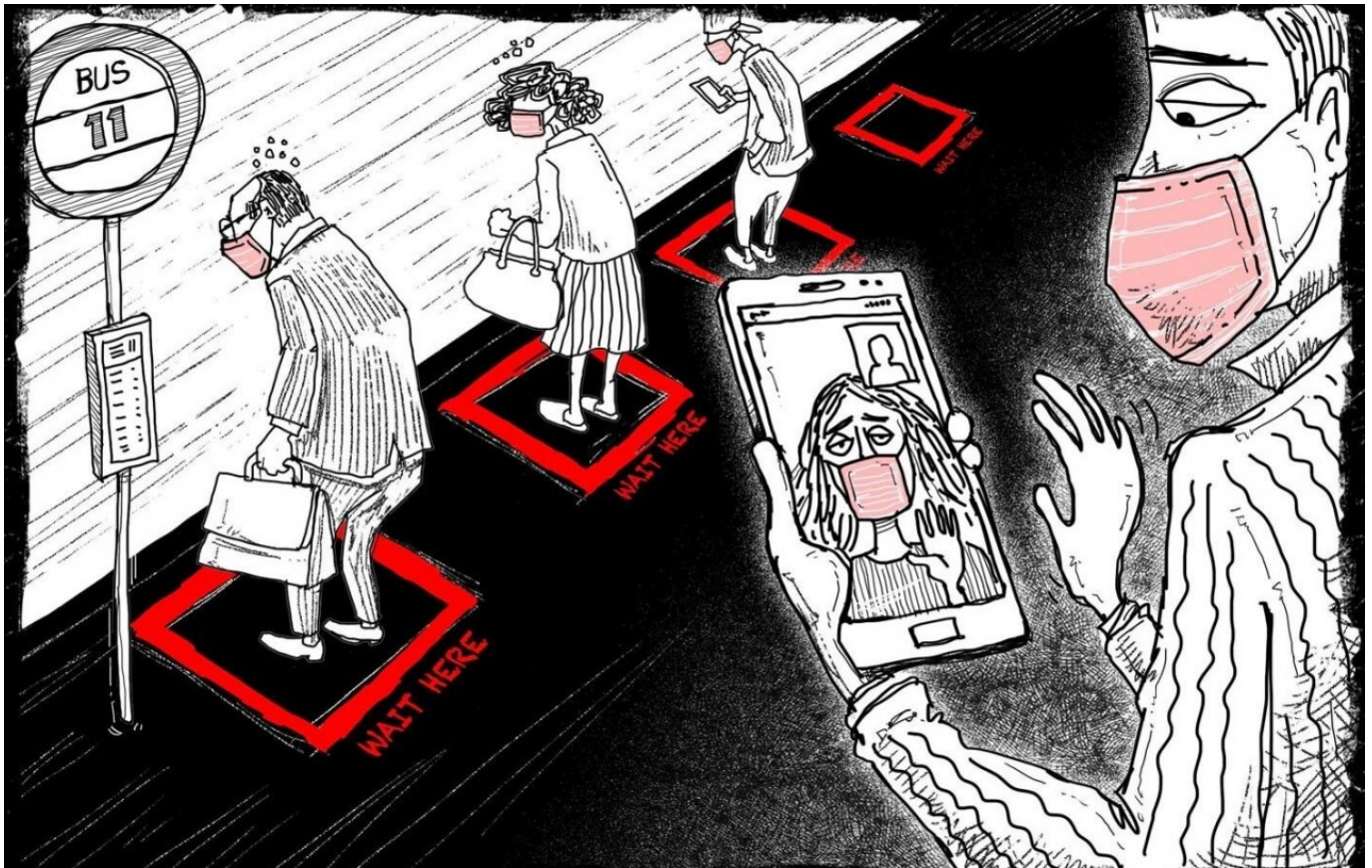


## Brave New Normal - Part 2

by **CJ Hopkins** on [Off Guardian](#)



My columns haven't been very funny recently. This one isn't going to be any funnier. Sorry. Fascism makes me cranky.

I don't mean the kind of fascism the corporate media and the fake Resistance have been desperately hyping for the last four years. God help me, but I'm not terribly worried about a few hundred white-supremacist morons marching around with tiki torches hollering Nazi slogans at each other, or Jewish-Mexican-American law clerks flashing "OK" signs on TV, or smirking schoolkids in MAGA hats.

I'm talking about actual, bona fide fascism, or totalitarianism, if you want to get technical. The kind where governments declare a global "state of emergency" on account of a virus with a [0.2% to 0.6% lethality](#) (and that causes [mild, flu-like symptoms, or absolutely no symptoms whatsoever, in over 97% of those infected](#)), locks everyone down inside their homes, suspends their constitutional rights, terrorizes them with propaganda, and [unleashes uniformed goon squads](#) on anyone who doesn't comply with their despotic decrees.

I'm talking about the kind of totalitarianism where the [police track you down with your smartphone data](#) and then come to your house to [personally harass you for attending a political protest](#), or attack you for [challenging their illegitimate authority](#), and then charge you with "assault" for fighting back, and then get the media to publish a story accusing you of having ["set up" the cops](#).

I'm talking about the kind of totalitarianism where the [secret police are given carte blanche](#) to monitor everyone's Internet activity, and to scan you with their ["surveillance helmets"](#), and [dictate how close you can sit to your friends](#), and menace you with [drones and robot dogs](#), and [violently pry your kids out of your arms and arrest you](#) if you dare to protest.



I'm talking about the kind of totalitarianism that [psychologically tortures children with authoritarian loyalty rituals](#) designed to condition them to live in fear, and respond to absurd Pavlovian stimuli, and that encourages the masses to turn off their brains and mechanically repeat propaganda slogans, like ["wear a mask"](#) and ["flatten the curve"](#), and to report their neighbors to the police for [having an "illegal" private party](#) ... and to otherwise reify the manufactured mass hysteria the authorities need to "justify" their totalitarianism.

Yeah, that kind of stuff makes me cranky.

And you know what makes me really cranky? I'll tell you what makes me really cranky.

It is people who publicly project themselves as "anti-authoritarians" and "anti-fascists", or who have established their "anti-establishment" brands and "dissident" personas on social media, or even in the corporate media, either zealously cheerleading this totalitarianism or looking away and saying nothing as it is rolled out by the very authorities and media propagandists they pretend to oppose.

I don't know exactly why, but that stuff makes me particularly cranky.

I'll provide you with a few examples.

The militant "Portland anti-fascists" who the corporate media fell in love with and made famous for bravely fighting off the Trump-loving Putin-Nazi Menace over the course of the last four years, as soon as the Corona-Totalitarianism began, did what all true anti-fascists do when the state goes full-blown fascist ... no, they did not "smash the state", or "occupy the streets", or anything like that.

They masked-up and started making [vegan hand sanitizer](#).

Popular Internet "anti-imperialists" started accusing everyone opposing the lockdown of [being part of some far-right Republican plot](#) to "promote mass death under the banner of freedom" or to "normalize death" to benefit rich people, or being members of a "death cult", or something.

Celebrity socialists took to Twitter to warn that we would ["shortly have the blood of thousands of people on our hands"](#), and call us ["anti-vaxxers"](#) and ["flat earth fucks."](#)

Indie political and military analysts patiently explained why governments needed to be able to [pull people out of their homes against their will](#) and quarantine them.

Anarchist anthropologists averred that the lockdown wasn't damaging the productive economy; it was only damaging the ["bullshit economy"](#), and those complaining about being out of work were people whose work is "largely useless."

Others simply looked away or sat there in silence as we were confined to our homes, and made to carry ["permission papers"](#) to walk to work or the corner grocery store, and were beaten and [arrested for not "social-distancing"](#) and were otherwise bullied and humiliated for no justifiable reason whatsoever.

(We are talking about a virus, after all, that even the official medical experts, e.g., the U.K.'s Chief Medic, admit is [more or less harmless to the vast majority of us](#), not the Bubonic Fucking Plague or some sort of Alien-Terrorist-Death-Flu ... so spare me the "we-had-no-choice-but-to-go-totalitarian" rationalization.)

My intent is not merely to mock these people (i.e., these "radical", "anti-establishment" types who fell into formation and started goose-stepping because the media told them we were all going to die), but also to use them as a clear example of how official narratives are born and take hold.

That's somewhat pertinent at the moment, because the ["Brave New Normal"](#) official narrative has been born, but it has not yet taken hold. What happens next will determine whether it does.



In order to understand how this works, imagine for a moment that you're one of these people who are normally skeptical of the government and the media, and that you consider yourself an anti-authoritarian, or at least a friend of the working classes, and now you are beginning to realize that there is no Alien-Terrorist-Death-Flu (just as there were no "WMDs", no "Russian hackers", no "pee-tape", etc.), and so it dawns on you that you've been behaving like a hysterical, brainwashed, fascist minion of the very establishment you supposedly oppose ... or at the very least like an abject coward.

Imagine how you might feel right now.

You would probably feel pretty foolish, right? And more than a little ashamed of yourself. So ... OK, what would do about that? Well, you would have a couple of options.

Option Number One would be admit what you did, apologize to whomever you have to, and try like hell not to do it again. Not many people are going to choose this option.

Most people are going to choose Option Number Two, which is to desperately try to deny what they did, or to desperately rationalize what they did (and in many cases are still actively doing).

Now, this is not as easy as it sounds, because doing that means they will have to continue to believe (or at least pretend to believe) that there is an Alien-Terrorist-Death-Flu which is going to kill hundreds of millions of people the moment we stop locking everyone down, and forcing them to "social distance", and so on.

They will have to continue to pretend to believe that this Alien-Terrorist-Death-Flu exists, even though they know it doesn't.

And this is where that [Orwellian "doublethink"](#) comes in.

People (i.e., these "anti-authoritarians", not to mention the majority of the "normal" public) are not going to want to face the fact that they've been behaving like a bunch of fascists (or cowards) for no justifiable reason whatsoever.

So, what they are going to do instead is desperately pretend that their behavior was justified and that the propaganda they have been swallowing, and regurgitating, was not propaganda, but rather, "the Truth."

In other words, in order to avoid their shame, they are going to do everything in their power to reify the official narrative and delegitimize anyone attempting to expose it as the fiction that it is. They are going to join in with the corporate media that are calling us ["extremists"](#), ["conspiracy theorists"](#), ["anti-vaxxers"](#), and other such epithets.

They're going to accuse those of us on the Left of aligning with ["far-Right Republican militias"](#), and ["Boogaloo accelerationists"](#), and of being members of the Russian-backed ["Querfront"](#), and assorted other horrible things meant to scare errant leftists into line.

Above all, they are going to continue to insist, despite [all the evidence to the contrary](#), that we are "under attack" by a "killer virus" which could "strike again at any time", and so we have to maintain at least some level of totalitarianism and paranoia, or else ... well, you know, the terrorists win.

It is this reification of the official narrative by those too ashamed to admit what they did (and try to determine why they did it), and not the narrative or the propaganda itself, that will eventually establish the "Brave New Normal" as "reality" (assuming the process works as smoothly as it did with the "War on Terror", the "War on Populism", and the "Cold War" narratives).

The facts, the data, the "science" won't matter. Reality is consensus reality ... and a new consensus is being formed at the moment.



There is still a chance (right now, not months from now) for these people (some of whom are rather influential) to stand up and say, "Whoops! I screwed up and went all Nazi there for a bit." But I seriously doubt that is going to happen.

It's much more likely that the Brave New Normal (or some intermittent, scaled-down version of it) will gradually become our new reality.

People will get used to being occasionally "locked down", and being ordered to wear masks, and not to touch each other, and to standing in designated circles and boxes, like they got used to the "anti-Terrorism measures", and believing that Trump is a "Russian asset."

The coming economic depression will be blamed on the Alien-Terrorist-Death-Flu, rather than on the lockdown that caused it. [Millions of people will be condemned to extreme poverty](#), or debt-enslaved for the rest of their lives, but they'll be too busy trying to survive to mount any kind of broad resistance.

The children, of course, won't know any better. They will grow up with their "isolation boxes", and "protective barriers", and "contact tracing", and they will live in constant low-grade fear of another killer virus, or terrorist attack, or Russian-backed white supremacist uprising, or whatever boogeyman might next appear to menace the global capitalist empire, which, it goes without saying, will be just fine.

Me, I'll probably remain kind of cranky, but I will try to find the humor in it all. Bear with me ... that might take a while.