

PHILOSOPHY, THEOLOGY

THE SOURCE OF OUR POWER

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A benefit of the recent political development are interesting articles that would not have surfaced otherwise. Here is one [explaining personal and institutional power](#)

Personal and positional power are not mutually exclusive. You can have personal power without being in a position of power and you can be in a position of power but not have personal power, but you can also have both. You might be tempted to think that this is a Venn situation here with the sweet spot of power being the conjunction of positional and personal power, but it's more nuanced than that. Positional power can be a crutch. It can keep someone from effectively developing personal power...

As soon as someone surrenders to the temptation to use malignant power they are exposing their lack of personal power. As they continue to resort to malignant power, it becomes increasingly obvious that they possess no personal power. This eventually spins out of control.

Like positional power, malignant power is also removable. You can't do that with personal power because it is inherent to the individual. Generally speaking, once someone has experience or knowledge, it's not going anywhere (barring some sort ailment or accident). So people with positional and malignant power will always feel threatened by personal power.

Another must read is [theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/03/how-to-build-an-autocracy/513872/](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/03/how-to-build-an-autocracy/513872/)

Nobody's repealed the First Amendment, of course, and Americans remain as free to speak their minds as ever—provided they can stomach seeing their timelines fill up with obscene abuse and angry threats from the pro-Trump troll armies that police Facebook and Twitter. Rather than deal with digital thugs, young people increasingly drift to less political media like Snapchat and Instagram.

Trump-critical media do continue to find elite audiences. Their investigations still win Pulitzer Prizes; their reporters accept invitations to anxious conferences about corruption, digital-journalism standards, the end of nato, and the rise of populist authoritarianism. Yet somehow all of this earnest effort feels less and less relevant to American politics. President Trump communicates with the people directly via his Twitter account, ushering his supporters toward favorable information at Fox News or Breitbart.