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that many of our current problems are the result of a sort of collective amnesia about our own past. Also, because we have faced some of the problems in the past, we have found some possible answers in that past. And we need to make sure we don't forget those possible solutions. Art and literature can help by putting things literally in perspective. A particularly apt illustration would be the body of modern dystopias, sci-fi dystopias of warning, like, you know, the masterpieces, '1984', 'The Handmaid's Tale', and I would add 'The Brave New World' to it. We can say that these works of 20th century literature are still sounding the alarm today. Their warnings feel just as timely in our historical moment, as they do at the time of their production. We can certainly relate to the dangers of authoritarian powers presented with such pointed clarity in '1984' and 'The Handmaid's Tale'. But at the same time as Neil Postman wrote in his prescient 'Amusing Ourselves to Death', and this is from 1985. The dystopian horizon of Aldous Huxley in his 1930s masterpiece, 'The Brave New World', may be just as

prescient as '1984'. And I'm going to quote now, if I may, from Neil Postman's 1985 book again, 'Amusing Ourselves to Death'. So Orwell feared those who would deprive us of information. Huxley feared those who would give us so much that we would be reduced to passivity and negativism. Orwell feared that the truth would be concealed from us. Huxley feared that the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance. Beyond these masterful dystopias of the 20th century, Egginton and I argue in 'Medialogies', and also in this other more recent book, 'What Would Cervantes Do?', that the fictional works published at the dawn of modernity, in another age of inflationary media, can also help us put things in perspective in our own time. A primary example here, as you know, and as the title of our second book indicates, is the work of Miguel de Cervantes: 'The inventor of modern fiction was particularly concerned about the effects of the emergent mass media with its awesome power to influence our thinking and behavior through their framing of the world. Of course, in the early modern

period, we're talking about print culture and the emerging mass spectacles that we associate with a modern theater, with its appeal to raw emotions, rather than to our minds. But we argue that Cervantes' works, slow things down so that we can actually see the sleight of hand at work. You know, we professors often talk about the importance of teaching our students to think outside the box. Cervantes' point to make was that to think outside the box, we actually have to see the box first. The fictional awareness strategies that we attribute to the work of Miguel de Cervantes can help us hone our interpretive skills today, so that we can understand better our own inflationary media, its framing, their framing of editing, and ultimately their construction of our reality. And this is actually what we call in our books, "reality literacy".

Okay, I would like to ask a final question. You said that to think outside of the box, we have to actually be able to see the box itself. What if we are part of the box? This actually is a great question

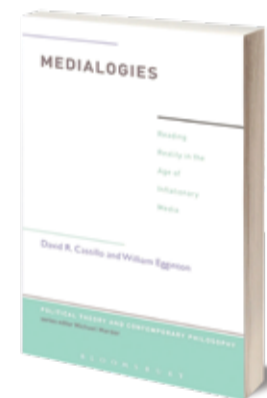
and a great insight. The point to make here is that Cervantes understood very well that we are, in one way or another, defined as either inside or outside the box. So what he does in his work is he shows us how we are being defined as part of the frame and how our beliefs are actually, as you say, part of that frame. So that the point of seeing the box is also the point of seeing ourselves, as, say, part of the scaffolding of the box, in a way our very desires, our impulses, our emotions, are hooked together with the framing. And that's the ultimate realization that Cervantes invites us to entertain, that we may very well be part of that frame. And that understanding where the potential for autonomous action is, comes with the understanding of our own place in the framing devices that name me and name the world.

Ok. That was great. If there are any other points you would like to mention, I'd be happy to share with our viewers. No, that's great. Really great talking to you

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Acrylic painting by Coma entitled 'Saturation' (2022)
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Cervantes' fictions worked in such a way as to show us how the media of his time can edit, frame, and construct the world, and show the tools that are used for that editing of the world.