

# COUPLING TRUTH AND HYPNOSIS WITH SPORTS AND TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING

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## ABSTRACT

*This article uses a story or two to explain how gaining an understanding of naturalistic hypnotic phenomenon can positively or negatively influence unconscious behaviors. Awareness of the effect of negative and untruthful hypnotic suggestions on our behavior and replacing with self-hypnotic replacement of that which is truthful can have a profound impact on the world. This may be especially impactful on the world when applied to all sorts of sports engagement and also when visiting other places and cultures. The impact addressed herein relates to how truthfulness and hypnotic awareness ultimately results in oneness- a sense of our interconnectedness with all. Such awareness is vital for realizing the cause of our continuing assault on life systems and the solution to it via our original Indigenous, nature-based worldview.*

**Keywords:** Hypnosis, Truth, Indigenous, Rush limbaugh, Interconnectedness, Sustainability

## INTRODUCTION

If awareness of the importance of hypnotic phenomenon and truthfulness accompanied us during sports and travel to other places, I submit that it would have a significant positive contribution to ecological sustainability. If we are not mindful of our dishonesties and hypnotically induced behaviors, we contribute to the rise of fear-based living, authoritarianism, and deceptive language that has been cultivated under our dominant worldview. A solution is to return to the intentional use of trance-based learning and the respect for honesty mandated by our original nature-based Indigenous worldview. By so doing we and those with whom we engage can communicate in ways cultivate a spiritual sense of interconnectedness to all things visible and invisible.

## TRUTHFULNESS

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For the “old Indians,” a phrase Vine Deloria, Jr. sometimes used when referring to pre-contact Indigenous people, speaking untruthfully was, by all accounts, unthinkable (Cooper, 1998). Today, however, truthfulness as a sacred phenomenon has all but vanished in our personal and public domains. In the Orwellian sense, the state and its corrupt hierarchical and capitalistic underpinnings have killed it. In fact, references to George Orwell’s 1984 and his “death of truth” Kakutani, 2018 have exploded on the Internet since 2016. A search for “Orwell-loss-of-truth” displays numerous articles about its current relevance and how 1984 “has come true today” (Blakinger, 2016); “relates to you right now” Temple, 2017 and “haunts our present” (2019). This shows how different modern civilization is from Indigenous truth-speaking cultures who conceive communication as being sacred and intrinsic to the concept of oneness (Four Arrows, 2019).

### **HYPNOSIS**

The impact of the loss of responsible truth on our current existential plight is especially important to fully realize. I emphasize “fully” because merely noting climate change denial or political lies is insufficient to counter the Orwellian phenomenon. Each day we must also recognize how we allow language to hypnotize us into believing the deception or accepting its normalcy. To better understand how powerful words can do this, one can Google about how hypnosis is used for surgical procedures, such as that done for individuals who cannot tolerate chemical anesthesia. When I was vice-president of the Northern California Society of Clinical Hypnosis, I worked for a plastic surgeon in San Francisco and did such hypnosis with a number of patients. I even used self-hypnosis to undergo an appendectomy without anesthesia (Fisher, 2019). Or one might study modern practitioner of Newspeak named Frank Luntz to see how this happens. According to a piece in Salon entitled, “You don’t know Orwellian until you know Frank Luntz,” Gabriel Winant (2010) writes, “Every word he speaks seems to be a lie.” Luntz has been a Republican media strategist (read “spin doctor”) for three decades. In a 2007 interview on NPR’s Fresh Air, Luntz redefined “Orwellian” as a compliment, saying that “to be Orwellian is to speak with absolute clarity, to be succinct, to explain what the even is and to do so without any pejorative whatsoever” (NPR, 2007). Currently an influential Trump administration insider, he got the Republicans to change language about “funding the border wall” to “funding border security” (Cook, 2019).

### **The Power of Hypnotically Induced Deceptions**

Luntz began his work for the GOP in 1990 and one of his first impactful achievements was to recast “global warming” as “climate change”. Professor James Lawrence Powell, 2011 explains in his text, the Inquisition of Climate Science that he did this so as to elicit less emotional reaction (p. 174). According to a Yale university study in 2014, it worked (Nature World News, 2014). The study concluded that people are more likely to fear “global warming” and take part in a campaign to stop it than they are “climate change.” The main spokesperson for embedding the new term in the public psyche was Rush Limbaugh, the person who (James Wolcott, 2007) says, “has done more than any political or media figure to prevent the US from formulating sensible climate policy” (p. 2). D. R. Tucker also writes about the

damage that Rush Limbaugh inflicted upon the United States in “Limbaugh’s 30 years of Lies & Fear, 2018. He begins asking, “Who could have realized how much damage he was capable of doing back then? Who could have imagined that one individual could contaminate American politics to the extent he did?”

Well, I realized it in 1992. I wrote a book exposing it. Publishers rejected it, with several confessing privately that they did so “for fear of retaliation.” This is how connected Limbaugh was to top level politicians and power media outlets like Fox News. So in 1993, I self-published *The Bum’s Rush: The Selling of Environmental Backlash (Phrases and Fallacies of Rush Limbaugh)*. The back story about my writing the book is worth conveying as evidence for the hypnotic power of the kind of anti-environmental hegemony that has been so successfully orchestrated to become truly Orwellian today. It is worth telling now. After all, Limbaugh was just given the Medal of Freedom by the so-called President of the United States. And of course, even before this, The Rush Limbaugh Show had a wide audience. According to YouGov, an international research data and analytics group headquartered in London, The Rush Limbaugh Show is currently the 2<sup>nd</sup> most famous radio program/podcast with 81% knowing about it and the Sean Hannity Show is 3<sup>rd</sup> with 71%. For perspective, note that BBC Global News is 5<sup>th</sup> with 67%.

The story begins with my wife and I having dinner with her parents, rest their souls, back in August of 1991. I had just read a scientific article about ozone depletion and its potential consequences and brought it up. My father-in-law abruptly dismissed the concern as “rubbish.” He said he would prove it if I was willing to listen to a recording he would send me when I got back home. Knowing that Dad was an ardent viewer of Fox News, I could imagine what was coming, but of course I agreed. A few days later, he sent me a cassette tape of a Rush Limbaugh radio show. It begins with Limbaugh talking about the “environmentalist wacko crowd not knowing that the so-called ‘greenhouse gases’ are created not by man but by nature.” The relevant part was where Limbaugh refers to an editorial from the Wall Street Journal as his “first guest” and a scientific position paper as his second guest. He then laughs for a full 42 seconds before saying “I want you to remember you’ve heard this all before. You’ve heard most of this in philosophical and theoretical form FROM MY MOUTH (emphasis his).” He then says, “Dr. Joe Waters, at Cal Tech, a top scientist with NASA’s Ozone Research Project, warns that in his view there will not be a large ozone hole this year” (saying “this year” very softly). He then paraphrases from the editorial:

As NASA has been the first to acknowledge, their own report is not finished. The Journal editorial goes on to say that environmental science has become an area fraught with political pressure NASA’s Michael Kurylo himself noted that recent Time Magazine cover story on the subject plays on sensationalism and said that scientists have mixed feelings about press releases...That’s from our first guest and it can be summarized by saying that there is NO OZONE DEPLETION (emphasis his). No hole has been found!” Make no mistake about it folks. Even those who want you to believe that there is an ozone hole haven’t got the courage to lie about it. They are attempting to convince you that there might be, and the fact that there might be is reason enough to begin drastic measures that will have great economic harm and

impact in order to fix them. (Limbaugh, Radio Broadcast, August 4, 1991, excerpted from (Jacobs, 1994).)

After listening to this, I transcribed Limbaugh's words and personally called Dr. Waters. After introducing myself and telling him what Limbaugh had read and said on the air, he told me that his statement merely described how a variety of environmental factors appeared to temporarily be slowing down ozone depletion. I then asked him if he thought ozone depletion was not a problem. He replied: "No, this is not a reason for any less concern. In fact, there are reasons for extreme concern for the human population!" Of course, I called Dad right away and told him that Limbaugh had taken Waters' quote out of context and that Waters strongly agreed that human-caused global warming was a very serious problem. Dad replied, "What does he know!" It was then I knew that the phenomenon of hypnosis was operating. Dad, a generous and intelligent man, a top executive with an automobile company, was no fool. So, to my wife's chagrin, I began listening to The Rush Limbaugh Show and read one of his books. I immediately recognized his use of hypnotic language and identified the most frequently used "red flags of persuasion." In the book, entitled *The Bum's Rush: The Selling of Environmental Backlash*, I show how persuasive words, fallacies and intent signals can be hypnotic, especially during times of stress, and how emotional words, pacing, double-binds, loaded questions, absoluteness, and other rhetorical strategies can bypass reasoning.

For example, I identify seven "red flags of persuasion" in the above Limbaugh presentation, one of 22 quotes from Limbaugh's books and radio program I break down similarly followed by corrective evidence. In this particular one, he uses absolute phrases like "Make no mistake". His laughing employs humor designed to relax the listener and create positive rapport. He uses emotional words like "drastic" and "great" to gain sufficient attention. He uses a deceptive strategy known as "missing word" when he says "make no mistake about it" (about what?) and ambiguity with his reference to people without the courage to lie. Ambiguity causes a listener to accept the intent of the speaker while letting pass other words for fear of misunderstanding. He uses either-or logic, a classic hypnotic device used by salesman ("Do you want to use my pen or yours to sign the contract to buy this new vacuum sweeper?"). He also uses the fallacies of generalization, burden of proof and misrepresentation of reference. Of course, Trump, like Limbaugh, is a master at such persuasion. Both use humor to deflect; create fear so as to increase receptivity to words (Jacobs, 1988); use authoritarianism to enhance compliance; and use hypnotic language, such as double-binds, repetition, provoking emotions, to create and/or take advantage of trance consciousness.

Of course, persuaders operating in any profession, political party, religion or social setting use such rhetorical strategies for convincing others to take a particular position. Their goals can be positive and useful or negative and harmful. In fact, most of us operate according to uninvestigated beliefs that stifle our movement toward our highest potential, especially as relates to sustainability. Settler colonialism is built into most of our systems and has normalized the occupation of Indigenous Peoples as well as the unnecessary destruction of life systems. The hypnotic hegemonic language

and hypnosis of such systems continues in our schools, media and organizational structures.

Such negative, misleading hypnosis is the opposite of how natural hypnotic phenomena have been used by Indigenous Peoples for most of human history (Four Arrows, 2016). Essentially, use of ceremony is a positive utilization of it. Intentions for being a better person, for the well-being of others while in a sacred space and using various mechanisms for entering alternative consciousness via changing brain-wave frequency. These include concentration, chanting, singing, drumming, prayerfulness, dancing, etc. There are many self-hypnosis techniques we can implement for “reprogramming” unintentional hypnotic beliefs inserted into our minds at some point in our life. We just need to couple such intentional self-hypnosis with meta-cognitive reflection and critical awareness that identifies possible false understandings and their source. The source is usually some authoritarian voice or misinterpreted experience occurring during a stressful moment. Coupling such a reframing with respectful and reciprocal communications with other-than-human energies in the natural visible and invisible world can help prevent susceptibility for the harmful consequences of our most powerful drug-words.

Linda Hogan, 1982 writes that traditional Indian views on language recognize that words have power, that words become entities that have the power to destroy or save the planet. With this understanding, Indigenous communication was inseparable from the spiritual sense of interconnectedness to all things visible and invisible. People under those forms of it, including art, prayer, song dance and dialogue, produced vibrational frequencies that moved through time and space (Four Arrows, 2019). The idea of intentionally speaking untruthfully was, by all accounts, unthinkable. Thomas Cooper, 1998 in his text, *A Time before Deception*, tells about how when Europeans started breaking treaties with Indigenous Nations, the Natives did healing ceremonies because they thought the individuals responsible had a mental illness. Perhaps this is still a good way to understand what is happening in the world today. Without worldview reflection and an operational awareness of the importance of words as a potent drug, we will continue to act as if insane. With it, we may regain our balance amidst the multi-faceted beauty of truthfulness.

## **CONCLUSION**

Most if not all sports competitors at national or world-class levels have learned how to use hypnotic phenomenon from their professional sport psychologists. They use it to curb anxiety, to achieve flow and to visualize ideal moves. As a former sport psychologist, myself, I have seen the power of individuals to maximize their holistic potential with self-hypnosis once they are taught the relatively simple process and have recognized the impact of unconscious and early-childhood hypnotic scripts that have been barriers to optimal performance. Ultimately, I have found that the prerequisite to effective use of hypnosis, whether recognizing is previous negative influence, or using it for positive transformation, the foundation for its effectiveness is the mandate for truthful reflection and communication. The same connections are relevant for inter-cultural (and intracultural) communication. If travelers and tourists, sportspersons are not, communicated and saw the world with control of the naturalistic phenomenon of hypnosis and truthfulness, our actions in the world would

automatically contribute to a sense of interconnectedness that would make life much better for future generations.

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