

Acknowledgements

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When the stars align, social media can be an appreciable tool for creating social fabric. Many people criticize Twitter as a purveyor of online hate, and this is doubtless true in many cases. But the platform also provides a uniquely democratic opportunity to bypass technocratic gatekeepers and communicate with anyone, no matter their social status. I have enjoyed this intellectual and human potential. Beyond a mostly friendly crowd which has engaged me in a number of fruitful debates, I have discovered new colleagues and sometimes made new friends, personalities who have welcomed critical perspectives on the Covid response with a heartwarming measure of humanity, grace, and intellectual support. A very special mention in this respect goes to Toby Green, Ian Sollieć, Anthony LaMesa, Daniel Hadas, Ondřej Krátký, Jason Strecker, Kevin Bardosh, Maximilien Lacour, Thomas Fazi, Jenin Younes, and Jay Bhattacharya. Your kindness in these troubled times has meant more to me than I can express.

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This book incorporates material from previously published works, which have informed and shaped its development. I have revised and expanded them into the broader scope and arguments presented here. They include:

- Blaive, Muriel. “(Literally) Scared to Death: The Urgency of a Balanced Debate about Covid.” *Britské listy*, October 9, 2020, <https://blisty.cz/art/101421-literally-scared-to-death.html>.
- Blaive, Muriel. “Surveillance Society: From Communist Czechoslovakia to Contemporary Western Democracies.” In *East Central Europe* 49, nos. 2–3 (October 2022): 254–75.
- Blaive, Muriel. “Illiberal Liberalism: Covid and the Moral Crisis of the Left.” *Review of Democracy*, November 17, 2023, <https://revdem.ceu.edu/2023/11/17/illiberal-liberalism-covid-and-the-moral-crisis-of-the-left/>.
- Blaive, Muriel. “Censorship is unacceptable in democracies—It also disqualifies the ‘We didn’t know’ argument,” *Collateral Global*, February 8, 2024, <https://collateralglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/censorship-unacceptable-democracies.pdf>.

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