

"So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.

And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters."

– Matthew 8:31–32

What happened?

I was recently asked, by an intelligent person: what happened?

This question admits, that something was indeed happening.

Thesis: We made truth telling impossible.

- Over the last 15 years multiple major meaning/orientation/alignment events unfolded
 1. Emergence of 4th wave feminism
 2. Migration crisis
 3. DEI turn
 4. Climate crisis
 5. COVID crisis
 6. Ukraine war
 7. Gaza war
- In each of the above cases the following, faulty reasoning was used to silence dissenting voices:
 1. Policy A is intended to promote X.
 2. You oppose Policy A.
 3. Therefore, you oppose X. ¹

1. In climate debates, one particularly common version is:

Climate scientists say climate change is real.

Policy A is proposed in response.

You oppose Policy A.

Therefore, you deny climate science.

Logically, this doesn't follow. A person can accept the scientific diagnosis while disagreeing about the policy prescription.

An analogy would be: Doctors agree obesity is a problem. A soda tax is proposed. Opposing the soda tax does not necessarily mean believing obesity doesn't exist. [example by CHATGPT]

(The flaw is that support for a goal (X) and support for a particular means of achieving that goal (Policy A) are not the same thing. Someone can support X while believing Policy A is ineffective, counterproductive, or inferior to another approach.).²

- It is a wide range of topics, and in order to keep a public post, receive funding or to simply stay within the acceptable conversation boundaries, one has to check all the boxes, the result was a sweeping purge. Keeping the job or gaining momentum meant one, or a combination of the following:
 1. Genuine activism on the “correct” side of the argument
 2. Careerism or cynicism (Machiavellianism)
 3. Staying silent
 4. Not understanding the issue
- In this way, we dismissed majority of voices signalling that “something is happening” or “something is about to happen”. They were either silenced or decided to withdraw. The purge included people who are not necessarily dissenting to the officially adopted set of policies, but simply pointed to the reasoning fallacy mentioned above. They were also silenced.
- As a side effect, it became very easy to score political points by simply making common sense observations about reality. To this our response was further ad hominem attacks.
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2. Depending on how it's used, related rhetorical devices include:

- **False dilemma (false dichotomy):** Presenting only two options—support Policy A or be against X—when other positions exist.
- **Association fallacy (guilt by association / inverse form):** Associating opposition to the policy with opposition to the cause.
- **Straw man:** If it misrepresents the opponent's actual position ("You oppose A, therefore you must oppose X").
- **Motte-and-bailey (sometimes):** Defending a controversial policy by retreating to the much less controversial cause it claims to serve. Critics of the policy are then portrayed as critics of the cause itself.
- **Appeal to motive or moral framing:** Treating disagreement over means as evidence of bad values or intentions.

- As a result, we generated a structural bias to most areas of cultural and scientific output together with inability to detect it. We also excluded vast amount of topics from polite conversation, research, public political debate and legitimate democratic representation.
- Thus, we are left with skewed perception of "what is happening", a completely paralysed public debate and complacency-based hiring and promotion system in the public sector with most of cultural and scientific production supporting this structure. It is a vicious cycle.

- Selected tools to understand the situation better:

1. Group dynamics theory by W. Bion – distinction between working and base assumption group

2. logical fallcies:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_fallacies