

# A New Global Attack to Censor Dr. Mercola

Analysis by [Dr. Joseph Mercola](#) ✓ Fact Checked

## STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › Mere weeks after my announcement that I was reintroducing my article archives on Substack Library for paid subscribers, the mainstream press started calling on Substack to censor and cull vaccine critics from its platform
- › Recent hit pieces against me have been published by The Washington Post, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Guardian, Mashable and others, in which they call for Substack to scrub my Censored Library
- › Media are again relying on claims made by the Center for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH). According to the CCDH, Substack is generating “at least \$2.5 million a year in revenue from just five anti-vaccine leaders who have amassed tens of thousands of subscribers, each paying \$50 a year”
- › The CCDH also claims the content on Substack is “so bad no one else will host it”
- › Substack CEO Chris Best and his two cofounders have brushed off calls for censorship saying that allowing “the presence of writers with whom we strongly disagree” is a “necessary precondition for creating more trust in the information ecosystem as a whole”

**Well, that didn't take long! Mere weeks after my announcement that I was reintroducing my deleted article archives and moving them to the Substack Library for paid subscribers, the mainstream press started calling on Substack to censor and cull vaccine critics from its platform.**

There are very good reasons why my content has moved to Substack under a Private Membership Agreement. All proceeds will be donated to our nonprofits, just like the profits from my book – there is no financial motivation for doing this. The reasons for doing this will be revealed in due time.

To their credit, Substack CEO Chris Best and his two cofounders have brushed off calls for censorship, saying that allowing “the presence of writers with whom we strongly disagree” is a “necessary precondition for creating more trust in the information ecosystem as a whole,”<sup>1</sup> and that:

*“We believe that critique and discussion of controversial issues are part of robust discourse, so we work to find a reasonable balance between these two priorities.”<sup>2</sup>*

## **Hit Piece Parade**

A recent hit piece by The Washington Post titled “Conspiracy Theorists, Banned on Major Social Networks, Connect with Audiences on Newsletters and Podcasts”<sup>3,4</sup> highlights how, after social media platforms have been successfully scrubbed of counternarratives, alternative platforms like Substack are now beginning to face the same kind of scrutiny:

*“Joseph Mercola, a leading anti-vaccine advocate whose screeds have been restricted by YouTube and Facebook, this month warned that the unvaccinated might soon be imprisoned in government-run camps. The week before, he circulated a study purporting to use government data to prove that more children had died of COVID-19 shots than from the coronavirus itself.*

*Shut down by major social media platforms, Mercola has found a new way to spread these debunked claims: on Substack, the subscription-based newsletter platform that is increasingly a hub for controversial and often misleading perspectives about the coronavirus.*

*Substack, which researchers from the nonprofit Center for Countering Digital Hate say makes millions of dollars off anti-vaccine misinformation, last week defended its tolerance for publishing 'writers with whom we strongly disagree.'*

*Prominent figures known for spreading misinformation, such as Mercola, have flocked to Substack, podcasting platforms, and a growing number of right-wing social media networks over the past year after getting kicked off or restricted on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube."*

As noted in the article, there's a fundamental difference between social media platforms like Facebook and platforms like Substack. On Substack, our information goes specifically to those who have opted in to get it. Those who want full access actually pay for that access. But even that is unacceptable to those who want to control every thought in your head.

According to the WaPo, censored content is censored because it could "potentially lead people to engage in behaviors that endanger themselves and others." Hence, you shouldn't even be allowed to get it even if you want it so badly that you're willing to pay for it.

Mashable<sup>5</sup> and The Guardian<sup>6</sup> also recently published near-identical hit pieces, calling me out by name as one of the primary "anti-vax" profiteers on Substack. What these and other articles like them so clearly show is that when they can't win an argument, or they're on the wrong side of history, they simply try to shut the opposition down to cover up their own inadequacies.

On a quick side note, the rapid growth of paid subscription platforms has now led to Twitter and Facebook making plans for their own paid subscription-based newsletters. What they seem to have completely overlooked is the REASON why people are turning to paid platforms.

They flock there because that's where the truth — the censored information — is. No one in their right mind is going to pay for more Twitter and Facebook propaganda.

## **Same Shady Propaganda Tactics as Always**

As is the norm with hit pieces, the WaPo sent us a request for comment at 4:52 p.m. and then published early in the morning stating that “Mercola did not respond to a request for comment.”

Leaving no time to respond and then claiming no response could be obtained, as if they actually tried, is a classic move to avoid giving the person they’re defaming the chance to say something that makes THEM look like idiots.

Another classic propaganda tactic employed in this piece is the projection that closed forums, including newsletters, are “plagued with misinformation because they are essentially echo chambers in which users share similar viewpoints.” Meanwhile, calling for censorship is by default a call for the creation of an echo chamber!

## **Dark Money Hate Group Wags the Media Dog**

Also rote by now is the media’s reliance on statements made by the Center for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH), which claims Substack is generating “at least \$2.5 million a year in revenue from just five anti-vaccine leaders who have amassed tens of thousands of subscribers, each paying \$50 a year.”<sup>7,8</sup>

The CCDH also claims the content on Substack is “so bad no one else will host it.” That seems pretty illogical, if you ask me, considering people are willing to pay for content they were used to getting for free.

Normally, people aren’t willing to pay for something they think is useless, or worse, will harm them if followed. When it comes to health in particular, it usually only takes one or two failed recommendations to turn people off for all time. So, why would people follow me onto a paid platform?

Funny enough, in its latest report,<sup>9</sup> the CCDH claims “The New York Times described the osteopathic physician Joseph Mercola as the most influential spreader of coronavirus misinformation online in 2021.” Meanwhile, The New York Times cites<sup>10</sup> the CCDH as the

source of that claim! So, the CCDH is using media reports of its own fabricated claims about me to support yet another set of defamatory claims.

They've obviously failed to update their lies as they never integrated Joe Rogan into their equation. His interviews with Peter McCullough and Robert Malone together garnered over 100 million views, putting him far, far ahead of me in reaching the public.

## **A Coordinated Brainwashing Campaign**

The fact that all multiple news outlets rely on the CCDH's reports, while never asking any questions about the group itself, or how it justifies its fake claims, is a surefire indication that a PR company is directing this censorship campaign.

That's what PR companies do – they craft the messaging and coordinate the timing of the publication of that information. Reporters, meanwhile, have surrendered to this top-down dissemination of “news” and ceased to even pretend that they're following journalistic standards. None of them points out that Facebook itself has called out the CCDH as a fabricator of lies.

August 18, 2021, Facebook's vice president of content policy, Monika Bickert, issued a statement<sup>11,12</sup> saying there is no evidence to support the CCDH's claims that 12 people were responsible for 73% of vaccine misinformation on Facebook. After an investigation, they found we were in fact responsible for only a tiny fraction – 0.05% – of all vaccine content on Facebook. Here's an excerpt from Bickert's statement:<sup>13</sup>

*“In recent weeks, there has been a debate about whether the global problem of COVID-19 vaccine misinformation can be solved simply by removing 12 people from social media platforms. People who have advanced this narrative contend that these 12 people are responsible for 73% of online vaccine misinformation on Facebook. There isn't any evidence to support this claim ...*

*In fact, these 12 people are responsible for about just 0.05% of all views of vaccine-related content on Facebook. This includes all vaccine-related posts*

*they've shared, whether true or false, as well as URLs associated with these people.*

*The report<sup>14</sup> upon which the faulty narrative is based analyzed only a narrow set of 483 pieces of content over six weeks from only 30 groups, some of which are as small as 2,500 users. They are in no way representative of the hundreds of millions of posts that people have shared about COVID-19 vaccines in the past months on Facebook.*

*Further, there is no explanation for how the organization behind the report identified the content they describe as 'anti-vax' or how they chose the 30 groups they included in their analysis. There is no justification for their claim that their data constitute a 'representative sample' of the content shared across our apps."*

## **Who and What Is the CCDH?**

So, just what is the CCDH? It's one-man organization with undisclosed funding and highly suspect connections to the technocratic "deep state." Since the beginning of the COVID pandemic in 2020, the CCDH has been on the forefront calling for censorship and deplatforming of anyone who questions experimental COVID jabs.<sup>15</sup>

Indeed, there's reason to suspect that's why this organization was founded in the first place. It fabricates "reports" filled with opinions not backed by any solid data, and those reports are then used by mainstream media and government leaders to justify this censorship racket.

Aside from its founder and CEO Imran Ahmed, an unregistered foreign agent, the CCDH consists of a seven-person board of directors that "supports and scrutinizes" Ahmed's work. And, while funding is stated as coming primarily from "philanthropic trusts," no specific trusts are listed.

Digging into the composition of the board of directors provides us with some interesting clues as to its purpose. Through the connection of cofounder Morgan McSweeney —

who left the CCDH for a chief of staff position with Labor Party leader Keir Starmer – we can deduce that the CCDH is connected with the technocratic hub that is the Trilateral Commission, where Starmer is a serving member.<sup>16</sup>

The group can also be linked to other technocratic centers within the globalist network through its board chairman Simon Clark and board member Kirsty McNeill.<sup>17</sup>

Clark is a senior fellow for the policy think-tank Center for American Progress and chairman of Foreign Policy for America, other members of which include Stephen Grand, a senior fellow of the Atlantic Council, and Avril Haines, former deputy director of the CIA and a participant in Event 201.<sup>18</sup>

Simon also served as the first director of web services for Reuters, one of the three global news agencies responsible for curating a vast majority of the world's news. McNeill, meanwhile, is a member of the European Council of Foreign Relations – another key player behind The Great Reset – and director of policy for Save the Children Fund, which is funded by the Gates Foundation and a partner of Gates' GAVI Vaccine Alliance.

Another board member is Damian Collins, a member of the British Parliament and former chair of the House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee. Collins also founded Infotagion, which “seeks to fight the disinformation contagion about COVID-19.”<sup>19</sup>

## **CCDH Protects The Great Reset Agenda**

When you think about it, isn't it rather curious that the Constitutional rights of American citizens are violated based on the opinions of an unregistered foreign agent who runs a tiny little pop-up group funded by dark money?<sup>20</sup> As noted in a July 20, 2021, Drill Down article:<sup>21</sup>

*“According to its website, the left-wing Center for Countering Digital Hate prides itself on ‘researching, exposing, and then shutting down users and news sites it deems unacceptable in the digital sphere.’ Users and news sites it deems*

*unacceptable? That seems potentially dangerous, considering we know very little about the CCDH. Senator Josh Hawley (R-MO) expressed his concerns on Twitter with the following post:*

*'Who is funding this overseas dark money group – Big Tech? Billionaire activists? Foreign governments? We have no idea. Americans deserve to know what foreign interests are attempting to influence American democracy' ...*

*No one knows who funds them. No one knows who is driving their research. But their findings are being used in censorship efforts under the guise of controlling misinformation?"*

## **Who's Behind the Attack on Joe Rogan?**

Spotify is another platform under fire thanks to the extraordinary reach of Joe Rogan, who continues to interview doctors and scientists about all the things mainstream media refuse to touch. With each passing blockbuster interview, the call to take Rogan off the air grows louder. Even U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy has called on Spotify to ban Rogan's show.<sup>22</sup>

In the video at the top of this article, Saagar Enjeti, host of "Saagar's Breaking Points," takes a deep dive into the hedge funds behind the campaign by Neil Young and other artists to cancel Rogan and hurt Spotify's bottom-line.

It all began when Young posted an open letter on social media, demanding Spotify make a choice – Rogan or him. Unless they ditch Rogan, Young would pull his music off Spotify. Spotify complied and pulled Young's material.

The problem with Young's apparent virtue signaling is that he doesn't own all of his music anymore. In January 2021 he sold 50% of his worldwide copyright and income interests in his 1,180 song catalogue to a company called Hipgnosis.<sup>23</sup> Hipgnosis, in turn, was bankrolled a few months later, in October 2021, with \$1 billion from private equity giant Blackstone,<sup>24</sup> which is seeking to gobble up real estate in the U.S. and turn us into a nation of renters.<sup>25</sup>

And, just one month after that, in November 2021 — perhaps not so coincidentally — the world’s largest asset management firm, BlackRock, decided to “short” sell Hipgnosis by betting £8.9 million (approximately \$12.1 million) against Hipgnosis’ £1.5 billion investment trust.<sup>26</sup>

Among Blackstone’s senior advisers is Jeffrey Kinder,<sup>27</sup> a former chairman and CEO of Pfizer. Hipgnosis/Blackstone, with their intimate Pfizer connection, now own and profit from Young’s music. So, as suggested by Enjeti, it appears there may be far more to this story than Young deciding it’s too dangerous to rock in a free world.

## **Spotify Is Not a Supporter of Free Speech**

Ironically, while Spotify is trying to maintain the illusion that they’re pro free speech and support Rogan, they’ve not only eaten away at Rogan’s valuable library that they paid so heftily for (as of April 13, 2021, 42 episodes had been quietly removed<sup>28</sup>), they also canceled my “Take Control of Your Health” podcast in April 2021 for saying the same things Rogan and his guests discuss today.

The takedown notification stated my podcast was in violation of their content policies, which include a prohibition of infringing content, illegal content and hate content — none of which applies, but the entire channel was taken down anyway, without recourse.

Now, Joe Rogan is sharing the same exact information that I was banned for. Spotify will, however, place “misinformation” warning labels on any show that might not toe the line of the official COVID narrative — another sign that Spotify isn’t the safe haven for free speech that Rogan thought it would be.

**“ It is not hyperbole to observe that there is now a concerted war on any platforms devoted to free discourse and which refuse to capitulate to the demands of Democratic politicians and liberal activists to censor. The spear of the attack are**

**corporate media outlets, who demonize and try to render radioactive any platforms that allow free speech to flourish. ~ Glenn Greenwald”**

In the past, my team challenged Spotify in arbitration after they removed a couple of my episodes, including one on the topic of electromagnetic fields (EMFs). They made specific statements about why certain content could be removed, and the episodes did not fall under any of those categories.

The judge at arbitration, however, said Spotify’s terms of service allowed them to remove anything, for any reason, so there was nothing we could do. We may have been one of the only ones in history to have challenged Spotify on arbitration, as they’ve since updated their terms of service and changed arbitration so that it must take place in New York.

They’ve changed all their policy on this and have continued to blatantly censor content with no explanation other than a vague “violation” of their terms of service.

## **A ‘Religion of Censorship’**

In a January 30, 2022, ZeroHedge article, independent journalist Glenn Greenwald, himself a Substack refugee, noted:<sup>29</sup>

*“Pressure campaign to remove Joe Rogan from Spotify reveals liberal religion of censorship. American liberals are obsessed with finding ways to silence and censor their adversaries.*

*Every week, if not every day, they have new targets they want de-platformed, banned, silenced, and otherwise prevented from speaking or being heard (by ‘liberals,’ I mean the term of self-description used by the dominant wing of the Democratic Party).*

*For years, their preferred censorship tactic was to expand and distort the concept of "hate speech" to mean "views that make us uncomfortable," and then demand that such "hateful" views be prohibited on that basis. For that reason, it is now common to hear Democrats assert, falsely, that the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech does not protect 'hate speech.'*

*Their political culture has long inculcated them to believe that they can comfortably silence whatever views they arbitrarily place into this category without being guilty of censorship.*

*Constitutional illiteracy to the side, the 'hate speech' framework for justifying censorship is now insufficient because liberals are eager to silence a much broader range of voices than those they can credibly accuse of being hateful.*

*That is why the newest, and now most popular, censorship framework is to claim that their targets are guilty of spreading 'misinformation' or 'disinformation.' These terms, by design, have no clear or concise meaning. Like the term 'terrorism,' it is their elasticity that makes them so useful ...*

*Corporate outlets beloved by liberals are free to spout serious falsehoods without being deemed guilty of disinformation, and, because of that, do so routinely. This 'disinformation' term is reserved for those who question liberal pieties, not for those devoted to affirming them ...*

*It is not hyperbole to observe that there is now a concerted war on any platforms devoted to free discourse and which refuse to capitulate to the demands of Democratic politicians and liberal activists to censor. The spear of the attack are corporate media outlets, who demonize and try to render radioactive any platforms that allow free speech to flourish."*

Case in point: Chelsea Clinton — who was born into the lap of luxury and handed a cool \$9 million to serve on a corporate board — tweeted out The Guardian's hit piece about anti-vaxxers making at least \$2.5 million a year from publishing on Substack, with the

comment, “Anti-vaxx grift going strong – why is Substack facilitating science denialists’ ability to profit from destructive lies?”

As noted by Alex Berenson<sup>30</sup> – another Substack refugee named by The Guardian aside from myself – “Chelsea apparently expected Twitter high-fives for her denunciation of ‘anti-vaxx grift.’ 5,600 replies later, things did not go as planned.”

People had no problem finding articles pointing out Chelsea’s own inclination for grift – and some were more popular than her original tweet. As noted by Berenson, “When the first reply ripping you gets more likes than your tweet, you might want to reconsider whether your position is as popular as you thought.”

## **Will the Censored Library Survive on Substack?**

Whether Substack will keep to its course and resist demands for censorship remains to be seen. For now, I’m optimistic.

*“Last year, in an interview with the New York Times, anthropologist Heidi Larson, founder of the Vaccine Confidence Project, said that efforts to silence people who doubt the efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccines won’t get us very far,”* Substack cofounders Hamish McKenzie, Chris Best and Jairaj Sethi wrote in a January 26, 2022, post.<sup>31</sup>

*“‘If you shut down Facebook tomorrow,’ she said, ‘it’s not going to make this go away. It’ll just move.’ Public health solutions, then, would have to come from a different approach. ‘We don’t have a misinformation problem,’ Larson said. ‘We have a trust problem.’*

*This point rings true to us. That’s why, as we face growing pressure to censor content published on Substack that to some seems dubious or objectionable, our answer remains the same: we make decisions based on principles not PR, we will defend free expression, and we will stick to our hands-off approach to content moderation.*

*While we have content guidelines that allow us to protect the platform at the extremes, we will always view censorship as a last resort, because we believe open discourse is better for writers and better for society ...*

*We are living through an epidemic of mistrust ... Trust in social media and traditional media is at an all-time low. Trust in the U.S. federal government to handle problems is at a near-record low. Trust in the U.S.'s major institutions is within 2 percentage points of the all-time low.*

*The consequences are profound. Declining trust is both a cause and an effect of polarization, reflecting and giving rise to conditions that further compromise our confidence in each other and in institutions ...*

*To put it plainly: censorship of bad ideas makes people less likely, not more likely, to trust good ideas. The key to making this all work is giving power to writers and readers. That's why at Substack we focus on subscriptions instead of advertising, and it's why Substack writers own and control their relationships with their readers."*

Without doubt, Substack is presently one of the best sources of "good ideas" available, for the very reason that free speech is allowed. In the end, leadership that depends on censorship to succeed tends to fail, for the simple reason that it erodes trust.

## Sources and References

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- <sup>8, 9</sup> [Counterhate.com January 26, 2022](#)
- <sup>10</sup> [New York Times July 24, 2021 \(Archived\)](#)
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- <sup>14</sup> [CCDH, The Disinformation Dozen](#)
- <sup>15</sup> [The Anti-Vaxx Playbook \(PDF\), Page 43](#)
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