

*Messianic Mad Men, Medicine, and the Media War  
on Empirical Reality: Discourse Analysis  
of Mainstream Covid-19 Propaganda*

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**ABSTRACT**

This article critically examines the emerging global war on pathogens mimicking the Global War on Terror (GWOT). We draw upon the history of recent wars and the fear-driven narratives aimed at nudging the public toward uncritical acceptance of the new emerging social and economic global order. We adopt Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky's 'Propaganda Model' to describe how mainstream media perform in manufacturing consent to policies that tighten control over populations and degrade rights, agency, and sovereignty. Here we consider the efforts of globalist political actors who seek to co-opt or influence political institutions around the world and position themselves as unelected rulers of an emerging authoritarian order. We argue that agenda-setting media are predisposed to serve elite interests that shape news coverage, bound public debate, and obscure new forms of warfare behind the smokescreen of a manufactured Global War on Pathogens (GWOP). We introduce critical analysis and alternative perspectives, largely marginalized by the mainstream, on the hidden conflicts of interest involved in the demands for full social compliance.

**Keywords:** *pandemic, Covid-19, vaccination, experiment, mainstream media, integration propaganda, agitation propaganda, Propaganda Model, narrative control, GWOT, GWOP, fear, perception management*

**Introduction**

In their seminal work *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of Mass Media*, Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky observe that the mass media:

serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace. It is their function to amuse, entertain, and inform, and to inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs, and codes of behavior that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society. In a world of concentrated wealth and major conflicts of class interest, to fulfill this role requires systematic propaganda." (1988, p. 1)

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, during the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, millions of people around the world registered their rejection of the systematic propaganda campaigns waged against them in the mainstream media (Tharoor, 2013). Unanswered questions about government-corporate conflicts of interest in acquiring control over natural resources in the Middle East (Friedman, 2003) moved citizens in major cities around the world to protest the impending Western belligerence. In keeping with the sorts of predictions researchers can make with Herman and Chomsky's model, mainstream media responses in the West downplayed the significance of this unparalleled popular resistance, either ignoring it entirely, or marginalizing any form of dissent against state violence as unpatriotic (or irresponsible).<sup>1</sup>

In every manufactured crisis since then there has also appeared the necessity of mainstream media, its owners and sponsors, to engineer mass consent for new policies of warfare (BMGF, 2020), and to deploy prominent personalities to help “inculcate individuals with the beliefs and codes of behavior that will integrate them” (Herman and Chomsky, 1988, p. 1) into what now appears to be an emerging global system of techno-feudalism (Escobar, 2020). We describe this unfolding order as a state of social, economic, and political development maintained by a network of transnational elites with interlocking interests in the use of technology as a force for reproducing power and establishing control over a growing global neo-serfdom. Winter Oak sees in this so-called Great Reset, “unimaginable levels of fascistic surveillance of our lives, particularly in our role as wage slaves” (2020). Michael Rectenwald observes that the propaganda supporting the Great Reset narrative is just “a public relations campaign shrouded under a cloak of inevitability” (2021). Official propaganda campaigns that have emerged since the outbreak of the current global crisis — supporting unscientific and unnecessary lockdowns (Bagus, 2021; Miltimore, 2020); improper uses of RT-PCR tests (Engelbrecht and Demeter, 2020; Mahese, 2020; Surkova, et al. 2020; Cassels, 2020; Jaafar et al., 2020); policies of mandatory masking (bin-Reza et al., 2012); unscientific social distancing (Alexander, 2021; Gant, 2020), and compulsory testing and vaccination of populations — have raised serious questions, hitherto unaddressed by mainstream media, about the legitimacy of famous figures to speak publicly with the pretense of unassailable expertise on such issues. Bill Gates for example has ascended to what appears, in the global mainstream theatre, to be a new position of global human health czar, impervious to critical inquiry, even as ever-increasing numbers of concerned citizens appear in the streets resisting these “draconian lockdowns” (Rectenwald, 2021) and questioning Gates' true identity and motives (Fenn, 2020; Hopkins, 2020; May, 2020). The mainstream systematically ignore legitimate questions. Is Gates merely a socially awkward computer programmer; a beneficent philanthropist (Lancet, 2009; Harris, 2009); an aspiring media mogul (Schwab, 2020); a “farmland king” (Manskar, 2021); a population control zealot (Newman, 2020); a malevolent misanthrope (Frank, 2009); or an insatiable profiteer (Braugh 2019)?

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<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey Klaehn (2002) points out that Propaganda Model (PM) shows how the media routinely make selection choices that establish and define ‘worthy’ and ‘unworthy’ causes. Herman and Chomsky, he notes, charge that news coverage devoted to government (state) policy in general (foreign and domestic) by the elite, agenda-setting media is typically ‘framed’ in order to effectively legitimize and facilitate the (geo)political-economic interests of dominant elites. The PM, thus, contends that media content is often organized both to manufacture consent and to prevent opposition to corporate hegemony.

Beyond the business of maintaining Microsoft's software hegemony, concerns over its founder's growing role in human and public affairs have been raised over the past two decades. If we consider that it is "the largest charitable foundation in the world, and its influence in the media ... growing so vast, there is reason to worry about the media's ability to do its job" (Fortner, 2010). Anderson Cooper's query in a November 2020 CNN interview typifies the overt and general unwillingness of corporate forms of journalism to treat these issues with essential balance or critical inquiry. Gates responds to Cooper's softball question about how vaccines will get into the arms of the masses: "... it's possible we'll use the same sort of drive-thru approach that we do for testing ..." (Gates, 2020b). For a public already on edge, there is a lack of requisite gravitas in images of a smirking Gates attempting to reassure people that unproven vaccines, reportedly capable of altering human DNA<sup>2</sup>, should be as easily acquired as a Big Mac and fries at the McDonald's drive-thru. In his position as apparent figurehead for various international heads of state and increasingly powerful international organizations (Martens and Seitz, 2015, p. 39), Bill Gates appears to many to be a "wolf in sheep's clothing" (Dongen et al., 2018) inspired by a spirit of "ruthless greed" (Savage, 2019), and a "twisted Messiah complex" (Guest, 2020). While outward appearances can be deceiving, Gates' interests appear conspicuously at odds with those of his global audience. As he leads a chorus of media stars (Davis, 2020) who parrot his claims that this is "the new normal" and that "we're all in this together" (Lichfield 2020), there appears to be a steadily advancing growth in technocratic feudalism that represents a worldwide war on civil rights and human sovereignty and, for many, not simply their way of life but life itself (Shimabukuro et al. 2021)<sup>3</sup>.

We aim in this essay to disentangle the camouflaged and complex connections among the "funding sources" (Herman and Chomsky, 1988) for this new war, and the ceaseless calls from elites for compulsory vaccinations — material breaches of the Nuremberg Code (Schuster, 1997) and the Declaration of Helsinki (DOH, 2018) — as being the only remedy the public is relentlessly conditioned to accept. We adopt Herman and Chomsky's model of the political economy of the mass media which, we argue, can serve as a starting point for deconstructing strategies of elite deceit often delivered with a wink and a "smile" and specious claims of goodwill toward the masses (Chumley, 2020a). Our aim is to explicate leading deceptions posing as normality framed by today's mainstream media (Lutz, 2012) in support of a frankly genocidal Malthusian belief — now 222 years old — that earth is overpopulated and in desperate need of population reduction (Urban, 2015;

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<sup>2</sup> Detailed analyses of mRNA vaccines appear in (a) Corbett, K. S., Flynn, B., Foulds, K. E., et al., 2020. Evaluation of the mRNA-1273 Vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 in Nonhuman Primates. *N. Engl. J. Med.* 383, 1544–1555.

<https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMoa2024671>; (b) Yadav, R., Parihar, R.D., Dhiman, U., Dhamija, P., Upadhyay, S.K., Imran, M., Behera, S.K., Prasad, T.S.K., 2021. Docking of FDA Approved Drugs Targeting NSP-16, N-Protein and Main Protease of SARS-CoV-2 as Dual Inhibitors. *Biointerface Res. Appl. Chem.* 11, 9848–9861.

<https://doi.org/10.33263/BRIAC113.98489861>, or (c) Tenpenny and Mikovits at <https://www.drtenpenny.com/podcasts-interviews>.

<sup>3</sup> Consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website for the latest VAERS spreadsheet data showing a picture of injuries and deaths from COVID-19 'vaccines', high numbers reported despite the fact that most commonly go unreported.

Levich, 2019). We draw upon a brief history of the propaganda techniques utilized to prepare the minds of the public to acquiesce to the novel bio-security policies coming into place and how these methods securitize general acceptance of the broader plans of those in power. Our analysis extends the argument, elaborated by Piers Robinson, that “understanding how power is exercised through communication is central to understanding the socio-political world around us” (Robinson, 2019). To grasp this level of understanding, we interrogate the “complex networks of power through which information is shaped and manipulated [to reveal] “deception, incentivization, and coercion” (Robinson, 2019).

## Rationale

The mainstream media lent unquestioning support to every aspect of the official 9/11 narrative, effectively serving as a propaganda arm of the establishment (Hughes 2020; Chossudovsky, 2005). Since clearer patterns of mainstream media disinformation have appeared with increasing frequency in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, it is reasonable to assess the leading narratives surrounding the present Covid-19 crisis for the existence of similar techniques in propaganda that might serve to cover corporate and government conflicts of interest. Jacques Ellul’s descriptions are helpful in parsing the major forms. In aiming to move people from mere resentment toward revolt, agitation propaganda is deployed not only by organized opposition to established power, but also by governments against their own citizens (Ellul, 1965/1973, p. 71). Agitation propaganda is often seen as subversive due to its common associations with destruction of an established order, rebellion, or war. Its influence, as political spectacle, has been seen throughout history as elected leaders (or subversives) use it to rally support for their particular cause. As it naturally attracts the most attention, the more overt form of agitation propaganda is more visible and widespread (Ellul, 1965/1973, p. 71).

In contrast, integration propaganda (adjusting the masses to desired patterns of thought and behavior) is, as Ellul points out, focused on achieving social conformity. Since it is no longer “sufficient [or apparently necessary in the present day and age] to obtain a transitory political act [like voting], one needs total adherence to society’s established truths and behavioral patterns,” and, “the more perfectly uniform, the stronger its power and effectiveness” (Ellul, 1965/1973, p. 74-5). Just as Anthony Fauci remains nearly omnipresent in mass media, for example, agitating public fears of the microbial menace and disrupting age-old traditions of social interaction, Cass Sunstein<sup>4</sup> also deploys cognitive and social psychology research to “fight against Covid-19: vaccine hesitancy” (2020) and to integrate skeptical members of society into the program of receiving their shots without question. Thus, as Celia Farber points out, “Fear is the driver of this weaponized paranormal virology [and] the media’s Modus Operandi ... to scare people, even to the point of death” (2020). Similar rhetorical practices in integrating and agitating the public to war (Cayley 2020) against a declared common enemy also appear in recent history. With the purposeful repetition of “war” as a

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<sup>4</sup> Among the primary roles Cass Sunstein assumes as a lawyer and academic, his latest appointment is Chair of the Technical Advisory Group on behavioral insights and science for health for the World Health Organization.

rhetorical trope, both George W. Bush and Ronald Reagan found significant success in agitating the public to respond positively to, respectively, the War on Terror and the War on Drugs. Although the overt labelling of these propaganda campaigns has receded significantly from the public discourse, the underlying fear-driven narratives that support them persist in the currents of yet another major conflict we identify as the Global War on Pathogens (GWOP). In March 2020, then President Donald Trump referred to Covid-19 as an “invisible enemy ... that a month ago nobody ever thought about” (Trump, 2020) — even while the prior and well-publicized actions of Anthony Fauci (Guterl, 2020; Lin, 2020), Bill Gates, and their fellow cohorts belied these claims. It should be noted that in 2001 equally mystified members of the Bush Administration, claiming ignorance of “any reports ... that planes might be used as weapons,” produced the same rhetorical patterns of ignorance when Condoleezza Rice claimed that nobody, “could have predicted that these people would take an airplane and slam it into the World Trade Center” (Rice, 2004).

The public is reminded, at present, through mainstream media channels that the new, “virus can have more powerful consequences than any terrorist action,” and that “if the world doesn’t want to wake up and consider this virus as Public Enemy number 1,” we’ll never “learn ... our lessons” (Ghebreyesus, 2020). Major purveyors of mass “fear porn” (Pattison, 2020), however, can only be effective if historical events can be protected from the inquiring gaze of the public. In an October 2019 “simulation of a corona pandemic conducted by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the World Economic Forum (WEF) (progenitors of the Great Reset), and Johns Hopkins University (Häring, 2020), a major role-playing exercise codenamed Event 201 appeared uncannily similar to other exercises that seem intended to manipulate public opinion more than attend to real threats. The events of 9/11, likewise, featured numerous unique and complex gaming exercises both leading up to and commencing on the very same day of the terrorist hijackings. U.S. officials confirmed that “scriptwriters’ for the drills included the idea of hijacked aircraft being used as weapons” (Komarov and Squitieri, 2004).

The GWOP, we contend, has necessitated maximal control over empirical reality arising from extreme conflicts of interest between messenger and audience. The war is a worldwide operation in which “vested interests are disguised by ostensibly independent groups” (Bakir et al., 2018) moving to subdue natural rights to “human sovereignty, agency, privacy” (Broudy and Arakaki, 2020) and dignity, so as to impose upon populations a global political agenda of “lock step’, top-down, social control” (Engdahl, 2020). Posing as global struggles against a shared enemy, i.e., “we’re all in this together” (Beer, 2020), these wars serve to maximize the wealth<sup>5</sup> and fortify the status and positions of the global power elite (Phillips, 2018, p. 29)<sup>6</sup> by dispossessing the masses of their civil liberties

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<sup>5</sup> Rupert Neate cites a “report by Swiss bank UBS found that billionaires increased their wealth by more than a quarter (27.5%) at the height of the crisis from April to July, just as millions of people around the world lost their jobs or were struggling to get by on government schemes” (2020).

<sup>6</sup> A recent study conducted by Columbia Journalism Review assessing Bill Gates’ influence over major (inter)national corporate media shows that Gates enjoys influence over ‘the major hierarchies and organizations of modern society’ (Schwab 2020).



and, ultimately, their capacity to resist the ever-expanding programs of oppression originally codified in the USA PATRIOT Act (Evans, 2002) — an insidious euphemistic designation.

Until Covid-19 restrictions came into place, the closest Western liberal democracies have come to living under full-scale martial law was the sweeping curtailment of civil liberties which the Patriot Act precipitated. While the battles in this present war rage across the world, those claiming to have difficulty seeing them unfold might be willfully blind, too distracted by mainstream media's manifold deceptions, or too numbed by their own material comforts to care. As we noted earlier, Robinson discusses the crucial need to understand how deception, incentivization, and coercion conceal the complex networks of power that shape information disseminated to the public (2019).

We observed the hegemonic forces of “organized persuasive communication” (Bakir et al. 2018) at work in the earliest stages of the Covid-19 information war. As a benefactor of Gates' donations at Imperial College London, Professor Neil Fergusson was the earliest leading proponent of lock-downs. The pandemic modeling produced by his research cohort predicted “that tens of millions would die,” — estimates that Gates himself had prophetically pointed to in various public talks in preceding years (Carras, 2020). Fergusson's predictions, though “highly flawed” (Dayaratna, 2020), have proven to be extremely valuable to political power throughout the world where lock-downs have become useful tools of economic and population control. Perhaps Upton Sinclair's wry comment on incentivization and its effects on human behavior still stand as instructive: “It's difficult to get a man to understand the truth when his wage packet depends upon him not understanding it” (Sinclair, 1935/1994, p. 109).

## Public Discourse in the Current COVID Lockdown

Damien Downing, President of the British Society of Environmental Medicine, offered an insightful observation about “Governments [that] like epidemics just the same as they like war .... It's a chance to impose their will on us and get us all scared so that we huddle together and do what we're told” (Downing, 2020)<sup>7</sup>. Vera Sharav appends the view that, “For autocrats and others, Coronavirus is a chance to grab even more power” (2020). Their contention suggests that there is some presupposed understanding in centers of elite global power that accepts as natural a permanent state of antagonism between rulers and the ruled when manipulation, coercion, or force is needed to enact controversial government plans and policies. While such arguments might appear to be in keeping with the fascist medical regime established by Dr. Mengele, practitioners of medical ethics at major universities today have suggested that such a “moral enhancement” could be made compulsory or be administered secretly, perhaps in the water supply (Crutchfield, 2020). Dr. Crutchfield's clever suggestion, however, may cause people to wonder whether he had been inspired by the WWII experiments of IG Farben on “human guinea pigs” (Bernstein 1945, p. 7).

Since the reported emergence of Covid-19 in Wuhan, public discourse in the West has featured clear signifiers of this sort of antagonism and tension. With the increasing frequency of banishment

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<sup>7</sup> While originally expressed during an interview with Al Jazeera, the full interview is no longer available online. The content of the remarks here were confirmed, however, through subsequent direct communication with Dr. Downing on 25 September 2020.

against dissident voices (Curtin, 2021); growing censorship carried out by corporate media (Greenwald, 2020); over the Internet (Feierstein, 2020) on Facebook (Ahmari, 2020; Moore, 2021); Twitter (Nelson, 2020; Peek, 2020); and YouTube (Chumley, 2020b; Lanum, 2021); and the manipulation of search results by Google (Epstein, 2016; Myers, 2020), all meant to bound public debate, we see a growing body of empirical evidence that an information war on publics is afoot. To maintain optimum levels of fear and panic, the leading corporate platforms that host and manage public discourse must filter out dissenting views on government suspensions of civil liberties (Damato, 2020); the planned destruction of paper currency (the purported carrier of Covid-19) (Kelley, 2020); the planned electronic implants (Savin, 2020) and biometric health passports (Burt, 2019); and the new bio-secure economy (Citizen, 2020) from which recalcitrant, critically aware members of the global populous will be exiled.

We see something at work today where communication that had once developed through dialectical exchanges has, since 9/11, been suppressed, distorted, or erased by pervasive state oppression and police actions that silence dissenting views while maintaining “the necessary illusions” (Chomsky, 1989) that democracy and the rule of law still matter. Routine maintenance of this pretense has done profound damage to public perception. What has developed in the vacuum of impotent representative democracy is Entrapment Terror — the mental effect of routine exposure to a 24/7 corporate news cycle of psychological operations against the masses, weaponizing the language of terror and trapping news consumers in a near-blinding state of fear. It is a paralyzing strain of terror aimed at thwarting any potential opening for rational dialogues grounded in logic. By doing so, it disables the masses from organizing to assert their natural rights and from expressing openly any coherent alternatives to the status quo. Bertrand Russell summarized the limitations of logic in the dialectical argument thus:

If you compare a speech of Hitler’s with a speech of (say) Edmund Burke, you will see what strides have been made in the art since the eighteenth century. What went wrong formerly was that people had read in books that man is a rational animal, and framed their arguments on this hypothesis. We now know that limelight and a brass band do more to persuade than can be done by the most elegant train of syllogisms. It may be hoped that in time anybody will be able to persuade anybody of anything if he can catch the patient young and is provided by the State with money and equipment. (1951, p. 27)

The emotionally agitating calls for war in mainstream media since 9/11 have been repurposed for this present campaign against COVID-19 as society’s techno-guardians dazzle the masses with their new state-funded (bio)technologies (CHD, 2020b). One example, funded by the Gates Foundation, is a call for “ink that can be safely embedded in the skin alongside the vaccine itself, [which is] only visible using a special smartphone camera app and filter” (Tangermann, 2019). Such are the highly efficient (bio)technologies, reminiscent of IBM’s high-tech data tools used in Nazi concentration camps (Black, 2012, p. 8), imposed upon every member of humanity in the name of safety and security, integrating the natural and biological with the synthetic in service to the hyper-rational demands of war. Alex de Tocqueville’s 19<sup>th</sup> Century comments are instructive. Of Democratic Despotism, he observed that, “it does not destroy, it prevents things from being born; it does not tyrannize, it hinders, compromises, enervates, extinguishes, dazes, and finally reduces each nation to nothing more than a herd of timid and industrious animals of which the government is the shepherd” (Tocqueville, 1838/1945, p. 663). In flouting one of the “major achievements of 20th century science, gradually emerging in the 1920s and then becoming ever more refined throughout the 20th century” (Tucker, 2020), the World Health Organization re-defined “herd immunity” to fit

the demands, evidently, of the emerging bio-secure economy. Before November 2020, “herd immunity” meant “indirect protection from an infectious disease that happens when a population is immune either through vaccination or immunity developed through previous infection.” After November 2020, the definition of “herd immunity” suddenly morphed into “a concept used for vaccination, in which a population can be protected from a certain virus if a threshold of vaccination is reached.” Clearly, contemporary life necessitates tighter control over the process of defining and redefining keywords for the war we are enjoined to struggle in.

Danielle Allen’s headline declares that America needs to be on a war footing (Allen, 2020), reminding her readers that we are all on the frontline and the securitization of public fear has now evolved from the GWOT into the GWOP — a struggle in which we must all be engaged. The intended rhetorical effects are multiple: to preoccupy the mind with the threat of an overwhelming menace that diverts attention away from the controlled demolition of democracy and the global economy and, thus, prevents people from awakening and tending to their own class struggles and impending servitude. It is intended to mobilize not just the military, but the entire general public as frontline combatants in the battle for national/global security. “All of these emotions, especially fear, whip people up into a state of alarm, and they become angry and almost evangelical about what they believe,” says Jen Senko. “It’s like a disease infecting millions of people around the country” (Senko, 2016).

As in any other shared societal struggle against a common enemy, the public mind must be properly conditioned, regimented and, as Edward Bernays noted, universally and continuously occupied, “every bit as much as an army regiments the bodies of its soldiers” (1928, p. 25) with optimal levels of fear so that the projected sacrifice of bodies will be judged as necessary and justified. We observe in mainstream propaganda today the clear regimentation of the public mind consistently seeking to sell people new policies that demand increasingly more sacrifices in support for this new war. There is, furthermore, a significant role played in the control of wealth held by figures such as Gates and Zuckerberg who make extensive use of it to shape the ongoing narratives. This practice reveals key aspects of the free market model as understood and applied by the small collections of people with the power and privilege to reproduce and invest capital. An historical example illustrates this contemporary interrelationship. Before Woodrow Wilson submitted the nation’s sovereignty to private transnational banking interests in 1913, he famously noted in 1907:

Since trade ignores national boundaries, and the manufacturer insists on having the world as a market, the flag of this nation must follow him, and the doors of the nations which are closed against him must be battered down. Concessions obtained by financiers must be safeguarded by ministers of state, even if the sovereignty of unwilling nations be outraged in the process. (Wilson quoted in Harvey, 2013, p. 102)

While Wilson, an early architect of the World Health Organization (WHO), had to engage with the likes of the Carnegies, Rockefellers and Hearsts, the giants of this present (bio)technological age, Bezos, Zuckerberg, Ellison and Gates, rule with the same sort of influence. Since the fora of modern social communication and interaction are increasingly concentrated in the hands of these tech barons, they now assume the role of the “control groups” (Chomsky 1988) previously filled solely by the banking elites. As such, they can now commission the manufacturing processes of public consent for crisis after crisis. Advertisers purchase access to audiences to sell us points of view that serve their aims, which are always focused on higher revenues, raising the value of stocks for their investors, and attending to their growing need for personal security. It should be noted that



Klaus Schwab, an early architect of the WEF had coined a new term, “stakeholder capitalism,” to camouflage the old practice of “shoveling money to ... shareholders and ... executives at the expense of customers, employees, the environment, and society as a whole (Denning, 2020). Having “invested ten-billion dollars on vaccinations over the past two decades,” as part of his personal intervention on public health, Bill Gates notes to seeing a 20-to-1 gain in profits, “better than anything else” (Belvedere, 2019) and, thus, illustrates the depths of his investment in this transnational cartel. History shows corollary patterns. In the 1930s, decorated U.S. Marine General Smedley D. Butler revealed the extent to which military operations were conducted to maximize industry profits (Butler, 1935), so it is vital that citizens ask today who the principal profiteers are in this global scheme.

To grasp a greater sense of what people are facing, we must return to recent history when a contingent of transnational techno-elites convened in 2016 at the United Nations to participate in the launch of a new initiative known as ID2020<sup>8</sup>. Iain Davis argues that the term “elite” is, in fact, a misnomer for a “technocratic parasite class” (2020) that uses its access to capital reproduction, investment, and media production to manipulate, acquire control over human capital, and socially engineer citizens. Its agenda featured a list of longstanding targets of its technocratic stakeholders (Bank and Buckman, 2002). The claimed goals of the plan were to advocate “for ethical, privacy-protecting approaches to digital ID” (ID2020, 2020) and to provide IDs for “over 1 billion people worldwide (who) do not have access to any form of identification” (ID2020, 2020). This scheme, we are told, is necessary to serve the needs of the already dispossessed. Rather than consuming food and clean water, the dispossessed must instead consume the proposition, camouflaged by the rhetoric of safety and security, that they must be numbered and tracked (Tangermann, 2019). The uncanny parallels from present to past money-making schemes, however, are rather striking.

Whereas Butler had made natural resources and geographic regions of the world safe for colonial expansion and the exploitation of new labor, these contemporary “servants” to real power, “UN agencies, NGOs, governments, and enterprises” (Buse and Walt, 2000, p. 551; ID2020, 2020), are hard at work today making human beings across geographic boundaries safe for exploitation, domination and invasion (intellectually and culturally, if not militarily). It appears that they must be made sufficiently docile, socially distanced, and incapable of organizing to resist an impending outrage against their agency and sovereignty.

Wherever slash-and-burn disaster capitalism leaves disrupted communities and environmental ruin in its wake (Ilić and Hafner, 2015, p. 110), we can observe, too, its clearing away for new safe spaces to impose upon “the precariat” (Standing, 2018) its injunctions against “the civil right to assemble” (Inanzu and Neuborne, 2017). These disrupted communities have no power to counter globalist decrees and, where they do in more developed nations, the elite control of mainstream media channels has ensured that organized resistance is hardly capable of developing in a natural manner. From these interactions arise at least a couple of key questions: by what processes do otherwise reasonable people come to accept the conditions of mental and bodily slavery presented to them

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<sup>8</sup> Among the transnational tech giants in attendance were Accenture, Microsoft, Avanade Inc., PricewaterhouseCoopers, and Cisco Systems.

(Vedmore, 2021)? How does manipulation on such a grand scale make the targets — “the bewildered herd,” now almost totally inoculated against the mental pain of critical reasoning (Thornton, 2017) — believe that the proposed plans and policies are, indeed, in their best interests?

## A Brief History of Manufacturing Consent

Viewed as a pretense that serves to camouflage machinations of power (Alford et al., 2019), the process of manufacturing mass consent (Herman and Chomsky, 1988) for questionable policies has long been integral to the maintenance of so-called democratic capitalist societies. Since it is, after all, the mainstream media’s self-proclaimed duty “to control what people think” (Brzezinski, 2017) while concealing abuses of power, increasingly sophisticated tools and techniques must be developed to ensure the obscurity of empirical reality in this interconnected digital world. Michael Rectenwald refers to it as the Big Digital Simulacrum where “information, knowledge, and ‘reality’ are shaped through disinformation agents and ideological filters” (2019, p. 162).

Helen Buyniski sees these interconnections in the ways that Microsoft had deployed artist Marina Abramović in a new ad for its HoloLens Virtual Reality platform. In critiquing negative public responses to what, in the context of global socio-economic upheaval, seemed to be a tone-deaf message, Buyniski wonders if it was Abramović’s “‘spirit cooking’ notoriety from the Podesta emails or [if] people [are] just sick of wealth-flaunting?” (2020). While Buyniski suspects the ad signifies intent among technocratic elites to “fuel a burgeoning class war” (2020), her analysis is especially trenchant in these times of entrenched exploitation of the dispossessed. The long cover-up of Harvey Weinstein’s system of abuse and Jeffery Epstein’s transnational network in trafficking captured girls and boys illustrate the extent to which mainstream media serve as educated sycophants to the centers of elite power. These concealed networks of abuse propagate the sins of what are claimed to be just a few bad apples and consumers soon forgets about the broader implications once the ruling elite sacrifice a few of their own in public spectacles reminiscent of Roman-era bread and circuses. Buyniski’s critique illustrates how reality must be made more mediated and virtual (or augmented) since free, open, and direct engagement with the empirical world is being made increasingly hideous.

It is useful to consider, also, the larger context of the past century and efforts employed then by elites to obscure empirical reality and distance the public from fully perceiving the objective world. Walter Lippmann first observed this practice at work in 1922. While we tend to view ourselves as reasonable and self-sufficient creatures, Lippmann saw how so “many aspects of our subjugation to symbols are not flattering” (1922/1997, p. 151). In a world of necessary action, symbols, he observed, “may be beneficent and sometimes a necessity, [though] the necessity is often imagined [and] the peril manufactured” (1922/1997, p. 151). Today, no longer is it Gaddafi, Bin Laden, Al Qaeda, Hussein or ISIS, but the new enemy du jour is embodied in a symbol imperceptible to the naked eye and yet threatening all of humankind. “In the symbol,” Lippmann pointed out, “emotion is discharged at a common target, and the idiosyncrasy of real ideas blotted out” (1922/1997, p. 128).

Today’s media landscape, awash with menacing images of the viral symbol “overestimating the threat” (Bagus et al., 2021) and accompanied by the foreboding pronouncements of mainstream pundits, activates the desired levels of “mass hysteria” (Bagus et al., 2021), never moderated but only

hyped. The manufactured fear (Klaehn, 2009) and loathing of the enemy — both the virus and any dissident views of the mainstream fear narrative — invite the attention of the masses to the pre-planned response whilst blotting out potential public debate over real ideas about the actual sources of the mayhem. Mainstream narratives work both to stimulate fear (Marlin, 2013) while, at the same time, integrating the public into the set regimen: “lock-step” (Rockefeller, 2010) compliance with the mandates, injunctions, and injections offered by the techno-elites.

It was media, hinted General Butler, that helped manufacture the lock-step response to an identified enemy, that integrated men, through psychological conditioning of the masses, into the war effort and made them more war conscious and murder conscious (1935). In his critical reflection on decades of service to the leading symbol of the nation — the flag — Butler exposed to the general public the plans of a corporate takeover that reportedly included the captains of banking and industry of the time. With the history of this attempted coup d'état obscured by media and education, few people are even aware today of what Butler had revealed in 1934: an organized collection of conspirators keen to integrate Butler himself into the treasonous plan “to set up a fascist dictatorship” (Butler 1935/2014).

Wherever violent attempts by powerful business interests to usurp democracy have proven unsuccessful, other means of undermining the natural human rights of the people have also been contemplated. Bertrand Russell’s reflections in a lecture on “Scientific Technique in Oligarchy” point to a future when a technocratic elite would turn to new tools and techniques in attempts to gain deeper levels of control over societies. An effectively propagandized public is crucial for mass consent to the technological and pharmacological interventions concocted and offered up for sale.

In future such failures are not likely to occur where there is dictatorship. Diet, injections, and injunctions will combine, from a very early age, to produce the sort of character and the sort of beliefs that the authorities consider desirable, and any serious criticism of the powers that be will become psychologically impossible. Even if all are miserable, all will believe themselves happy, because the government will tell them that they are so. (1951, p. 50)

Astonishing are the effects found today in this present program born of the mid-1900s, with globalist elites now capable of arrogating to themselves powers that might once have been considered the preserve of malevolent gods. Proposing measures to block out the sun (Naish, 2019); releasing millions of genetically modified mosquitoes (Stein, 2019); registering patents for their GMO seeds (Gates 2010); claiming the necessity of lockdowns of unforeseeable duration (Gates 2020a); and rolling out their latest big digital remedies, they pursue every possible avenue for control and profit. Similar strategies of dispossession through technological means also appear within military defense doctrines that have evolved with the times. John Oller traces the historical path of research and development in bioweapons, “to vaccine research dating back at least to the creation of the War Research Service in the United States in 1942 (2021, p. 100). Today, we can find its offspring in strategic planning. The authors of *Rebuilding America’s Defenses* mused, precisely one year before the events of 9/11, about how the future “art of warfare on air, land, and sea [which] will be vastly different than it is today, [as] ‘combat’ likely will take place in new dimensions: in space, ‘cyberspace’, and perhaps the world of microbes” (Donnelly et al., 2000, p. 60).

Today’s world in which “full-spectrum dominance” (Engdahl, 2009) calls for control over land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace, also necessitates sustained assaults against the public mind. Rectenwald

notes that, “In military terms, the Great Reset entails the creation of new battle spaces including cyberspaces and the human brain as a battle space (2021). Like any other invading force, news reports of impending biological invasions condition the public to remain on constant alert, ever vigilant of the forthcoming threat and the mystery of its possible devastating effects. In these times when corporate influence over the regulatory state has become so pervasive and entrenched (Warren 2016), it has become more important than ever to recognize the patterns that James O’Conner observed as the state involves “itself in the [process of capital] accumulation, [by] either mystifying its policies [and] calling them something that they are not, or ... trying to conceal them (2002, p. 6).

## **Bounding People, Reproduction, and Public Discourse**

Chomsky pointed with memorable pith to one of the larger aims of contemporary propaganda: “The goal is a society in which the basic social unit is you and your television” (1998, p. 29). Crucially, this so-called social unit is hardly social since resistance to the persuasive powers inherent in its programming cannot easily be expressed in meaningful and material ways. Given that a television or computer screen represents the physical limits of what can be observed in the mediated world, the practice of bounding in mainstream media works especially well in societal lockdowns to control public perceptions of what counts as the acceptable limits of debate. Barriers to the public’s understanding of issues of the greatest import are constructed by the corporate system itself. In *Manufacturing Consent*, Herman and Chomsky expound a propaganda model “that sees media as serving a ‘societal purpose,’ [which is] to defend the economic, social, and political agenda of privileged groups that dominate the domestic society and state” (1988, p. 298). Systematic marginalization of the public from meaningful debate is accomplished by careful “selection of topics, distribution of concerns, framing of issues, filtering of information, emphasis and tone, and by keeping the debate within the bounds of acceptable premises” (1988, p. 298).

Our observations of mainstream coverage of the current crisis also reflect the features of bounding described by Chomsky (1992). The elimination of any competing perspective to the leading narrative appears to be a systemic operation. Since news reports have aired of the original outbreak in Wuhan, it has become clear that what we are offered for mass consumption are narrative patterns programmed into mainstream content strictly confined to the perspectives of corporate dogma. Christopher Shaw, however, has recently parsed some of the key conflicting details in the Covid-19 genesis story (2021, pp. 101-04), which reveal a deeply troubling departure from objective reality. Of course, history shows similar patterns. In a 2003 interview with Bill Moyers, Bill Gates took the opportunity to trumpet the work of his then-new charitable foundation, noting that he had long been troubled by inequities in human health (2003). Christopher Caldwell questioned this purported altruism, noting that billionaires don’t simply “give away” their money but instead “deploy it, through tax-exempt foundations, to ends of their own choosing, and this can have disruptive effects on democracy, no matter how noble the hubristic billionaire believes his aims to be” (2010). Retrospect allows us to see the extent to which Gates’ “concerns” have since pricked his conscience and galvanized him into a claimed altruistic global campaign to increase the reproductive health of the less fortunate.

His concern over the global population “heading up to around 9 billion” (Gates, 2010) people does not simply jar with his asserted worry over the reproductive health of billions of women who have

no access to “proper” healthcare. The subtext of the assertion appears also to be a clever rhetorical contortion worthy of the best dystopian works of western fiction. If “political language ... is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind” (Orwell, 1946), we can locate such discourse practices in the literature, too, where researchers note with concern that

... still increasing by roughly 80 million people per year, or more than 200,000 per day ..., the world population must be stabilized—and, ideally, gradually reduced—within a framework that ensures social integrity. There are proven and effective policies that strengthen human rights while lowering fertility rates .... (Ripple et al., 2020)

History, however, testifies to the weakness in such a claim as official programs of social and, thus, reproductive control have long been used to “gradually reduce” populations. Though it isn’t necessary to reanalyze the well-known state-sponsored germ warfare agenda enacted against American citizens during the decades-long Tuskegee Study (1932-72), premised upon the racist postulation that African Americans are by nature promiscuous, we see this experiment as an important starting point from which to cite equally hideous but hardly known covert programs conducted on unwitting citizens in the interest of curbing populations.

During both world wars, funding for the United States’ biological weapons program increased and continued into the Cold War and well beyond. News broke in the late 1970s that the Pentagon disclosed in declassified documents that from 1949 to 1969 it had conducted 239 secret open-air germ warfare experiments on an unsuspecting public (Wilson, 1977). In 1950, a secret exercise codenamed Operation Sea Spray commenced to test the vulnerability of domestic population centers to a possible foreign biological weapons attack (irony unintended). The U.S. Navy sprayed *Serratia marcescens*, bacterial microbes, along the coast in San Francisco sending some members of the population to the hospital and one to an early grave (Bentley, 2019). Not to be outdone by the Navy, the U.S. Army “tested ‘germ warfare’ on the New York City subway by smashing lightbulbs full of bacteria” (Loria, 2015). It had also “conducted secret chemical testing in [an] impoverished St. Louis neighborhood at the height of the Cold War” (CBS, 2012). Officials admitted that the tests “were part of a biological weapons program and St. Louis was chosen because it bore some resemblance to Russian cities that the U.S. might attack. The material being sprayed was zinc cadmium sulfide, a fine fluorescent powder” (CBS, 2012).

Testing, as Antony Barnett points out, is also an international phenomenon that, from 1940 to 1979, involved “releasing potentially dangerous chemicals and micro-organisms over vast swaths of the [British] population without the public being told” (2002). Barnett refers to “The Sabotage Trials” conducted between 1952 and 1964, to determine the vulnerability of large government buildings and public transport to attack. In 1956, bacteria were released on the London Underground at lunchtime along the Northern Line between Colliers Wood and Tooting Broadway.

Beyond covert chemical experiments (too numerous to fully reference here), genetic manipulation has also shown promise in controlling populations. Robin McKie discusses the future of contraceptives found in the world’s most popular crop. “Waiving fields of maize,” she notes, “may one day save the world from overpopulation” (2001). This contraceptive corn, which makes male sperm sterile, was developed by the biotech firm Epicyte. It is owned by Monsanto, a transnational chemical giant that Gates invests in and, according Colin Todhunter, is keen to help Monsanto get their genetically modified organisms (GMOs) into Africa on a grand scale” (2013). “Should we be



wary,” asks Todhunter, “of a hugely politically connected sector that has ownership of technology that allows for the genetic engineering of food and a gene that could be used (or already is) for forced sterilization?” (2013).

In keeping with the Malthusian view that the “pestilence-stricken multitudes” (Shelley, 1819) must be properly schooled so as to be effectively subdued, Gates describes in the Bill Moyers interview seeing a “measurable impact when you can go in and educate families, but primarily women, about their different choices. There’s a real impact that you can have in this area. Anything to do with reproductive health” (2003). This perspective, however, erroneously presupposes that human beings are both ignorant of and powerless to make their own choices. Growing resistance to the thinly-veiled ideology that earth has long been overburdened by multitudes of “useless eaters” (Windeer, 2011, p. 10) signifies the absurdities in the claim: “Our data show that improving health and education decreases in populations as parents decide to have less children” (Gates, 2003). We wonder if such decisions “to have less children” correlate with the inability to have children.

In 2014, Kenya’s Catholic bishops charged two United Nations organizations, funded in part by the Gates Foundation, with sterilizing millions of girls and women under cover of an anti-tetanus inoculation program sponsored by the Kenyan government (Weatherbe, 2014; Oller, et al. 2017). In 2009, thousands of young women were integrated, without their consent, into a massive observational study of how the HPV inoculation would affect populations, in this case the poor and illiterate (Kumar, 2014). As an investor who holds no public office and has no formal medical training, Gates, however, has regularly appealed to false authority over the years and has, with great effect, bounded public debate and marginalized dissenting views on these medical interventions. Beyond the consistent funding offered to various mainstream news sources, Gates has also funded his foundation’s own “flak machines” — the “fact checkers” who discipline and censor opposing voices to maintain an “increasingly friendly media environment for the world’s most visible charity” (Schwab, 2020a) and obscure from public view the “investments in companies developing Covid-19 vaccines and therapies” (Schwab, 2020a).

The perennial myth of the white man’s burden shouldered by Bill Gates and his globalist cohorts appears, in recent years, to be too heavy to bear for a growing number of people around the world awakening to the subterfuge (Langrudi, 2020). For us, the twisted reasoning rampant in the Western academy, too, is the most critical issue of our time: Re-establishing the inalienable rights and liberties of human beings to choose whether to reproduce their lives or not. In light of this widespread bounding and censorship, we are reminded of *The Crisis of Democracy*, the Trilateral Commission’s study of civil society that urged more “moderation in democracy” (Crozier et al. 1973, p. 113) to curb the perceived excesses in civil liberties exercised during the 1960s protest movements. Since power alone gives this social Darwinian theory its legitimacy, real democracy threatens to shift power away from this small minority to the people. Hence, their claimed urgency in circumventing it. Power and deceit appear as the principal tools of transnational plutocrats undermining the world’s institutions. Adolf Hitler, who was, apart from his monumental sins, a master of propaganda, deconstructed the so-called big lie and argued that the most obscene and outlandish untruths retain an important resonance of credibility,

because the ... masses ... are always more easily corrupted in the deeper strata of their emotional nature than consciously or voluntarily; and thus in the primitive simplicity of their minds they more readily fall victims to

the big lie than the small lie, since they themselves often tell small lies in little matters but would be ashamed to resort to large-scale falsehoods. It would never come into their heads to fabricate colossal untruths, and they would not believe that others could have the impudence to distort the truth so infamously. Even though the facts which prove this to be so may be brought clearly to their minds, they will still doubt and waver and will continue to think that there may be some other explanation. For the grossly impudent lie always leaves traces behind it, even after it has been nailed down, a fact which is known to all expert liars in this world and to all who conspire together in the art of lying (1925/1998, p. 134).

His notion of the “grossly impudent lie” is especially prescient today. As the world’s wealthiest private donor (Saez, 2017; Bowman, 2012) to the WHO, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation carries unparalleled “cultural capital” (Oxford 2011) and the power to reportedly circumvent democracy (Usman 2020) and influence through multiple channels (Martens and Seitz, 2015, p. 36), public policy (Schwab, 2020b), health policy (Bowman, 2012), media (Fortner, 2010) and the political agenda of international bodies such as the United Nations and the WHO.

Armed with honorary doctorates, Gates has enjoyed hundreds of hours of airtime over the years (Schwab, 2020a) to threaten people’s lives, their jobs, predict doom, tell them they have no choice in the matter (CHD 2020c), frequently waving his hands in theatrical fashion as if to convey the appropriate sense of panic we are adjured to feel. Even if all of his claims were proven to be untrue, bland retractions would do little to undo the recent months of conditioning that Gates and his fellow techno-elites have used to instill a deep-rooted fear of the implied consequences to human well-being. The leading narratives will have delivered a significant percentage of people to the threshold of capitulation, cocked and waiting to be triggered by the next event — such as a curtain call for Event 201, whatever forthcoming SARS, MERS or alternate pandemic that, deadly or otherwise, might signal a final collapse of public autonomy.

## Conclusion

Through critical analysis of the state-corporate propaganda supporting the Covid-19 crisis, we have striven throughout this essay to show that the urgings of self-interested centers of global power reveal another war that, while somewhat different in focus, follows the same predictable patterns of fear-driven narratives that have dominated the public consciousness since 9/11. One of the principal effects of the GWOP has been the global spread of terror that, like the GWOT, traps populations in a perpetual state of mistrust and fear that paralyzes essential social interactions, curtails movement, and the will to resist oppression and coercion at the hands of global techno-elites.

What is sad is the extent to which otherwise reasonable people go to protect themselves from cognitive dissonance when they can see tyrannical forms of authority emerging around them — whether in the degradation of human and civil rights, or the numerous, politically fabricated, post-9/11 wars for regime change — and they refuse to speak up and demand that the truth be told.

Franklin D. Roosevelt noted that “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself, that nameless, unreasoning unjustified terror paralyzing needed efforts to convert retreat into advance” (1932). While many people are beginning to challenge the mainstream mythologies, we wonder with concern whether their voices and actions will prove sufficiently powerful to overcome this global industry of perception management.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that this research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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