



It's A Jetsons World: Private Miracles & Public Crimes

Jeffrey A. Tucker

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We are surrounded by miracles created in the private sector, particularly in the digital universe, and yet we don't appreciate them enough. Meanwhile, the public sector is systematically wrecking the physical world in sneaky and petty ways that really do matter. Jeffrey Tucker, in this follow-up to his *Bourbon for Breakfast*, draws detailed attention to both. He points out that the products of digital capitalism are amazing, astounding, beyond belief—more outrageously advanced than anything the makers of the Jetsons could even imagine. With this tiny box in hand, we can do a real-time video chat with anyone on the planet and pay nothing more than my usual service fee. This means that anyone on the planet can do business with and be friends with any other person on the globe. The borders, the limits, the barriers—they are all being blasted away. The pace of change is mind-boggling. The world is being reinvented in our lifetimes, every day. Email has only been mainstream for 15 years or so, and young people now regard it as a dated form of communication used only for the most formal correspondence. Today young people are brief instant messaging through social media, but that's only for now, and who knows what next year will bring. Oddly, hardly anyone seems to care, and even fewer care about the institutional force that makes all this possible, which is the market economy. Instead, we just adjust to the new reality. We even hear of the grave problem of “miracle fatigue”—too much great stuff, too often. Truly, this new world seems to have arrived without much fanfare at all. And why? It has something to do with the nature of the human mind, Tucker argues, which does not and will not change so long as we live in a world of scarcity. We adjust to amazing things and don't think much about their source or the system that produces them. The Jetsons' world is our world: explosive technological advances, entrenched bourgeois culture, a culture of enterprise that is the very font of the good life. But there is one major difference, and it isn't the flying car, which we might already have were it not for the government's promotion of roads and the central plan that manages transportation. It is this: we also live in the midst of a gigantic leviathan state that seeks to control every aspect of our life to its smallest detail. The government is still Flintstones, an anachronism that operates as this massive drag on our lives. With its money manipulations, regulations, taxation, wars (on people, products, and services), prisons, and injustices, we similarly look the other way. We try to find the workaround and keep living like the Jetsons. Often times things don't go right and the reason is the anachronism that rules us. And yet, unless we understand cause and effect in the way that the old liberal tradition explained it, we can miss the source. Tucker goes to great length to explain that which we take for granted, that glorious global network of cooperation and exchange we call the market economy and its capacity to meet our every material need. At the same time, he draws attention to way that the government is chipping away at economic opportunity and making our lives a bit more miserable every day. The answer to the problem of private miracles and public crimes is to keep the former and jettison the later -- all in the service of that elusive dream of universal peace and prosperity. This book will inspire love for free markets - and loathing of government.

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