

We Are Still Locked Down

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Consider just how fortunate we are to have the Twitter Files. Every few days, we are seeing dumps of documents from the operations of Twitter before Elon Musk took over. This weekend's release was especially shocking. It revealed a close and symbiotic relationship between the company's management and the FBI, which employs 80 people to police social networks and flag posts. They aren't looking for crime. They were focused on wrongthink on matters of politics.

In other words, all our worst suspicions have been confirmed. We still await the Covid files but let there be no doubt about what they will show in grim detail. Twitter worked with government to throttle the reach and searchability of accounts that took issue with the main messaging of the CDC/HHS from early in lockdowns to the present. We already knew that Facebook had [deleted](#) 7 million posts in the second quarter of 2020. Twitter pulled some 10,000 accounts down.

Twitter is now mostly open, for now. The rest of the venues remain wholly controlled. Brownstone has posts tagged, throttled, and sometimes deleted from LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and it is a constant struggle to avoid Google's own push against our content. Even ridiculous sites with no credibility or reach appear high in search engines when our content is searched. This is not an algorithm at work.

On this basis alone, it is fair to say that we are still in lockdown nearly three years later. The point of such top-down censorship is not only to control the public mind. It is also to keep all of us from finding each other. It truly did work for a very long time. It took nearly a year for the group that we now know as the anti-lockdown movement to form. Even when Brownstone was founded, I had not known about Justin Hart's Rational Ground. Now of course we work closely together.

The impact of all this work to keep us apart has been huge. It's why those of us who resisted from the very beginning felt so very alone, and we could not understand why. Were we going crazy? What is wrong with people that they seem not to be objecting to having their schools and churches closed? Why was the media demonizing people for wanting to get

haircuts? Whatever happened to the Bill of Rights and why does no one seem even to be complaining about what was happening?

Let us pause to explore the meaning of lockdown. We often hear now that the US never did lock down, as ridiculous as that sounds. Epidemiologist Jay Bhattacharya grew so tired of hearing this claim that he formulated a definition: any government policy that seeks to keep people physically separate under the excuse that doing so mitigates against some crisis. This would include claims, for example, that other people are biohazards, and would include fear-mongering propaganda, and much else.

Think back to March 16, 2020 in the White House [press conference](#) when Deborah Birx summed up the whole theme of the day. “We really want people to be separated at this time, to be able to address this virus,” she said. If you think about it, that is surely among the most draconian demands ever made by any government against its people. It means the abolition of freedom and society too. It’s utterly astonishing, and yet the media gathered there just nodded heads as if this were completely normal.

Part of the mandatory separation – part of the lockdown – was information control to keep people who opposed what was happening from finding each other. This trick truly did work because all our usual methods for digital socializing came to be nationalized overnight. We did not know this because there was no real announcement but it was nonetheless real. We had come to rely on social media to give us a sense of the public mind but that came to an end during the most shocking policies ever imposed on so many Americans. And the policy happened all over the world except for one state and about 5 nations.

The lockdown included information control and that was crucial. As for the possibility of hearing the opinions of others, we also faced egregious stay-at-home orders and limits on the numbers of people who could even enter our own homes. I’ve not seen a complete study on what happened but in Western Massachusetts where I was at the time, no more than 10 people were allowed to meet in one setting. Thus no weddings, funerals, or large house parties. Private citizens became so zealous in their enforcement of this that they would fly drones over communities to look for cars bunched up and rat out the address to the local media. This truly did happen.

Only now do we see the larger point. It was to prohibit an opposition from forming and to gaslight the whole population into thinking that everyone was going along with this, since this was nothing but “common sense public health measures.” Anthony Fauci told us this many times. This might also have contributed to the huge decline in the health of the population. People lost a sense of hope and turned to substance abuse and overeating. Gyms were closed and so were all in-person AA meetings. The lockdowns contributed as much as 40 percent to the overall excess deaths in that year alone.

Eventually of course many things opened up but unvaccinated visitors from other countries are still not allowed in, which is an outrage. I have a conductor friend from the UK who has constant invitations to conduct in the US but he is simply not allowed into the country. For three years now!

Question: have we really ever left lockdowns? We are far less free today and far more censored. Twitter is an aberration among the major tech platforms. Media is controlled too. But for Tucker Carlson, Laura Ingraham, and few others, plus the mighty *Epoch Times*, where would we even get our news? And thank goodness for Substack, which has allowed so

many writers and researchers to have an outlet. The point is that these are all lights peeking through a darkness that is still being imposed from above. Which is to say: the emergency for human liberty is still with us.

They wanted to keep us separate, and the excuse was a virus. The rule of separation (and the stickers are still everywhere in this country) was truly to keep us apart. One of the most powerful books to come out of our era is Naomi Wolf's [The Bodies of Others](#). The core theory was that separating humans from other humans was the whole point: to take away our social connection and the possibility of living a dignified life of our own choosing. The only beneficiaries to the policy were tech, media, and government. Her book is a classic for the ages.

Part of this separation included the attack on small business and traditional commerce. The word commerce comes from *commercium* in Latin, a word that figured prominently in a composed verse from medieval Christianity that became a much-loved motet: *O Admirabile Commercium*. The point is to draw attention to the exchange between time and eternity as instantiated in the incarnation that Christmas celebrates.

Commerce has long been the meeting place for humans to form social order. Trade means mutual benefit, finding value in each other. That it came under such severe attack makes sense from the point of view of a ruling class that was attacking human association at its root.

Even today, we are having difficulty finding each other and are relieved when we do so. I was struck by this during the Brownstone holiday party a few days ago. There we were all together, the room filled with incredibly energy, everyone toasting friendship and connection, smiles everywhere, a profound sense of gratitude for the physical space that allowed us to meet and eat, all of us knowing full well that we went months and even a year and longer when we could not do this by order of government edict. Just discovering each other, and sharing tales and ideas, amounts to an act of defiance.

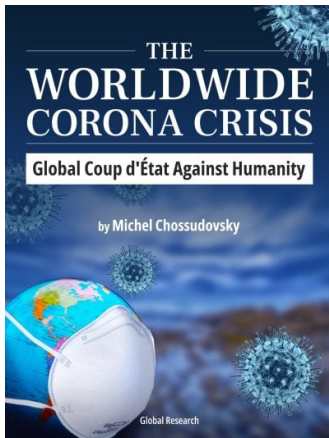
Two Christmases came and went when we were told that meeting and celebrating the season was a biohazard and not recommended. In some places, it was forbidden. It's hard to imagine a more grim policy and it still shocks us to think back and realize that it was all deliberate. One means to reverse this horror is simple: find friends, celebrate together, share stories and ideals, promote peace and love, and work to rebuild what we have lost.

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