

1. Everyone is guilty of everything all the time
2. Except for cops, who are never guilty of anything ever
3. And except for auxiliary professionals like Emergency Room staff, who are never guilty whilst on duty but guilty at all other times.

I had developed this model due to my ex-wife's interactions with cops, at the crisis unit where she worked before G. Pierce Wood and when she was wearing her ER nurse hat. Nothing I have experienced or learned since then over the past quarter century has contradicted this model. It works.

So I should have been able to predict the FBI would think I was guilty of anything no matter what I said. Why didn't I?

Again, I was stupid. You've seen the movies, like Macon County Line and Smokey and the Bandit and Dukes of Hazzardz (also TV). The local yokels are all "gol a dang dang dang dang Lemuel!" They're corrupt and bigoted, and they talk funny.

In contrast, the FBI are all professional and intelligent and well if conservatively dressed. They swoop in with a hearty "Here I am to save the day!" and take care of business.

I had even seen No Country for Old Men criticized based on the idea that, in what I laughingly call "The Real World®," the FBI would have been on the case, and the really bad stuff would neve have happened.

The idea that the FBI are the Good Cops® is deeply hard-wired from Hebbian learning by sheer repetition. The Cary and Garner cops had actually treated me pretty well. They hadn't come in guns-a-blazing. While one admitted to having made an illegal search by watching the contents of my computer remotely before obtaining a search warrant, they did not use tactics like The Subjunctive Game on me. I thought they were merely wrong and mistaken, but not actively malicious. I stupidly expected at least comparable treatment from the FBI.

Much later, I learned good treatment was a rarity. Almost everybody I have met in prison was arrested with extreme violence, including "Moosmeyer." But thanks to another free book, Rise of the Warrior Cop, I eventually learned about Bellotte v. Edwards, 629 F.3d 415 (4th Cir. 2011).

A guy printed some photos at a Walmart kiosk. An employee asked to see him. Though they contained nudity, the guy complied. The Walmart employee reported him to the cops for child pornography. The cops went guns-a-blazing into his house. He was away at his hunting lodge, so they pointed them at his children. When he returned and found out what had happened, he took a passport photo to the police to prove that the "child" was in fact a 35-year-old woman. Oopsie! Bad cop! No doughnut!

This case was only unusual in two ways:

1. The guy in the case had an opportunity to prove that an image the cops decided was child pornography was nothing of the kind. This was probably the easier of the two problems to fix and reform into accordance with Truth, Justice, and the American Way®! Judges, cops, prosecutors, and public defenders all agree: due process is Un-American, and you can torture without anybody caring. They fixed it so that, even the image I pleaded guilty to has no nudity, unlike in Bellotte, and nothing even remotely resembling sexual activity or suggestiveness, I cannot even get a judge to look at it.

2. The guy sued for damages and one, albeit by the skin of his teeth, as one of the three appellate judges thought the cops were doing a fine, fine job and deserved immunity. This would be a much tougher sell, as cops do not like not pointing guns at people. "Moosmeyer" was also in the 4th Circuit, and he was arrested with enough force to stop the billions and billions of Jewish Atheist Russian Islamic Nudist Misogynist Terrorist Pedophiles at the Mexican border, marching to Lubbock, HAHAHAAAA! (which is probably why we need a wall). However, maybe in cases where the local cops know they are being wagged by the federal government and will see no benefit from it don't risk it. This also explains the sloppiness about the illegal search, the lack of Miranda warnings, and the clearly excessive bail (\$3MM instead of the normal \$50,000) as well, perhaps.

I didn't know that at the time. I was actually surprised when the FBI exhibited behaviors that would make Stalin spin in his grave and shriek "I wish I had thought of that!" I even thought that the FBI was an opportunity to explain what had really happened. Stupid, stupid, stupid!

Of course, I continue to be stupid. It did not really surprise me when the government moved to dismiss my 13-ground §2255 for failure to state a claim. The law clerk here says they always try. I was surprised when the magistrate recommended granting dismissal. Not only did she seem completely to ignore everything I had written in my response, but she misrepresented the transcript of the arraignment and made omissions to such a degree that anyone with a brain would call it blatantly lying. Stupid, stupid, stupid! I thought adjudicators would be independent. ~~Worse than if~~

Of course I have a long way to go, and I am waiting for the de novo review I called for in my objection. But it seems that just like it's turtles all the way down, it's judicial evil all the way up. If my case is dismissed, I will never be able to present my evidence before a judge to be adjudicated on the merits, let alone be able to obtain the documents, such as my search warrant, I need to prove the rest. I cannot even obtain the original "Dead Man" box top. I very stupidly believed that could not happen here, not in America, but it seems that is the only thing that does happen.

I am still stupid enough to acknowledge the possibility that some Americans may care about their country and their rights and may want to turn toward justice. But despite all my efforts, I have no evidence that this is the case. It is possible they exist but I cannot reach them, but that is functionally equivalent to their not existing. I have no hope or ability to hope left.

When I soon overcome this stupidity, I'll stop writing. This will be much to the relief of those who continue to want to believe It Can't Happen Here®.