

## What is Soft Fascism, Anyway?

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Wednesday, February 12, 2014

<https://politicsrespun.org/2014/02/what-is-soft-fascism-anyway/>



[I keep writing about soft fascism.](#) Why is that, anyway?

Soft fascism is a process of anti-democratic governing that is not as overtly totalitarian or authoritarian as more historically memorable fascist states. Soft fascist governing has features like:

1. corrupt electoral processes
2. legislative tactics that undermine democratic engagement
3. warrantless monitoring of citizens
4. limiting the time that legislatures sit
5. silencing of public servants
6. disregarding court rulings against legislative abuses
7. criminalizing dissent

Naomi Wolf's 2007 book, [The End of America: A Letter of Warning to a Young Patriot](#), and her [article](#) in the UK's Guardian newspaper helped begin an analysis of how relatively free societies can begin to close, with fascist tactics, while remaining ostensibly free societies. Thus, the fascism is of a softer variety.

Also in 2007, US Republican presidential candidate Ron Paul began talking about soft fascism, referring to the [military-industrial complex](#) and [corporatism](#) as motivating a reduction in civil liberties.

Groups, people and actions emerging or growing since 2007 that oppose soft fascist governance include the [Indignados](#), those opposing corporate rights treaties and agreements, the [Occupy Movement](#), [Edward Snowden](#), [Anonymous \(group\)](#), [The Yes Men](#), [Chelsea Manning](#), and [WikiLeaks](#).

Here's the basic question: does the action of a government enhance or inhibit democracy, civil rights and freedom? These days, while feeling like the frog in the slowing boiling pot, we need to be aware of the hot water. If we don't jump out, it's our fault.