

# The Collapse of the Canadian University and the Rise of “The Church of COVID”

By [Prof. Maximilian C. Forte](#)

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*February of 2022 was a particularly dark month, both in Quebec and in Canada generally.*

In Quebec, we had the expansion of the use of “vaccine passports” to large, well-ventilated box stores; a curfew had been imposed in January (and was lifted after nearly three weeks); the demonization of the so-called “unvaccinated” reached a fever pitch, first in [regime media](#), then in government pronouncements—a new tax on the “unvaccinated” was promised, and it was promised to be “significant”. Apparently the solution to [the problem of Omicron defeating the non-vaccines](#), was to blame those who spared themselves the useless and potentially harmful injections.

By the end of the month, the Canadian federal government invoked the Emergencies Act to crush a [popular](#), peaceful protest—the Freedom Convoy. [Bank accounts](#) of hundreds of protesters and donors were frozen; protest leaders were arrested and jailed on trumped up charges, while other protesters were trampled by horses or arrested at gunpoint by policemen outfitted in a manner almost identical to soldiers; and protesters’ private property was seized and/or vandalized by the police. What the dictatorial Justin Trudeau called a “fringe minority” with “unacceptable views,” was accurate only as a description of his own regime, according to multiple surveys (like [this one](#), [that one](#), the [other one](#), and [now this](#)). Everyone in Quebec was subjected to a new round of restrictions: the closure of businesses and churches; schools going back online. As mandated by the federal side of the regime, the “unvaccinated” were not allowed to leave the country, and they were banned from travelling by air or rail within Canada—the only country in the world to do that. An Iron Curtain was slammed down on Canada, and parts of that curtain remain intact. And then we all got Covid thanks to Omicron—for everyone I knew at the university, students and myself included, whether injected or not, the sickness was a total non-event and certainly far less severe than the common cold or a seasonal flu, even for those with multiple comorbidities. Some students were forced to quarantine at home with sick family members, and still did not get sick. All of this upheaval was meant to shield us from catching this?

In this dark, miserable month of [authoritarian aggression](#) against Canadians' human rights and civil liberties, universities remained absolutely silent, because they were absolutely complicit. It is to this point that the following is directed.

On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, [Reinfo Covid Quebec](#) (a very large organization of health professionals, scientists, professors and citizens, numbering more than 10,000 members), organized and hosted a press conference titled, "The Collateral Damage of Government Measures" ("*Dommages collatéraux des mesures gouvernementales*"). The entirety of the professors' panel in which I participated can now only be seen [on Rumble](#) (and Part 1 can be seen [here](#)). The event was mostly in French.

Before I continue, let me thank everyone in Reinfo Covid Quebec for their amazing organizational skills, their dedication, their professionalism, their courage, their high spirits, and their warmth. I thank them also for creating a momentary liberated zone for us: in contravention of government regulations, we met without masks, sitting shoulder to shoulder, laughing and chatting in large groups, for an extended time—no anti-social distancing, no useless breathing obstructions, no fear. In the darkness of February, they offered a warm and welcoming light.

My presentation (the video below), was in English. What follows beneath the video is the longer version of the remarks I had prepared, which appears only in print.

## The Collapse of the Canadian University

When a Canadian university tells a professor in the natural sciences that, "this university does not recognize natural immunity," then we have arrived at the lowest intellectual point in the history of our universities. Natural immunity is a basic biological fact. For it to be struck from recognition gives you just one indication of the assault on science and on academic knowledge committed in the name of a "public health emergency" that was used to justify irrational, capricious, arbitrary, harmful, and discriminatory impositions.

Self-censorship has prevailed in Canadian universities, encouraged by castigating the few who express doubts, and by university administrations that present unsubstantiated monologues that advocate for restrictions and for dubious pharmaceutical products. We are further hampered in Canada by an inadequate number of public intellectuals, while we instead have a surplus of public relations intellectuals with close ties to pharmaceutical companies and to corporate media.

This is a country which has now purged a wide range of scholars in the natural and social sciences, and the humanities, because they expressed dissenting views and stood by the ethics governing their disciplines. Academic freedom is now, de facto, cancelled. Tenure is also, de facto, nullified. Faced with the first real test to their integrity and their ethics, the vast majority of Canadian scholars failed to stand up and speak out.

Rather than serve as a source of diverse perspectives and challenging questions, universities instead fell in line with encouraging mass panic. This conformity has not only damaged public discourse, by taking leave of our duties as the critical conscience of society, it has damaged universities themselves, and I think the damage is now irreparable. University presidents have repeatedly produced unquestioning endorsements of the so-called "vaccines," masking, and social distancing. Universities have internalized the

“vaccine passport” system. Professors have been enlisted to police their students by enforcing mask mandates. Faculty unions have loudly advocated for tougher restrictions, such as mandatory inoculation. This is an extremely dangerous precedent, where one’s place in a university can be cancelled at any time based on one’s health status. Just as dangerous is the Canadian university being conscripted by the state-corporate alliance.

What will remain as a simply inexcusable and unforgivable reality of this period, is that open scientific debate was blocked during what was called a “pandemic”. Asked to rise up to meet history, Canadian academics mostly preferred to stand down. Consequently, the university itself has fallen as a victim of this emergency, with limited prospects for recovery.

## The Rise of the Church of Covid

As an anthropologist, I have asked myself: what is happening here? And why is it happening? I think of religion and ritual, the making of community, and the art of secrecy.

The intense pressure to conform is, it seems, an attempt to cement a community of believers. Strict rules of belonging are imposed, and those who disagree are excluded. This community has invented new rituals to mark it as a community with borders, and to elevate certain knowledge beyond the realm of questioning. Rituals include ones such as “masking,” which as dubious as it is in preventing transmission and infection, is much more useful as a political symbol that is masked as a moral virtue. Masking also diminishes personal identity, which is one of the unstated intentions, while (anti-)social distancing means that this paradoxical community (united by separation) is one that coheres but not within itself—instead it coheres through adhesion to an abstract “common good” (which is neither common, nor good).

This community has invented its own rite of passage: a form of baptism, of purification in the name of salvation, with “the vaccine” worshipped as the saviour.

The high priests of this community—the administrators, the approved scientists—have made their knowledge special and magical by raising it above questioning. This is the role of censorship and even secrecy, in creating subjects and propositions that are taboo. Those who are not anointed and do not follow in the path of the saviour, are the damned.

The alleged common good—said to be imperilled by a dangerous, unclean “Other” who has not been ritually purified through “vaccination”—is a common good that expects tribute to be paid, and without reciprocity to members of the community whose rights have now become conditional privileges. In reality, it is not so much an objective community, as it is a method of extracting tribute, service, and submission—not so much a community as it is an exploitation scheme.

It is surprisingly self-reflective of Pfizer to call its new (not distributed) injectable, *Comirnaty*, in a play on the words for “community” and “mRNA,” for this is a community of devotion and service to mRNA technology. It is an imagined, even imaginary, community that flows from the point of the needle. In reality, actual living communities have been divided if not destroyed with the ritual mandates and restrictions that were ushered in to march the masses into the “vaccine” centres. Whether due to fear or mandates that left no choice, citizens were pressed into service for Pfizer and Moderna—and then they were patronizingly told that “we are all in this together” and condescendingly thanked for “stepping up and doing their duty”. Meanwhile, the massive flow of profits went in one direction only—for

example, in the direction of building a massive new [417-foot-long mega-yacht](#) for Jeff Bezos, for when he is not journeying into outer space.

Writing as a political economist, Professor Fabio Vighi provided a complementary [explanation](#):

“Virus, Vaccine and Covid Pass are the Holy Trinity of social engineering. ‘Virus passports’ are meant to train the multitudes in the use of electronic wallets controlling access to public services and personal livelihood. The dispossessed and redundant masses, together with the non-compliant, are the first in line to be disciplined by digitalised poverty management systems directly overseen by monopoly capital. The plan is to tokenise human behaviour and place it on blockchain ledgers run by algorithms. And the spreading of global fear is the perfect ideological stick to herd us toward this outcome”.

In his new book ([Where Are We Now? The Epidemic as Politics](#). London: ERIS., 2021) the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben outlined some more parallels between Covid pandemicism and religious thought and practice. He argues that, “the transformation we are witnessing today operates through the introduction of a sanitation terror and a religion of health. What, in the tradition of bourgeois democracy, used to be the right to health became, seemingly without anyone noticing, a juridical-religious obligation that must be fulfilled at any cost” (p. 10). Reflecting further on the meanings of this highly leveraged if not outright invented crisis, Agamben points out how “science” has acquired the properties of religion:

“It is as if the religious need that the Church is no longer able to satisfy is groping for a new habitat—finding it in what has already become, in effect, the religion of our time: science. Like any other religion, this faith can produce fear and superstition, or it can be at least used to disseminate them. Never before have we witnessed such a spectacle of divergent and contradictory opinions and prescriptions, typical of religions in times of crisis. These opinions range from the minoritarian heretical position (one that is nonetheless represented by distinguished scientists) that denies the seriousness of the phenomenon, to the orthodox dominant discourse that affirms this same seriousness and yet differs within itself, often radically, on the strategies for facing it. And, as always happens in these cases, some experts (or so-called experts) manage to gain the approval of the monarch, who, as in the times of the religious disputes that divided Christianity, sides with one current or the other according to his own interests, before subsequently imposing his measures” (p. 20).

“The analogy with religion must be read to the letter,” Agamben asserts, adding: “Theologians declared that they could not clearly define God, but in his name they dictated rules of behaviour and burned heretics without hesitation; virologists admit that they do not know exactly what a virus is, but in its name they insist on deciding how human beings should live” (p. 33).

Prof. Douglas Farrow, a colleague at McGill University where he teaches theology and ethics, had much more to say on these issues in his article, “[Enrolled in the Religion of Fear](#)”.

In this New Church of the Eternal Pandemic, where states of emergency act as the crowning religious festivals on the annual calendar, universities train students in the methods of reproducing the authorized, orthodox theology. Dissidents, in some noteworthy cases, are

publicly flogged to send a lesson to others, while boosting the morale of acolytes.

## Update: Punishing Resistance to, and Critique of, the Non-Vaccines

Many dozens (perhaps hundreds) of professors across Canada have been suspended without pay, or terminated outright for refusing to disclose their private and personal medical status, in addition to those who have been suspended and/or terminated because they openly rejected the new non-vaccines. Thousands of students—in Ontario alone—were de-registered from their courses and barred from their campuses.

Before continuing, a note of clarification may still be necessary for some. Why *non-vaccines*? First, because the [CDC changed its definition of “vaccines”](#) in August of 2021, [to accommodate the new products](#) being developed for the market, which did not meet the previous CDC definition of “vaccine”. Second, because these are called [gene therapies](#) in the pharmaceutical industry itself; by the FDA they are [formally referred](#) to as [investigational](#) new drugs; in the legal arena, they are classed as [prototypes](#) by Pfizer itself. Note also that “[emergency use](#)” investigational new drugs are defined by the FDA itself as “[experimental](#)”. We can thus call these products *experimental gene therapies* to be brief, all complaints notwithstanding.

Personally, I know several dozen of these suspended and fired academics, through my membership in [Canadian Academics for Covid Ethics](#). That is where we have met, corresponded, and co-authored some Op-Eds. Separate from CA4CE, I have received correspondence from at least three dozen more professors across Canada, some of which later joined the CA4CE. I will have much more to say about professors’ non-compliance, and the results, in future follow-ups on this site.

For now, I want to direct your attention to [the very latest instance](#) of the New Church of Covid (an ex-university), punishing two professors for publicly criticizing the experimental gene therapies used against Covid, one of whom was injured by taking these products. I am speaking here of Professors Patrick Provost and Nicolas Derome at Laval University. Professor Provost, whom I know, was the more prominent of the two in the media, having authored [a recent article](#) critical of Quebec’s disproportionate response, using the Quebec Health Institute’s own data to show [just how overblown](#) have been the impacts of Covid.

Indeed, [a separate study](#) which was not the subject of controversy, provided evidence of the fact that Quebec had 4,033 excess deaths between March 2020 and October 2021, but reported 11,470 Covid-19 fatalities—almost three times as much: “It’s the biggest gap recorded in Canada during the pandemic”. In [reporting](#) on the same study, it was admitted that, “Quebec doctors included COVID-19 as a cause of death in medical reports more liberally than doctors in other provinces did”. The alleged impacts of Covid were then used by the government to cause real psychological, physiological, economic, and social harms with lockdowns and various other restrictions and mandates. For having challenged the dominant narrative, Patrick Provost’s article was not only removed from the Web by its publisher, he was suspended for eight weeks without pay by Laval University.

Fortunately—and this has been rare in Canada—the [Laval University faculty union](#) has vigorously taken up the cause of both professors. This is plainly a fight about academic freedom. The [Quebec Federation of University Professors](#) has also endorsed their fight. Amazingly, in a sharp departure from its complicit silence, if not support for quashing the academic freedom of dissenters, the [Canadian Association of University Teachers](#) finally felt

compelled to speak out in support of those targeted by Laval.

What makes the matter even more interesting is that the very same Quebec government whose pandemicist narrative has reigned throughout the past two (plus) years, recently passed an Academic Freedom Law ([Bill 32](#)). Many individual faculty and their unions in Quebec protested this law when it was first introduced, and seemed to be running interference for politically “woke” university administrations. Even the FQPPU criticized how the law was drafted and promoted. [Along](#) with the [Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms](#), I instead supported Bill 32, and I did so in a lengthy email on the subject that I sent the Minister. The same Minister of Higher Education who shepherded the law, Danielle McCann, has been forced to come out and [condemn](#) Laval University. Minister McCann then cited the situation at Laval as [evidence that Bill 32 was necessary](#), and on this point she is correct.

We thus have a situation where a law—originally intended to shield professors who used “the N-word” in an academic context and for academic purposes, thus designed to hobble the importation/imitation of US culture wars into Quebec—is instead put to its first test with academic free speech against a narrative pushed by the government itself. Professors Provost and Derome have a straightforward case for grievance, and one which would likely win in the courts if it came to that. Laval University has in the meantime disgraced itself, in prime time, and it has broken the law.

For more on this, see the extensive list of media coverage compiled by Reinfo Covid Quebec on its page dedicated to this case ([scroll to the bottom](#)). One can [read the page in English](#) here. See also Douglas Farrow’s critique: “[A Repressive Political Act—Université Laval rejects academic freedom and does violence to science](#)”. Those who follow Zero Anthropology in [Telegram](#) would have received an abundance of coverage of this case over the past week.

For my part, I was hoping that the message in my video above would not be validated so much further, so close to home, in such short order.

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*Maximilian C. Forte is a professor of anthropology at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. His areas of research and teaching interest are centered in Political Anthropology, with a focus on imperialism, neoliberalism and globalization, nationalism, democracy, and the international political economy of knowledge production. His long-standing research area involves the ethnohistory of Indigenous Peoples in the Lesser Antilles, and a focus on Indigenous resurgence in Trinidad & Tobago and neighbouring nations of the Caribbean.*

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