

Foreword

Government technocrats, billionaire oligarchs, Big Pharma, Big Data, Big Media, the high-finance robber barons, and the military industrial intelligence apparatus love pandemics for the same reasons they love wars and terrorist attacks. Catastrophic crises create opportunities of convenience to increase both power and wealth. In her seminal book, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, Naomi Klein chronicles how authoritarian demagogues, large corporations, and wealthy plutocrats use mass disruptions to shift wealth upwards, obliterate the middle classes, abolish civil rights, privatize the commons, and expand authoritarian controls.

A consummate insider, the former White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emmanuel is known for his admonition that vested power structures should “never let a serious crisis go to waste.” But this tread-worn strategy—to use crisis to inflame the public terror that paves the road to dictatorial power—has served as the central strategy of totalitarian systems for the millennia.

The methodology is, in fact, formulaic, as Hitler’s Luftwaffe commander, Hermann Göring, explained during the Nazi war crimes trials at Nuremberg: “It is always a simple matter to drag the people along whether it is a democracy, a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism, and exposing the country to greater danger. It works the same in any country.”

The Nazis pointed to the threats from Jews and Gypsies to justify the homicidal authoritarianism in the Third Reich. The dictatorial demagogue, Senator Joseph McCarthy, and the HUAC committee warned against communist infiltration of the State Department and film industry to rationalize loyalty oaths and the blacklist. Dick Cheney used the 9/11 attack to launch his “long war” against amorphous terrorism and the Patriot Act abridgments that laid the groundwork for the modern surveillance state. Now the medical cartel and its billionaire Big Tech accomplices have invoked the most potent, frightening, and enduring enemy of all—the microbe.

And who can blame them? Increasing the wealth and power of the oligarchy is seldom a potent vessel for populism. Citizens accustomed to voting for their governments are unlikely to support policies that make the rich richer, increase political and social control by corporations, diminish democracy, and reduce their civil rights. So demagogues must weaponize fear to justify their demands for blind obedience and to win public acquiescence for the demolition of civil and economic rights.

Of course, the first casualty must always be freedom of speech. After stoking sufficient panic against the hobgoblin *du jour*, robber barons need to silence protest against their wealth and power grabs.

In including free speech in the First Amendment of the Constitution, James Madison argued that all our other liberties depend on this right. Any government that can hide its mischief has license to commit atrocities.

As soon as they get hold of the levers of authority, tyrants impose Orwellian censorship and begin gaslighting dissenters. But ultimately they seek to abolish all forms of creative thinking and self-expression. They burn books, destroy art, kill writers, poets, and intellectuals, outlaw gatherings, and at their worst, force oppressed minorities to wear masks that atomize any sense of community or solidarity and prevent the subtle, eloquent nonverbal communication for which God and evolution have equipped humans with 42 facial muscles. The most savage Middle Eastern theocracies mandate masks for women, whose legal status—not coincidentally—is as chattels.

The free flow of information and self-expression are oxygen and sunlight for representative democracy, which functions best with policies annealed in the boiling cauldron of public debate. It is axiomatic that without free speech, democracy withers.

The most iconic and revered monuments of democracy therefore include the Athenian Agora and Speakers' Corner at Hyde Park. We can't help feeling exhilaration about our noble experiment in self-government when we witness the boisterous, irreverent debates in the House of Commons, or watch Jimmy Stewart's filibuster scene in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*—an enduring homage to the inseparable bond between debate and democracy.

To consolidate and fortify their power, dictatorships aim to replace those vital ingredients of self-rule—debate, self-expression, dissent, and skepticism—with rigid authoritarian orthodoxies that function as secular surrogates for religion. These orthodoxies perform to abolish critical thinking and regiment populations in blind, unquestioning obedience to undeserving authorities.

Instead of citing scientific studies to justify mandates for masks, lockdowns, and vaccines, our medical rulers cite WHO, CDC, FDA, and NIH—captive agencies that are groveling sock puppets to the industries they regulate. Multiple federal and international investigations have documented the financial entanglements with pharmaceutical companies that have made these regulators cesspools of corruption.

Iatrarchy—meaning government by physicians—is a little-known term, perhaps because historical experiments with it have been catastrophic. The medical profession has not proven itself an energetic defender of democratic institutions or civil rights. Virtually every doctor in Germany took lead roles in the Third Reich’s project to eliminate mental defectives, homosexuals, handicapped citizens, and Jews. So many hundreds of German physicians participated in Hitler’s worst atrocities—including managing mass murder and unspeakable experiments at the death camps—that the Allies had to stage separate “Medical Trials” at Nuremberg. Not a single prominent German doctor or medical association raised their voice in opposition to these projects.

So it’s unsurprising that, instead of demanding blue-ribbon safety science and encouraging honest, open, and responsible debate on the science, the badly compromised and newly empowered government health officials charged with managing the COVID-19 pandemic response collaborated with mainstream and social media to shut down discussion on key public health and civil rights questions. They silenced and excommunicated heretics such as Dr. Mercola who refused to genuflect to Pharma and treat unquestioning faith in zero liability, shoddily tested, experimental vaccines as religious duty.

Our current iatrarchy’s rubric of “scientific consensus” is the contemporary iteration of the Spanish Inquisition. It is a fabricated dogma constructed by this corrupt cast of physician technocrats and their media collaborators to legitimize their claims to dangerous new powers.

The high priests of the modern Inquisition are Big Pharma’s network and cable news gasbags who preach rigid obedience to official diktats including lockdowns, social distancing, and the moral rectitude of donning masks despite the absence of peer-reviewed science that convincingly shows that masks prevent COVID-19 transmission. The need for this sort of proof is gratuitous.

They counsel us to, instead, “trust the experts.” Such advice is both anti-democratic and anti-science. Science is dynamic. “Experts” frequently differ on scientific questions and their opinions can vary in accordance with and demands of politics, power, and financial self-interest. Nearly every lawsuit I have ever brought pitted highly credentialed experts from opposite

sides against each other, with all of them swearing under oath to diametrically antithetical positions based on the same set of facts. Science is disagreement; the notion of scientific consensus is oxymoronic.

The modern intention of the totalitarian state is corporate kleptocracy—a construct that replaces democratic process with the arbitrary edicts of unelected technocrats. Invariably, their fiats invest multinational corporations with extraordinary power to monetize and control the most intimate parts of our lives, enrich billionaires, impoverish the masses, and manage dissent with relentless surveillance and obedience training.

In 2020, led by Bill Gates, Silicon Valley applauded from the sidelines as powerful medical charlatans—applying the most pessimistic projections from discredited modeling and easily manipulated PCR testing, and a menu of new protocols for coroners that appeared intended to inflate reporting of COVID-19 deaths—fanned pandemic panic and confined the world’s population under house arrest.

The suspension of due process, due notice, and comment rulemaking meant that none of the government prelates who ordained the quarantine had to first publicly calculate whether destroying the global economy, disrupting food and medical supplies, and throwing a billion humans into dire poverty and food insecurity would kill more people than it would save.

In America, their quarantine predictably shattered the nation’s once-booming economic engine, putting 58 million Americans out of work, and *permanently bankrupting over 100,000 small businesses, including 41,000 Black-owned businesses, some of which took three generations of investment to build.* These policies have also set into motion the inevitable dismantling of the social safety net that nurtured America’s envied middle class. Government officials have already begun liquidating the 100-year legacies of the New Deal, New Frontier, the Great Society, and Obamacare to pay the accumulated quarantine debts. Say goodbye to school lunches, healthcare, WIC, Medicaid, Medicare, University scholarships, and more.

While obliterating the American middle class and dropping an additional 8 percent of Americans below the poverty line, the 2020 “COVID coup” transferred a trillion dollars of wealth to Big Technology, Big Data, Big Telecom, Big Finance, Big Media behemoths (Michael Bloomberg, Rupert Murdoch), and Silicon Valley Internet titans such as Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, Sergey Brin, Larry Page, and Jack Dorsey. It seems beyond coincidence that these men, who are cashing in on the poverty and misery caused by global lockdowns, are the same men whose companies actively censor critics of those policies.

The very Internet companies that snookered us all with the promise of democratizing communications have created a world where it has become impermissible to speak ill of official pronouncements, and practically a crime to criticize pharmaceutical products. The same Tech/Data and Telecom robber barons, now gorging themselves on the corpses of our obliterated middle class, are rapidly transforming America's once-proud democracy into a censorship and surveillance police state over which they profit at every turn.

For example, this cabal used the lockdown to accelerate construction of their 5G network of satellites, antennae, biometric facial recognition, and "track and trace" infrastructure that they, and their government and intelligence agency partners, will use to mine and monetize our data for free, compel obedience to arbitrary dictates, and to suppress dissent. Their government/industry collaboration will use this system to manage the rage when Americans finally wake up to the fact that this outlaw gang has stolen our democracy, our civil rights, our country, and way of life—while we huddled in orchestrated fear from a flu-like illness.

Predictably our other constitutional guarantees lined up behind free speech at the gibbet. The imposition censorship has masked this systematic demolition of our Constitution, including attacks on our freedoms of assembly (through social distancing and lockdown rules), on freedom of worship (including abolishing religious exemptions and closing churches, while liquor stores remain open as "essential service"), private property (the right to operate a business), due process (including the imposition of far reaching restrictions against freedom of movement, education, and association without rule making, public hearings, or economic and environmental impact statements), the Seventh Amendment right to jury trials (in cases of vaccine injuries caused by corporate negligence), our rights to privacy and against illegal searches and seizures (warrantless tracking and tracing), and our right to have governments that don't spy on us or retain our information for mischievous purposes.

Silencing Dr. Mercola's voice, of course, was the Medical Cabal's early priority. For decades, Dr. Mercola has been among the most effective and influential advocates against the pharmaceutical paradigm. He was an eloquent, charismatic, and knowledgeable critic of a corrupt system that has made Americans the world's top consumer of pharmaceutical drugs. Americans pay the highest prices for drugs, and have the worst health outcomes among the top 75 nations. Putting opiates—which kill 50,000 Americans annually—aside, pharmaceuticals are now the third biggest killer of Americans, after heart attacks and cancer.

Like a prophet in the wilderness, Dr. Mercola has argued for years that good health does not come in a syringe or a pill but from building strong immune systems. He preaches that nutrition and exercise are the most effective medicines, and that public health officials ought to be pushing policies that discourage reliance on pharmaceutical products and that safeguard our food supplies from Big Food, Big Chemical, and Big Ag. These predatory industries naturally consider Dr. Mercola to be Public Enemy #1.

Big Pharma's \$9.6 billion annual advertising budget gives these unscrupulous companies control over our news and television outlets. Strong economic drivers (pharmaceutical companies are the biggest network advertisers) have long discouraged mainstream media outlets from criticizing vaccine manufacturers. In 2014, a network president, Roger Ailes, told me he would fire any of his news show hosts who allowed me to talk about vaccine safety on air. "Our news division," he explained, "gets up to 70% of ad revenues from pharma in non-election years."

Thus, pharmaceutical products were both the predicate and the punchline of the Cancel Culture. The Pharmedia long ago banned Dr. Mercola from the airwaves and newsprint while turning Wikipedia—which functions as Big Pharma's newsletter and propaganda vehicle—into a mill for defamations against him and every other integrative and functional health physician. At COVID's outset, the social media robber barons—all with their own financial entanglements with Big Pharma—joined the campaign to silence Mercola by ejecting him from their platforms.

It's a bad omen for democracy when citizens can no longer conduct civil, informed debates about critical policies that impact the vitality of our economy, public health, personal freedoms, and constitutional rights. Censorship is violence, and this systematic muzzling of debate—which proponents justify as a measure to curtail dangerous polarization—is actually fueling the polarization and extremism that the autocrats use to clamp down with evermore draconian controls.

We might recall, at this strange time in our history, my father's friend, Edward R. Murrow's warning that: "The right to dissent . . . is surely fundamental to the existence of a democratic society. That's the right that went first in every nation that stumbled down the trail to totalitarianism."

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.