

# Back to Basics: Freedom? Or Serfdom? The Choice Is Yours



By Steven Yates

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**“Political tags – such as royalist, communist, democrat, populist, fascist, liberal, conservative, and so forth – are never basic criteria. The human race divides politically into those who want people to be controlled and those who have no such desire.” -Robert A. Heinlein, *Notebooks of Lazarus Long***

As I write this, my copy of [Scanned: Why Vaccine Passports and Digital IDs Will Mean the End of Privacy and Personal Freedom](#) (White River Junction, Vt.: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2022) by Nick Corbishley, arrived in yesterday’s mail. I’ve not yet had time to read the whole thing, but what I have read lays out very well the existential threat to our freedoms – the ones that matter, anyway.

Early on, Corbishley explains how the past two years plus have changed the equation, and why believers in freedom will not like the “new normal” if nothing can be done to stop the juggernaut before the window of opportunity closes.

An investigating journalist with a history degree who has written for the European “alt-economics” blog *Naked Capitalism* among other sites, Corbishley states that his book is for everyone, “vaccinated” or not. His focus is less on the gene-therapy injections and more on what they are being used for.

He warns of a global-scale digital ID grid for which the

technology is fast falling into place. He notes (as I and others have done) how the mass hysteria campaign that began in earnest early in 2020 paralyzed critical thought, how constantly changing international travel rules have left people stranded and made others fearful of making any travel plans at all, doubtless part of the intent. Other arbitrary changes have resulted in people being “fully vaccinated” on one day and not “fully vaccinated” on the next.

As for the injections themselves, he reiterates what I and others have also emphasized: they are very different from previous (actual) vaccines. Previous vaccines actually conferred immunity. How many smallpox or MMR “boosters” you have needed, following childhood immunization?

No “vaccines,” moreover, have ever been *mandated for (i.e., forced upon) adults* by governments or employers before. No previous “vaccines,” once integrated into digital technology, have ever had the potential literally to lock out of the economy those whose choice is to not partake. As we know, refusing covid “vaccines” has already led to mass firings, including of experienced health care professionals at institutions whose official stories are of overwhelm by covid patients—what sense does this make? There are places where, absent a “green pass” (in our area it is called a “mobility pass”) you cannot enter restaurants, clubs, malls, theaters, airports, or in some places (Lithuania is an example) even grocery stores. There are places where the “unvaccinated” see higher health insurance premiums and even the possibility of being refused medical care!

We are well past the “nudges” of what I [elsewhere](#) called Stage 3 vaccine “compliance” when countries threaten to lock you out of their economies and health care systems!

Corbishley does not appear willing to venture into speculations about what these things are doing to people’s bodies. But he does make the obvious point that also unlike

all traditional vaccines which took five or more years to develop and test for safety and effectiveness, these were rolled out in less than a year, use a new and experimental technology, and were given “emergency use authorization” instead of full approval.

What happens next, now that around 10.8 billion of these shots have been administered worldwide?

Who actually knows?

All we can do is pray that the billions who have received them have not been turned into biochemical time bombs, as part of an elite-driven depopulation campaign.

Some argue that no one they know of has had more than minimal negative effects. I only know of one such person who took the Moderna shots, began feeling ill a couple of weeks later, and died miserably from systemic organ failure after four months of suffering no one could alleviate. His grieving family asked his doctor point blank if the covid shots were responsible. They received an evasive, “We’ll know in a few years.”

If these shots really do turn out to be the prime mover of a mass depopulation effort, there is no category of criminality able to cover it. *Crimes against humanity* doesn’t do it. If, say, five billion people have had these shots and *only 1 percent* dies from them, do the math. *That’s 50 million people!*

The rest are in danger of the kind of “social credit” system that was already being implemented in Communist China, already a full-fledged technocracy operating on a docile population.

The technology able to transform “green passes” or “mobility passes” into global digital ID already exists, and is being furthered apace. Once the global social credit system is in place, your digital ID *would be, literally, a license to live in the world*. Without it, you would not be able to work, enroll at a university, travel including inside your own

country, enter malls and stores, or even receive medical care. Not just your covid “vaccination” records but *all* your personal records could easily be input and recorded where any bureaucrat or technocrat could access them – will access them to determine whether you should be given or denied specific services.

Your records will include your full name, birth records and parentage, ethnicity and nationality; your full formal education records; your employment history or history of businesses owned; your medical history including *all* vaccinations and any hereditary genetic issues; transactions which will *all* be digital once physical cash is eliminated, including any outstanding debt you owe; your driving record including if you own a vehicle; and your history of interactions with the legal system and criminal history (if any).

Finally, and – this is the dangerous one for truth-tellers – your digital ID will incorporate your political party affiliation if any (and *none*, if that option exists, could be considered a red flag!), and especially any record of statements you’ve made dissenting from official narratives on social media or elsewhere.

This kind of system will doubtless be sold on its convenience.

All your information in one place, perhaps on one card!

No more need for birth certificates, drivers licenses as such, credit cards in the ordinary sense, passports, or other separate forms of ID that can be lost or stolen.

Since the masses love convenience, I don’t think the percentage of refuseniks will be larger than those who have refused the gene-therapy injections.

And I am sure data entry clerks could be trained to work for 25 bucks an hour to locate and input all this information into

hundreds of millions of global digital IDs!

Don't have your shots up to date? Or do you dissent? Your digital ID can be deactivated by remote, for however long the controllers (who might well be AIs!) choose to keep it off.

If you are in a place where a mobility pass can be turned off if you haven't gotten "your" covid "booster," *you have already lost control over your body and what goes into it!*

How did we get here, to the brink of Dystopia?

***Back to basics*** time!

The historical-intellectual tradition I have long identified with began arguably with the Magna Carta, which introduced the idea that the king can't do just anything he pleases. This document outlined writ of *habeas corpus* and due process.

That was in 1215. There was no comprehensive theory of rights (to property, etc.) there. We had to wait over 550 years to get to the implementation of a system whose founders consciously sought controls over power with checks and balances. And that system was far from perfect in its ability to maintain itself, as subsequent history shows abundantly.

One of my realizations – I've oft repeated it – is that *every society contains a minority that is fascinated by power*. This minority may be as few as 1 or 2 percent, or it might be more. Fascination with power probably comes in degrees.

Most people just want to take care of loved ones, pursue private goals, and otherwise just live their lives and be left alone. Historically, most populations have only been able to do this inside constraints imposed by the powerful, from pharaohs and kings and Caesars down to modern totalitarian dictators.

Since most people prefer stability to constant change and upheaval, and since tyrannies may afford stability, many

populations have adapted to life under brutal tyrannies. Witness North Korea.

But while we of the so-called “free world” have never lived under an *overt* dictatorship, we have never been as free as most of us like to think.

Public education aimed at the masses was designed back in the late 1800s to condition obedience into children, and prepare them to serve the needs of big business. (Source: John Taylor Gatto, *The Underground History of American Education*, 2000-01).

The economy was effectively centralized via its financial system in 1913 when Woodrow Wilson signed the Federal Reserve Act.

In a work called *America's Sixty Families* published in 1937, Ferdinand Lundberg revealed that even then, the U.S. was essentially a plutocratic oligarchy passing itself off as a democracy. By this time, mass media (then consisting of newspapers and weeklies) was largely controlled by the oligarchs.

They doubtless found establishing control over major institutions surprisingly easy. For most people either do not care about freedom or do not really want it, no matter how much they have been conditioned to say they do. In the early 1920s in his muckraking classic *Notes on Democracy*, H.L. Mencken wrote:

**The truth is that the common man's love of liberty, like his love of sense, justice and truth, is almost wholly imaginary. As I have argued, he is not actually happy when free; he is uncomfortable, a bit alarmed, and intolerably lonely. He longs for the warm, reassuring smell of the herd, and is willing to take the herdsman with it. Liberty is not a thing for such as he. He cannot enjoy it rationally himself, and he can think of it in others only as something to be taken away from them. It**

is, when it becomes a reality, the exclusive possession of a small and disreputable minority of men, like knowledge, courage and honour. A special sort of man is needed to understand it, nay, to stand it – and he is inevitably an outlaw in democratic societies. The average man doesn't want to be free. He simply wants to be safe.

I think we take the capacities for choice we have had too much for granted. Americans have been subject to “nudges” for generations but never lived under an overt dictatorship. The question before us, in that case: are we so adaptable, so prone to accepting restrictions on our freedoms (and the end of our privacy) in the name of convenience, or sufficiently vulnerable to media-induced hysteria that we are willing to allow our former health choices to be dictated by technocrats?

The result would be *covert* tyranny without visible tyrants, a techno-feudal serfdom of the digital system itself that would have shocked both Huxley and Orwell with its comprehensiveness.

The absolutely *stupidest* reaction to this, which I keep seeing on mainstream sites, is to call this a “baseless conspiracy theory”!

Are those QR codes you are now seeing everywhere hallucinations! Where we live, *even restaurant menus* have largely disappeared! You can only access the menu through its QR code on your smartphone! That's only the beginning of the all-encompassing digital control grid being constructed all around us, using the most advanced information technology in human history!

Perhaps more people will believe me when venders start refusing to take cash, apologetically telling consumers they have to either pay for goods and services including rent and utilities exclusively with credit cards (or as they will likely be called, “smart cards”) or online. They will be

*required* to do this.

Do we want freedom, or serfdom?

Those for whom [freedom is a core value](#) need to start standing up and saying so, loudly, and in sufficient numbers to make a difference (my writing these articles is definitely *not* good enough). That means rediscovering, or perhaps discovering for the first time, freedom's preconditions: responsibility and sufficient real education to take care of oneself, and the character to deal consistently with others honestly and with empathy.

Otherwise, our planetary near-future definitely will be digital serfdom in the techno-feudalist system being constructed piece by piece. Expect it to be completed by 2030, which means that much of it will be in place long before then. You will own nothing, have no privacy, but be happy—or so the [World Economic Forum](#) (is its existence a mere “theory”?) assures you. Our efforts to have placed checks on power will have failed, and no one reading this will live long enough to see them come back, if that can even happen on a societal scale. In the meantime, you will not even be able to control what is done to your own body in the name of “health” and technocratic “progress.”

Steven Yates's new book *What Should Philosophy Do? A Theory* (Wipf and Stock, 2021) is available [here](#) and [here](#).

Steven Yates blogs at [Lost Generation Philosopher](#), and has begun writing a philosophy course centered on freedom, its preconditions, and the choices a person must make in order to have it.

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