

## Annan Jensen: Governor confuses fact and fiction

Contributed by Sophie Annan Jensen  
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You would think that Arnold, after all his years in Hollywood, would know a lousy script when he sees one. You would be wrong.

At the moment, he seems to think that a combination of "Idiocracy," "Soylent Green" and "Mad Max" (aka "Road Warrior") are blueprints, not warnings.

Yep, ignorant kids, starving people, mass suicide and rule by mob certainly are prescriptions for a healthy society. (Before you get your leathers in a twist, let me emphasize that I have nothing against motorcycles or their riders. Some of my best friends, etc. Only incurable clumsiness keeps me from joining you.)

Arnie wouldn't be the first politician to confuse fact and fiction. Number 43 seemed to think that "Wag the Dog" and "Canadian Bacon" were how-to manuals on war as a distraction.

Maybe you agree with Arnie that what California's budget needs is a couple thousand park guards collecting unemployment, a few thousand nonviolent prisoners looking for jobs, several hundred tourist-dependent businesses paying less in taxes because they have fewer customers.

Traci Verardo-Torres, legislative advocate for the California State Parks Foundation, doesn't think so. In Saturday's Lake County News story on possible park closures, she mentioned the governor hasn't studied the economic fallout, which is what the foundation is now doing. They don't yet have all the numbers, but she said every dollar spent at a state park is known to have \$2.35 worth of impact in the local economy.

Arnie says the proposal will save \$143 million; the damage to the state's tourism and economy hasn't been calculated. "That's one of the things that the State Parks Foundation thinks is a real flaw for this proposal," Verardo-Torres said.

Did no one ever explain to the political classes what satire or fiction are? That when Jonathan Swift wrote the essay "A Modest Proposal" he didn't really want the poverty-stricken Irish to eat their own babies? That when movies are not documentaries (and sometimes even when they are) somebody made it up?

Fiction, and especially science fiction, seem to confuse a great many people. Who can blame them in these days of "reality" TV shows with script writers? When "60 Minutes" airs the same story twice in five months promising a pill (not yet approved) to increase your longevity? When a fake news show is often the first to let you know about a politician's contradictions? When some of us look around and think "hmmm ... didn't Ray Bradbury write that?" When Disneyland has its own local government in Florida?

For all their confusion, politicians seem to agree on one thing: You gotta give people hope. So here's the bright side of park closures. The empty parks will be swell places for the state's jobless and estimated 160,000 homeless (about 50,000 of them war vets) to gather. (2007 figure from the National Alliance to End Homelessness.)

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