

# 74 Million of Us Can All Be Wrong: The Power of Belief and the Illusion of Truth

In the wake of the 2020 presidential election, many people were left wondering how such a large number of Americans could have voted for Donald Trump. After all, he was a man with a long history of making false and misleading statements, and his policies were widely seen as harmful to the country.

One possible explanation for Trump's victory is that a significant number of voters were simply misinformed about his record and his policies. They may have believed, for example, that he was a successful businessman who would bring jobs back to America. Or they may have believed that his tax cuts would benefit them financially.



## MAGA MEN: 74 million of us can't all be wrong

by Jeffrey A. Miron

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But it's also possible that some voters were not simply misinformed, but genuinely believed that Trump was the best candidate for the job. They may have been drawn to his strong personality or his promises to "make America great again." They may have believed that he was a strong leader who would stand up for their interests.

Whatever the reasons, it's clear that a large number of Americans were willing to overlook Trump's flaws and vote for him anyway. This raises the question: is it possible for a large group of people to hold a belief that is not based in reality?

In a word, yes. This phenomenon is known as a mass delusion, and it is defined as a widely held belief that is not based in reality.

Mass delusions can be caused by a variety of factors, including:

- **Confirmation bias:** This is the tendency to seek out information that confirms our existing beliefs and to ignore information that contradicts them.
- **Groupthink:** This is the tendency to conform to the beliefs of a group, even if we know those beliefs are not true.
- **Emotional appeals:** These are appeals that are designed to trigger our emotions and make us more likely to believe something, even if it's not true.

Mass delusions can have a devastating impact on individuals and society as a whole. They can lead to discrimination, violence, and even war.

For example, the Salem witch trials were a result of a mass delusion that witches were responsible for all the evils in the community. As a result, innocent people were accused of witchcraft and executed.

In the 20th century, the Nazi regime in Germany was able to convince an entire nation that the Jews were responsible for all of the country's problems. This led to the Holocaust, in which millions of Jews were murdered.

More recently, the anti-vaccine movement has resulted in a decline in vaccination rates, which has led to outbreaks of preventable diseases such as measles and whooping cough.

Mass delusions are a serious problem, but they are not inevitable. We can all take steps to protect ourselves from being misled by false beliefs.

Here are a few tips:

- **Be aware of your own biases.** We all have biases, but it's important to be aware of them so that we can avoid letting them cloud our judgment.
- **Be critical of information that you encounter.** Don't simply accept everything you hear or read as true. Question it and try to find out if it's accurate.
- **Talk to people who have different views than you.** This can help you to see different perspectives and to challenge your own beliefs.
- **Be open to changing your mind.** If you're presented with new evidence that contradicts your beliefs, be willing to change your mind.

By following these tips, we can all help to protect ourselves from being misled by false beliefs and to make better decisions for ourselves and for our society.

**\*\*Alt attribute for image:\*\***

A photo of a large group of people marching in a protest. The people are holding signs that say things like "Make America Great Again" and "Trump 2020."

**\*\*Image link:\*\***



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