



95. Corruption

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Future Sense is a podcast edited from the radio show of the same name, broadcast on BayFM in Byron Bay, Australia, at www.bayfm.org. Hosted by Nyck Jeanes and well-known international futurist, Steve McDonald, Future Sense provides a fresh, deep analysis of global trends and emerging technologies. How can we identify the layers of growth personally, socially and globally? What are the signs missed; the truths being denied? Political science, history, politics, psychology, ancient civilisations, alien contact, the new psychedelic revolution, cryptocurrency and other disruptive and distributed technologies, and much more.

This is Future Sense.

Nyck: You're tuned to BayFM. Thanks for joining us here on the broadcast live on BayFM, 99.9 in the Rainbow Region of New South Wales in Australia, and if you are listening to us in the edited podcast, then thanks for joining us anywhere in the world; and please get your friends signed up—it doesn't cost anything—sign up to listen to the podcast and spread it around; spread the information if it flies for you, if it helps you to be in alignment.

Steve: Exactly.

Right, we're talking about corruption in this section of the show, and there's a lot of it around at the moment, as you might have noticed. If we think about it in a systemic way, we stand back and we look at the big picture, we see that systems go through periods of stability and then they go through periods of change. During those periods of change, the structures that formed during the stable times must change somehow. What that means for structure is it must come apart somehow so that there is enough looseness in the system for a new kind of structure, and usually a more complex, capable structure to form if it's headed in an evolutionary direction. But things can go backwards and there are plenty of examples in history of systems going backwards.

I had great exposure to that when I spent some time in Somalia back in the 90s, working in a town that was basically like the Wild West with no government and no sanitation, no electricity. Yet it had a Coca-Cola bottling factory that was in ruins and an agricultural college that was in ruins and a Fiat car factory that was in ruins. That taught me that societies can go backwards as well, so it's always good to remember that.

During these times of change, as we're in the midst of right now globally, there is always a little bit of a backward shift due to this slingshot effect where we realise that the values we've been living by no longer seem to be working. Because we can't see into the future, to

the future values, what we do is we look backwards to the past and we think, OK, maybe if we go back to the way things used to be, then it'll fix our problems. Of course, it doesn't fix our problems, but what it does do is it speeds up the change process because it creates more pressure; more evolutionary tension for change, just like pulling back that elastic band on a slingshot.

Nyck: And I guess for many people, that's quite a hard thing to receive when you see some of the politics on the planet and that regressive search manifest, for example, in big ways, like excessive nationalism or a return to religion, or just back to family values and these kind of notions. It makes a lot of sense to those people at the time because, as you say, they can't see forward, but it does actually accelerate things. I think that's the key here, isn't it, that actually an acceleration process starts by that regressive search.

Mitch: Well, I'm feeling that, particularly in the United States right now, where society is changing so quick, and it's not aligning with the older value systems and so there is that kind of want to go back. But everything that they're doing, every little bit that they're pulling out, is just making the system less and less stable or less and less aligned and speeding up that process.

Nyck: Yes. It relates back to what we were talking about in the first half of the show: the crooked foundations. The foundation in those institutions were perhaps originally very solid in that era but now they're not solid anymore. They're crooked now, and literally crooked in many cases.

Steve: That's right, exactly.

If we look at the value systems that we grow through as humans, as individuals—and also the same pattern applies to the whole evolution of our species over time—they alternate between a focus on individual living and communal living. In individually-oriented systems, our main focus is on changing the outside world to fit our needs—or my needs, in particular because it's an individual thing—and in the communal systems that flips 180 and we are focussed on changing ourselves to fit with what the world requires of us.

You can really see that dynamic in play at the moment globally, where there's this tension between people who want things to fit with their individual needs and particularly in alignment with the old paradigm, which is the Scientific-Industrial paradigm—Layer 5 in Graves's model, which is an individually-oriented system—and the emergence of the new values which are communally-oriented where people are saying, 'no, no, you all need to give it up for the community, give it up for the greater good' kind of thing. That's creating a lot of tension, which is also driving the change process faster. Basically the end result is that it's pushing us more quickly into a communally-based value system and helping us create a new ethical framework around that.

Nyck: I'm thinking now of the notion of the phrase which has arisen in the last few years, this idea of virtue signalling: 'we know the way we're supposed to be; the value system we're supposed to have on the planet and you should be feeling that', and that being imposed on some people in some areas who are made to be responsible for the problems of the planet and so forth, and trying to make people change their values. But you can't just force people to change their values, of course, so the tension is created even deeper then.

Steve: That's right. And what makes it even trickier is sometimes the words that come out of people's mouth don't actually reflect their values inside. You can get the whole 'greenwash' thing happening, for example, where people speak the words but actually if you watch their behaviour, it's individually-oriented and not communally-oriented.

Mitch: I'm also fascinated, too, by how the technology drives all of this, right? Going into this communal or this we-focus as we're moving through, how the Internet and that connectivity and that decentralisation of the information systems and the information exchanges are creating these new value systems that are opening up to 'we need to start thinking about the larger community' as opposed to the individual focus. That's one of the things that I always go back to—I'm fascinated with the development of the technology that we just accept, in some ways blindly, and how that impacts so directly what we're thinking, feeling in how we're moving forward in the world.

Steve: It does and that's a really interesting link because that technology was created by the individually-oriented system, right? So that's a wonderful connector that's showing how these systems flow from one to the next, and that natural 180 degree flip is just part of this kind of sine wave pattern that happens through the value systems as we go through them.

Nyck: And of course, just at the moment, the paradox is that both are true: that technology—the systems that we built—are serving the individual I-me-mine on one hand and the project of Layer 5 of the commercial and the capitalist and the corporate, still; and at the same time providing a whole connectivity that we haven't had before, and opportunity, therefore, for the exchange of ideas and possibilities and growth that way, so two are coexistent at the moment.

Mitch: Pulling the curtain back on the corruption. You know, this information is there, it's easily accessible now, and so we can start to see what's going on behind the scenes, so to speak, and that's going to make a big difference to the 'what's happening in this world of corruption.'

Steve: Absolutely. That's very, very true.

It's the communal value systems within which we create our ethical frameworks and when the individual value systems emerge, they tend to deconstruct those frameworks. So in that respect, it's the individually-oriented systems that bring change in the external world and the communal systems that bring change in the internal world. What's happening at the moment is we're trying to create this new ethical framework which comes with Layer 6, right? And at the same time, we're looking back and we're looking at how the fifth system has corrupted the ethical framework from Layer 4, which was Agricultural and a very strongly religious-influenced era.

Nyck: And I guess you see that particularly in America, where the evangelical and tax-free rise of that expression of religiosity, which actually—well, what's it doing? I mean, it's so corrupted in its own way, arguably. I mean, those who have beliefs out there, fine, but really the institutions are the problem.

Steve: Yes, they have been corrupted, particularly through the shift that's come with the Scientific-Industrial era. That's not to say that some of these organisations weren't corrupt from the start.

Nyck: Tele-evangelism has led to a vast amount of wealth for some of these folks.

Steve: That's true, and the Scientific-Industrial value system, Layer 5, has been very much about personal success and people asserting their personal needs. Of course, in that system, with the economic system that it created, the more value, the more money that you have within that economic system, the more you can serve your personal needs. In the system itself, because of its nature, that unit of value that was created in fiat money accumulates to the individual because the whole system is just themed that way. Hence the need for us to design new systems now that are decentralising, which, as you pointed out, spreads the joy back out to the community rather than hoarding it.

Nyck: And of course, this is part of the technology revolution as well, this decentralisation: distributed energy, distributed everything.

Mitch: Right. Not just through the information but through our monetary system.

Steve: That's right. If we look at our political systems and just think about this theme of individual success that has run through that whole era, and the fact that that mindset has designed the systems, or at least adapted old systems to fit with its needs, it's no surprise then that our political system has become a system that those in power have been able to reinforce their power with. Once they get into power, then they have the power to change

the system and they can change the system in self-serving ways which makes them, to some extent, unreachable by the general public. This is one of the great dilemmas that we're facing across society at the moment: how, in a so-called democratic system, does the general public stand up and say, 'hang on a minute, the system's broken, we need to fix it', when we don't have regular and ready access to be able to change the system ourselves unless we're one of the people in power?

Nyck: Well, the system is gamed in the political sphere. You can look at things like gerrymandering, which in Australia is pretty full on; but in the US, both parties, but particularly Republicans, have been very good at redrawing boundaries to suit their electoral purposes. Then there are things like the House of Lords in the British system, which is basically a given position with no real relationship to the people. I was listening to a programme on that other great radio station, Radio National, the other day about that; about the distance from the members of the House of Lords—the language that they speak, the world that they live in—and the common people, and yet they are supposedly speaking for and making laws for the common people. So detached from reality.

Mitch: And that's one of the big discussions in the States right now, is about the Electoral College. It doesn't fit into a democratic society when you don't have the people actually doing the election or the change when it is just the few. That is something that is coming up and that we will be challenged with.

Nyck: Indeed. We'll take a little break here on *Future Sense*. You're tuned with myself, Nyck Jeanes Steve McDonald, and the Texan Elf, Mitch Schultz, on BayFM.

Nyck: And right now we've got another half hour of *Future Sense* with myself, Nyck Jeanes, Steve McDonald, and Mitch Schultz here in the studio with you. And we're talking a little bit about corruption and realignment that needs to come from that.

Steve: We are indeed. We've been talking about natural systems and the natural evolution of human values and what happens when we go through these communally-oriented value systems—and I'm talking firstly about Layer 2 in Clare Graves's model, which is described beautifully in *The Change Code* book, by the way. Layer 2 is our family values, or at a species level, it's our tribal values; and then Layer 4, which emerged with the Agricultural era at a species level where we came together for the first time and lived in large cities and consequently had to work together communally for that to be a harmonious process. It was during that time, too, that we saw the development of a lot of our major religious systems, which inevitably gave a list of items of how to live.

Nyck: How to live, yes. The commandments, one way or the other.

Steve: Exactly. Instructions from God. In that Layer 4 system, we always look to a higher authority for instructions on how to live our life. It doesn't always have to be religion, but there's some kind of deferment to a higher authority.

And then Layer 6 which is emerging right now. We're already starting to see the early stages of Layer 6 values playing out. They're yet to mature into a fully formed value system, but certainly they're out there.

Nyck: Just on that, though, it's interesting. What signs of maturity in Layer 6 would you point to?

Steve: Again, I think it's a matter of aligning those areas that we spoke about in the last part of the show. Regarding the physical aspect—so we're talking there about the physical environments that we live in—we're still at the moment living very much in physical environments that have been created by the Scientific-Industrial era. This is why so many people who are shifting their values now are finding it so difficult to be in civilisation for various reasons, because it's designed for the old value set. So, once we get to the point where we're creating physical living environments that are catering for this new value set—where that value set is dominant within society—and also we have spiritual systems which are there to cater for the spiritual aspect of our life as well so that we can have that body-mind-spirit alignment, I would call that a mature expression of the value system.

Nyck: And I guess when it comes to the spiritual, for example, we'd be looking at a more mature appreciation and understanding of what that spiritual dimension actually is, and that's not the same for everybody.

Steve: Yes. In Layer 6, it's going to be a spiritual system that is appreciative of and caters for all perspectives. That's a very Layer 6 thing, right? And we see the early signs of that in things like uniting churches where, albeit that they are all different Christian churches, they all come together and say 'all of these different variations are okay'. So, if you can imagine that, but something that caters for any spiritual system and says it's all relative to a person's perspective, basically.

Mitch: It goes beyond just the East meets West, but incorporating all these different aspects in that process.

Steve: That's right, as opposed to the West eats meat ... which was a track by Ravi Shankar, I must say.

Nyck: Very good. We've got a great question here actually from a long-time listener, Melody: "Hey, guys, to what extent might we be able, individually and en masse to actually envisage imagined future structures, systems, workable models that are sufficiently well aligned and flexible to grow and constantly sustain themselves without corrupting? Can we visualise such?"

Steve: I think part of that process is embracing the nature of systems change and the nature of change generally, and understanding that change is about creation and un-creation or destruction or whatever you want to call it. I generally call it constructive and deconstructive. You construct something that's suitable for the life conditions and when the life conditions change, you have to deconstruct at least part of that to then reconstruct a system that fits with the new life conditions. So once we are fully embracing of change and we're fully in that process of going with the natural flow of emergence and then decay and then re-emergence, and we work with that, that's when we won't need to be corrupt. Corruption only happens where people's personal needs or wants don't fit with the system that's present, right? So it's a mismatch between a structure and a personal motivation. That's when corruption creeps in. But if we can learn to cater for everyone's needs and we can have different things that cater for those needs, then there's no need for people to be corrupt. They can go and do what they want to do over there and they can come and conform over here.

Nyck: Very good. And of course, just going back to what you said before about the new system, we often talk on this show about localisation and resilience, and the necessity for them, really. That, in a sense, is what seems to be coming in this area, which is quite a Layer 6-emergent region. We're seeing many elements of that coming into play—the move towards sustainability, renewability, localised food markets and all of these things—and they seem to be moving into place, I think, positively speaking; moving into a place where these new structures are coming to be grounded more.

Steve: Yes. Interestingly, we're also seeing some element of regression here as well. As change is creeping into greater population centres, we're seeing people wanting to get out of there; as cities are regressing, we're seeing people who want to get out of the city now who were previously comfortable in the city and looking to come to country areas as well. I'm sure that I've picked up elements of that and you probably have too—how little things are changing that have made Byron not the way that it used to be—but it's all part of the natural shift and change process.

Nyck: Exactly. Many people don't like Byron Bay, itself—and for those who are listening overseas, you probably know the name; know the place. Those changes for many people here have been quite uncomfortable. To face this mishmash and this connectivity of people who are coming here, often not really knowing why. I mean, on one hand they come to escape the old life—the stricture of the structure that they're living in—to find some more freedom, but often they don't really know why they're coming here. That's what I observe. And I think that's exciting. I find that in Byron Bay, this township, itself, I still like it because you can watch these movements in people. You can see that they're here, they're different, they're trying something different, they're available for something different, at least. They may not know what it is.

Mitch: Celebrate that complexity. It's beautiful.

Steve: It's a wonderful melting pot—the complexity created by all those people coming from all these different places and all mixing together in one area.

But back to politics. Perhaps that's where corruption is most evident at the moment. Back in 2014, a couple of people from Princeton University published an academic paper on the theme that the US is no longer a democracy, it's become an oligarchy.

Mitch: I would argue that it has never been a democracy, but I'll step aside on that one.

Nyck: Certainly since the robber baron era, you could argue—since the late 1800s—I think that's likely true.

Steve: Yes. Basically what the paper said was that the economic elites have undue influence over politics compared to the average American. I'll see if I can just pull a couple of quotes from an article that I've got here from the BBC, which is talking about this study (<https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-echochambers-27074746>). It says: "The US is dominated by a rich and powerful elite. So concludes a recent study by Princeton University Prof Martin Gilens and Northwestern University Prof Benjamin I Page. This is not news, you say." That's what it says in the BBC article.

They're saying that "economic elites and organised groups representing business interests have substantial independent impacts on US government policy, while average citizens and mass-based interest groups have little or no independent influence." It goes on to talk about some percentages that they worked out from the study where they reckon that "proposed policy change with low support amongst economically elite Americans is adopted only about 18% of the time, while the proposed change with high support is adopted about 45% of the time." It's just basically saying it's very hard to get things changed if you're not one of the economic elite, and I think there's an argument to say that that's in play here in Australia—not to the same extent, but we've had a few examples of things that have been pretty weird.

I'm thinking of the coup against Kevin Rudd [ex-Prime Minister], which followed immediately after about \$6 million was spent on advertising by mining companies just trying to bring him down.

Of course, the other great example in the news right now, today even if you look, is the impeachment attempt against Donald Trump. Some people would say the whole idea of trying to impeach him is simply a party-aligned corruption of what should be proper political process, but they're just using any tool that they can to try and bring Trump down.

Mitch: I think, though, that on either side of that debate, I always like to ask whatever opposition there is: 'How would you feel if it was on the other side?' Because it inevitably just boils down to what side of the fence you're on, and what tribe you're playing with. It wasn't that long ago when they were doing this with Bill Clinton from the opposite side, and it's flipped back and forth, and you don't want to go outside of those party lines, particularly in America. I think it's very easy to see a lot of this corruption—and a lot of people would agree that it happens in politics—but in business, even in academia and in many other places where money is heavily involved and power is heavily involved. We think that this stuff is not going to be in academia and other parts, even of the non-profit world, but there is heavy corruption. So, again, it's that realignment or things being out of alignment in many aspects of society.

Steve: Very true and what it comes down to is that all of these systems have been designed from the Scientific-Industrial mindset, which is individually-oriented, and so they're not working for community and that's the way we should expect it to be once they've had many, many years to run their course. It's all part of the natural shift, like the big pendulum swing which is one way of looking at this individual or communal orientation: the pendulum swings to an extreme and it's when it gets to its extreme it has the most potential to swing back the other way; and that's what we're seeing.

Nyck: And of course, all these things are about polarisation, which is the major theme in Monica Bourgeau's book, *The Change Code*, which we've talked about here, and which Steve wrote the forward for—and we'll give some more books away next week when the office is open—but that notion of the pendulum swing being also represented by the excessive polarisation. What you're saying is no matter which side of politics you're on, you're stuck in that side if you're coming from that place.

And just going back to the thing I forgot earlier, it was about Unions. I think the disempowerment of unions around the world is interesting because collectively they're powerful and there's money involved and they're also sometimes corrupt. However, they haven't got enough power as individuals within the system—because they're all, generally speaking, working class—to actually instigate real power against the elites that you're talking about there.

Steve: Yes, and it's interesting to note that in the latter stages of the Scientific-Industrial era, even Unions have been corrupted to the point where they don't seem to have much power anymore. Very interesting.

Nyck: Indeed. We'll take a little break here before our last segment.

Nyck: We're just about finished *Future Sense* for this week on BayFM, on this holiday day [Australia Day]. Have a good day out there.

Steve: We've been talking about corruption in this part of the show. We just mentioned the USA before the break, and of course, we've got our own trouble happening here in Australia. There have been calls for an Independent Commission Against Corruption at federal level here in Australia for quite some time. I pulled up an old article here from ABC News from 27th November, 2018 (<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-27/more-than-four-thousand-public-servants-report-corruption/10556368>), which was saying that "more than 4,300 federal public servants believe they witnessed corrupt behaviour in the past year [from that time], as Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, faces mounting pressure to establish an integrity commission", and I certainly think there's a strong need for that.

As we were saying earlier, when we have a system that has been designed from a mindset of individual success—so it's oriented towards individualism rather than the greater good of the community—we should expect that system to want to reinforce its position. We've seen that unfold over the years through the Scientific-Industrial era, how democratic institutions like our federal political ones, have tweaked and changed various aspects of the democratic system to make it harder for them to lose power—easier for them to stay in power—and also more difficult for anybody outside the inner sanctum of the political organisation to have influence over the decision-making process. Part of that evolution, also, has been the fact that money is needed to maintain political power, so those people who have the money have had undue influence over our political institutions; and some people would say that a process of corporate capture has happened where really it's the large corporates who have the money and are feeding or controlling our political institutions through that means.

Nyck: There was a vote in September last year in the upper house in the Australian Parliament: "Labor, Centre Alliance and Jacqui Lambie joined the Greens in voting for a federal anti-corruption commission," but, of course, the bill wouldn't pass the House because it's dominated by the coalition (<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/sep/09/senate-passes-greens-bill-to-create-federal-icac>). I wondered there whether Labor [traditionally Left-leaning] voted because they knew that it wouldn't pass, because Labor is just as implicated or pretty well as implicated as the Coalition [traditionally

Right-leaning] in exactly the stuff that we're talking about here. But at least some elements in our supposedly-democratic institution, the Greens and others, voted for that in the Senate.

Steve: Yes. As with everything, during a time of major transformation, all of our social systems need to change somehow in order to transition into this new era, which is quite clearly going to be community-oriented. The concern is how will that change happen? And we've been seeing a lot of civil unrest around the world of late. Hong Kong has certainly been in the news, but lots and lots of other places around the world have been experiencing similar kinds of unrest where the general public are in disagreement with something that the government has done or threatens to do. We need to look at our systems and ask ourselves the questions: How could our system change, if it needed to change, for the greater good? What are the mechanisms for doing that? How easy will the change be? How easy can the change be?

When the system has been engineered to the point where it can easily resist pressure from the general public for change, then at this time in history, that's clearly a warning sign; it's a red flag. Some countries, like Switzerland, for example, have built-in systems whereby the general public can have influence in between election cycles.

Nyck: Citizen-initiated referenda and similar concepts.

Steve: That kind of thing, and that's one mechanism that might help relieve the pressure, but at this time where change is speeding up and the pressure for change is more immediate, people probably feel like they can't wait four years or whatever the electoral term is to vote for another party, which is probably going to have the same attitude as the previous party: that they just want to make themselves as secure as possible in power and not generally listen to the public.

Nyck: Indeed. In fact, we have a text on that: "American Democrats and Republicans party together at night after masquerading as different during the day. The most clear example is Bernie Sanders being attacked by elites of both parties and their media apparatchik", so this is exactly right.

Steve: Yes, so this ought to be a big warning sign for governments around the world at the moment. The clear danger is civil unrest. We know that the US government, for example, has been anticipating that for, I think probably decades now. The Pentagon in particular have been pouring a lot of money into research, into civil unrest and how to deal with it. There was an article in the Australian *ABC News* yesterday about local police forces acquiring sound weapons for crowd control, which might indicate that maybe our government's onto it as well.

Nyck: Well, the French did this years ago, and this is a truth. The French had a thing which was like a sound cannon, which emitted a very low B flat. You couldn't hear it—way low—and it just made you shit your pants, basically.

Steve: Really?

Nyck: This is actually true. They did use it.

Nyck: Yes, that stuff's been around for a long time. When I was in the Army, a friend of mine did an exchange with the British army, in the 80s, this was. He went to an experimental weapons place to work and they were experimenting with sound weapons back then. I know they've used them on cruise ships for a long time—anti-pirate kind of stuff—so this stuff is around, but that's a bit of a side-track. The main issue here is that we're living in a time of rapid change where our governments need to be able to move faster; they need to be able to be open to all of the signs of change and be listening very carefully to hear what needs to change and be able to act on that change quickly. We're also very rapidly getting to the point where we can't expect the general public to wait four years to bring about some kind of policy change which is acutely needed at the time. So there are red flags and warning signs and things that need to be attended to there.

Nyck: That's about it. I did want to mention something very quickly. Sometimes we use astrology and some people like it, some people don't. Chiron, this body has just moved into a certain point in a 50-year cycle, which is exactly resonant with 1969, and I think this is very interesting in terms of perhaps a new healing cycle that we're entering. Perhaps that's what we're talking about today, about alignment: a new healing cycle available to us if we tune into it, if we align ourselves to that. So things are not all negative here at all. In fact, quite the opposite. We think we've got a future.

Steve: Does this mean it's time for the new Summer of Love?

Nyck: It's the time for the new Summer of Love. Every day. In every way.

Mitch: Bring it on.

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