

Free-Thinkers vs. No-Thinkers: The Ultimate Political Division

By [Dr. Emanuel Garcia](#)

Global Research, July 17, 2023

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

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My political awakening came rather late in life, sometime in my mid-twenties. Before then I eschewed politics and regarded it as something sleazy, mundane and rather vicious, at every level. I preferred the world of art and letters and scholarship, though I eventually came to realize that politics played as much as part in that world as in our general practical one.

I recall, for example, participating in a symposium about Freud and his famous analysis of Dora. It was the case that marked Freud's discovery of a phenomenon called 'transference' - discovery Freud made *in retrospect*. At the time he was conducting the analysis he was in the dark, and only upon review years later did he realize why the treatment had run amiss. The major presenter, a well-known and highly regarded scholar, gave his address and astonishingly enough accused Freud of malfeasance because he had neglected to understand what had not yet been known.

When it came my turn to offer remarks I noted that Freud could hardly be faulted for missing something that had yet to be discovered. By revisiting his work and questioning its problems he happened upon an insight that would have profound consequences for any psychotherapeutic treatment, and should have rightly been applauded.

The presenter well knew this, as I myself knew from his previous scholarly publications, yet he chose to play to a university audience that wanted to hear about Freudian misogyny rather than Freudian revelation. I had been invited to publish my remarks in the proceedings of the symposium, only to find that, shortly afterwards, having clearly cited the facts about the matter, I was informed that the invitation had been withdrawn.

It was politics, albeit politics at a level that held little consequence for the general well-being of people - nobody would starve or die as a result of these obscure political decisions - though I dare say the academic luster of the presenter might have been at stake had he decided to speak truth instead of pandering to what was fashionable. I didn't know it then

but it was 'wokeness' rearing its incipient head way back in the late 1990s. I must say that it was a very hard pill to swallow for someone who believed in the ideals of factual scholarship in psychoanalysis.

When I came into a greater political awareness that comprised the machinations of State and the complex electoral system that regulated daily life and the general direction of the country, I was firmly in the camp of what was called the 'left': all for free speech, free expression, equal opportunity, equal playing fields, equal justice regardless of privilege, and peace. I was most definitely against bellicose American adventurism and exploitation in Vietnam and the Middle East and one of the reasons I decided to emigrate to New Zealand during the Bush II years was the incomprehensibly savage invasion of Iraq, a country that had been deemed culpable for 9/11 by propaganda and that had been declared to possess the infamous 'weapons of mass destruction' it never had.

I never liked the facile distinctions of left and right, politically speaking, or liberal and conservative. I considered myself primarily an American 'constitutionalist', and the more I monitored the declarations of State the more deception I perceived. I wondered why, for example, President Bush was not a forthcoming testifier for the 9/11 Commission, among other things, and why wildly unconstitutional measures via the felicitously named 'Patriot Act' had been adopted without a peep to restrict our rights to privacy and protections against search and seizure. When I returned to the States for a visit in 2009 I was appalled by the loudspeaker announcements at Penn Station in New York, where I had spent many an hour awaiting the familiar Amtrak train to Philadelphia, advising people to be alert to unaccompanied baggage and to report any suspicious behavior to the authorities - notices blared every five minutes in what I imagined had been commonplace in Soviet Russia.

In our covid era, however, the dualistic political distinctions have turned out to be both confusing and irrelevant as new fault lines are created, fault lines that are themselves of dubious utility save for simplification and division. What I mean is that so many people - friends and family - who shared my political positions in the past - environmentalists, pacifists, anti-authoritarianists and, dare I say, even 'conspiracy theorists' - are now on another side, the side of mandates, 'the science', war-mongering and centralized control.

When the Canadian truckers had their bank accounts frozen they applauded. When yet another booster was recommended they lined up. When social media channels were disabled or otherwise censored for opinions that went against the mainstream narratives, they didn't spring to protest. When those of us lost our jobs because we refused to sacrifice bodily sovereignty, they kept silent. And as the evidence about the danger and uselessness of the Jobs mounts, they turn their heads. Most important, in the face of State lawlessness that seeks to curtail basic rights, they keep their heads down.

As the tide goes out the detritus left in the wake of the covid tsunami delineates, roughly, two factions: those in support of globalized central control, and those who struggle for some semblance of individual and local autonomy.

The hard part is figuring out how the freedom-and-peace-loving 'left' has been transformed into a fascistic force that is all about control - a control that reaches down into our very molecules and into our thoughts, it seems.

Was it there all along?

I think perhaps it shows that those convenient political labels are superficial emblems that tell us nothing about the essence of the very people they purport to describe, an essence that has now been sublimated into a far more accurate descriptive division between free-thinking and no-thinking.

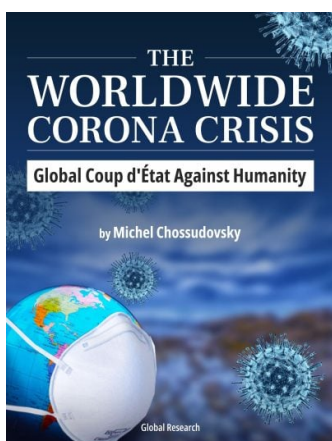
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Dr. Garcia is a Philadelphia-born psychoanalyst and psychiatrist who emigrated to New Zealand in 2006. He has authored articles ranging from explorations of psychoanalytic technique, the psychology of creativity in music (Mahler, Rachmaninoff, Scriabin, Delius), and politics. He is also a poet, novelist and theatrical director. He retired from psychiatric practice in 2021 after working in the public sector in New Zealand. Visit his substack at <https://newzealanddoc.substack.com/>

He is a regular contributor to Global Research.

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by Michel Chossudovsky

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