

The Emperor Has No Clothes: Finding the Courage to Break the Spell

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Global Research, July 21, 2021

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

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To all the silent good people watching our society tear itself in two, this essay is for you.

Those in charge have long since signalled that they have no intention of returning to a liberal democracy founded on the recognition of inalienable individual rights and freedoms. If data were the ingredient required to confront them, they would have folded long ago. They are impervious to data. This isn't about a virus. This is a psychological game and it's all about power and control.

In this Brave New World, the regime will grant temporary conditional privileges tied to virus seasonality, good behaviour, or whatever other conditions they choose to set to achieve the social engineering agenda of the day. Once they opened Pandora's Box to a society based on conditional rights, there is no limit to where their imaginations will take them.

How do we stop this neo-feudal re-imagining of society? How do we play chicken with a regime that appears to hold all the cards? At this point it is clear that regaining our freedom depends entirely on the government losing the support of the crowd. To use the words of Hans Christian Andersen's [timeless folktale from 1837](#), we need to shake our frightened fellow citizens out of their stupor by getting them to see that “*the emperor has no clothes*” but, more importantly, we need everyone who sees it to be willing to say it out loud.

So, in this essay, I am going to dissect the psychology of dissent.

Winning Hearts and Minds - How to Open the Mind to Doubts

Data plays an important role in changing hearts and minds, but only as a secondary ingredient. We are fighting a psychological battle, not an intellectual one.

Data will help those who start to ask questions, but first they need to ask their first question. First there needs to be a seed of doubt. Data will not plant that seed of doubt. Data does not have the power to break the spell.

A frightened mind seeks certainty because certainty feels safe, which is why a frightened mind rejects anything that undermines the feeling of certainty. Uncertainty is scary. This desire for certainty makes people savagely hostile to conflicting data and capable of entertaining the wildest of logical fallacies. The facts simply do not matter to their feelings. People only begin to seek out data *after* the spell begins to break. Something else must first plant that initial seed of doubt.

Uncertainty is uncomfortable so if it cannot be pushed aside, then and only then will the mind enlist rational thought processes to work through the dilemma in order to regain a sense of certainty. That is the psychological game we need to play. We need to create the sense of uncertainty that forces our frightened peers to enlist their rational minds. Once doubt sets in, the data will take them the rest of the way.

Thus, the willingness to look at data is merely the second step along each individual person's journey to recognizing that the emperor has no clothes. Much of our effort in this battle for our freedom has been focused on that second step. More data. But the first step along that path requires planting the initial seed of doubt. **How do you seed doubt without data?**

The simple reality is that this first step is fought with symbolism, with herd psychology, and with the courage to bear the cost of speaking out when others will not. Navigating this first step is the focus of this essay because that is where we are falling short.

To plant a seed of doubt, to help people take that first step, it is not what you say that matters so much as being seen to say it, out loud, in public, in a way that allows you to be identified and counted, and being willing to face the music when the world can see what you really think. And saying it over and over again, relentlessly, until enough voices join in, until the counter chorus can no longer be dismissed as fringe. **Doubt is created by breaking the illusion of consensus.**

This first seed of doubt happens on a deeply subconscious emotional level. There are three different ways that it can happen:

Many only start to ask questions *after* getting their first COVID vaccination. As they begin to feel safe, they regain their ability to think, which gives rise to questions and doubts. It is why the regime is creating a hyperventilating drumbeat about "variants" and stoking hysteria about the unvaccinated. The regime is trying to keep the vaccinated in fear in order to prevent them from regaining their ability to see clearly and think independently.

Doubt can also be created when someone's personal experience doesn't match the propaganda that they've been fed. The regime is fighting that part of the battle for us. When someone is injured by a vaccine, sees a loved one trapped in isolation in a nursing home, or is at risk of losing their business to lockdowns, doubt in the narrative begins to creep in. There is only so much pain that anyone can bear before their certainty in the regime begins to waiver.

And doubt can be created simply by depriving someone of the illusion of consensus. Remember Hans Christian Andersen's folk tale. It was a child that broke the illusion because it was unafraid to say out loud that the emperor's fine gown didn't exist, that he was wearing nothing at all. Data didn't break the illusion. All it took was a pointed finger, a well-timed laugh, *and the courage to speak out.*

Doubt creates conflicting emotions that can only be resolved by enlisting the rational mind. Doubt leads the mind to seek out data, not the other way around. The regime is doing everything it can to prevent the fearful from thinking. This is a psychological war.

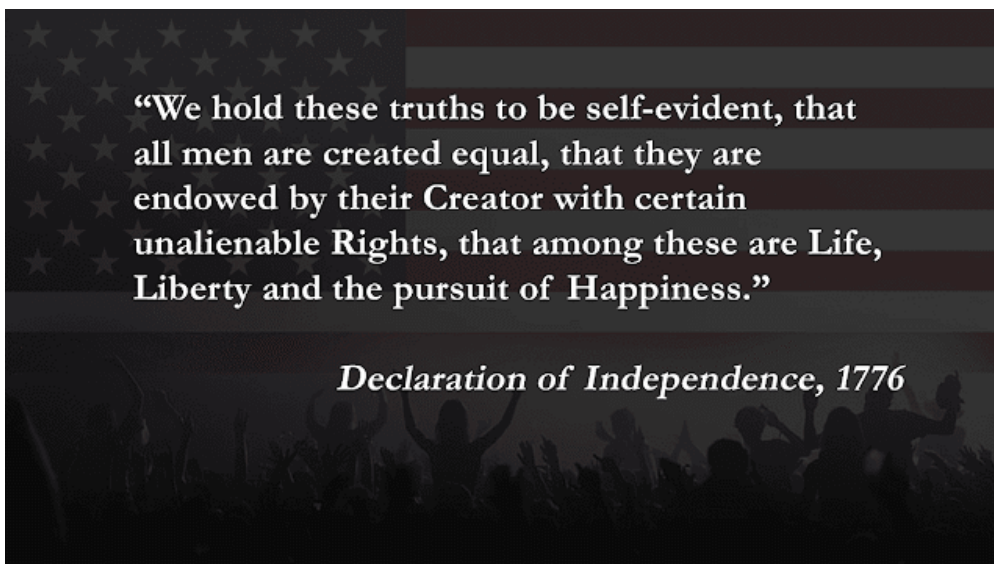
A Glimpse of Two Futures

The outcome of this psychological war will determine the world that you, your children, and your grandchildren will live in. So, before I dig deeper into the psychology of how to win this war, it is worth reminding ourselves of what is at stake because it is easy to lose sight of the big picture when we are so focused on debunking government lies and fighting vaccine passports, masks, and social distancing restrictions. The courage to make a difference in this psychological war comes from understanding the long game that is being played.

This is a war about the role of government. It is about your freedom to think, to speak, and to ask questions, and about whether your individual autonomy is downgraded to a conditional privilege or whether it remains a right. It is a war about whether you are to remain a citizen or become a subject. It is about who owns you, you or the state.

The question at the forefront of this psychological battle, accelerated by the lens of COVID, is about whether we will remain a society based on legal equality and inalienable rights or whether, in the name of safety, equity, and political correctness, we will allow ourselves to be reduced to a society of masters and servants, as was the norm throughout much of human history, with the masters granting or withdrawing conditional privileges to pursue whatever they perceive as the greater good.

Herdsmen and their cattle. Shepherds and their flock. Those who wear the imperial mantle of responsibility for the wellbeing of the herd versus those with the obligation to endure, muzzled and under a yoke, for the “greater good”.



Citizens have a voice in the rules they live by and a responsibility to take care of themselves. Cattle get fed, sheltered, herded, vaccinated, prodded onto cattle trucks, milked, and harvested. For some, freedom from responsibility has a certain appeal, but it is anything but liberty. Real freedom is not a license to do what you want to others or to take what you need from others. Real freedom is a restraint that prevents others from doing things to you and prevents others from taking what they need from you. And vice versa. Freedom draws a line between people that no-one has a right to cross. That is the freedom

that is being lost.

In a free and open society, *freedom is the greater good*. So, in a sense, what is playing out on a grand scale is a global referendum on freedom. The consequences of this referendum will be with us long after the virus fades away. In this referendum, you don't get to cast your vote at the polls. Your choice to speak out or stay silent in the face of the naked emperor is your vote. Both options come with terrible risks: the consequences of being bulldozed by the regime if you speak out versus the servile future that is waiting for you if you don't.

There is no option to simply sit on the sidelines of this referendum. Silence is a choice. Those who choose silence are, in effect, signalling that their freedom is worth less to them than the discomfort of speaking out and facing the consequences. They are, in effect, legitimizing the regime's use of intimidation by showing that it works. Yet many will nonetheless opt for the perceived safety of the sidelines out of fear of repercussions. That fear is justified and understandable. The penalties are very real in this game. But you are either swept along by the stampede or you dig your heels in. Those are your two choices. Freedom on one side. Servitude on the other.

Your disapproval about all that is going on around you is irrelevant unless you say it out loud and take a stand. Visibility. Saying it on social media from behind an anonymous avatar achieves nothing. Letters, petitions, and press releases made by associations do not speak to the subconscious minds of our frightened peers. They will not look at them. These avenues are all in the same realm as the data. They will be dismissed until *after* the spell begins to break.

To have a psychological impact, you have to voice your dissent in person, out there in the real world where the risk of repercussions is real. *Where you can make eye contact while you are doing it*. At work, at home, at school, at church, at the gym, at the mall, and out on the street. You have to say it where those who disagree with you can see you saying it. You have to be the little boy who stood in front of the crowd and pointed at the emperor's lack of clothes. That is how democracy works in its rawest form when the institutions of liberal democracy cease to function.

Words are *not* violence. Words are 100% peaceful, no matter how much you disagree with them or how much you are offended by them. But censorship in any form *is* a form of implied violence because, without your voice, you are held hostage by your censor and have no peaceful means of self-defence.

A liberal democracy cannot function in an atmosphere of censorship. Brute force begins with censorship. Allowing yourself or others to be silenced ushers in a world where the only means of self defense is through brute force. That is what is currently being normalized under the guise of saving the world from COVID.

When speech is allowed to be silenced, whether through cancel culture mobbing, Big Tech censorship, or outright legal attacks like those currently being attempted by the Canadian government (i.e. bill C-10 and bill C-36), it raises the cost of self-defence beyond a threshold that most people are willing or even capable of bearing.

History shows that once the norms of a liberal democracy give way to brute force politics, even if the regime does change hands, those that emerge on top are themselves rarely champions of freedom and tolerance. The only way to prevent brute force politics from

becoming normalized is if the good people refuse to shut up. So, this is not just a war against bad people with bad ideas, it is equally a war to defend the only system ever invented that gives citizens autonomy over their own bodies, minds, and voices, along with the mechanism to defend that autonomy through peaceful means.

That is why the Founding Fathers made freedom of speech the very first right when they drafted the US Bill of Rights. Peaceful resolution of conflict in a civil society depends on everyone having absolute freedom of speech. In a civil society, all other rights flow from this right. Without freedom of speech, all that remains as a tool to defend yourself is brute force. Our voices are our last defense as the institutions of liberal democracy fall away. Use your voices while you still can because, if freedom of speech is lost, we will be ushering in a world governed by brute force and the tyranny will be real no matter which side gains controls over the levers of power.

A right comes with the responsibility to exercise that right when your or anyone else's rights are under attack. Rights derive their legitimacy only through the willingness of citizens to defend them, for themselves and for each other. If the willingness to speak your mind in public is missing, you have no rights.

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