

# The death of Covid tyranny may be nigh

*Are we finally heading back to the old normal?*

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*Getty Images*

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The enormous gulf between observational data and the unshakeable cult-like belief system of the scientific-political elite on lockdowns is baffling. Curves for Covid cases, hospitalisations

and deaths give no clue about when countries and US states locked down, how hard and for how long. Hundreds of millions have suffered between the callousness of the modelling dogmatists, panic-fuelling media, authoritarian instincts of social engineers and cowardice of science-challenged politicians. Children and the elderly were both badly betrayed by the pandemic lockdowns. We've endured extraordinarily widespread human suffering, long-term economic devastation and reckless government spending for a year. 'Experts' are also perplexed by low mortality rates in countries like India and Nepal where hard lockdowns proved unsustainable. Are the modelling epidemiologists depraved, demented or just criminally incompetent?

The dam of scepticism may be about to burst as growing numbers abandon the Covid tyranny. A review by the UK's Health Advisory and Recovery Team, which includes eminent public health and medical specialists, published a major study in March: 'Many international studies bear out that lockdowns have proven to be a complete failure as a public health measure to contain a respiratory virus'. They called for a return to the lockdown-free pre-Covid-19 pandemic plan.

Obedience reigns when people defer to authority and do as told, regardless of what's right. Resistance builds when a critical mass believe 'authority' has morphed into authoritarianism and start doing what's right, regardless of diktats. Lord Sumption thinks England is already into civil disobedience. While others go on noisy street protests, growing numbers of English, especially the elderly who have been vaccinated, are quietly ignoring rules that no longer command respect. In the US, Texas, Mississippi, Iowa, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma and Alabama are reopening despite dire warnings of 'highly transmissible variants' and another report from the Centres for Disease Control and

Prevention (CDC). Governor Greg Abbott tweeted on 2 March: 'I just announced Texas is OPEN 100 per cent. EVERYTHING.' Real-world data has cut through from eleven other states without restrictive measures. On school closures, parents are awakening to the reality that science-illiterate governments are captured by teachers' unions. Steve Waterson's lockdown-critical article in the Australian attracted a huge number of positive comments online. The riposte by John Kaldor of the Kirby Institute, restating the approved narrative, received mainly hostile comments, tinged with anger. This wouldn't have been the case a few months ago.

Stephen Miller wrote in *The Spectator* (29 December): 'Anthony Fauci must go'. The 80-year-old top US infectious diseases official since 1984 and chief medical adviser to President Joe Biden seems embarrassment-proof. He has serially flip-flopped and moved goalposts on masks, double-masking and herd immunity based on his readings of the public and political mood. Addressing CPAC on 27 February, South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem said: 'Fauci is wrong a lot'. Because she refused to shut down, Fauci told her to expect 10,000 patients in the hospital. 'On our worst day, we had a little over 600' and 'never exceeded our hospital capacity'. Fauci responded the next day, telling Noem: 'just take a look at the numbers they don't lie': South Dakota has the eighth-highest Covid death rate among US states. This is a curious response. Fauci implicitly conceded Noem's account of their conversation, but remains insouciant that actual hospitalisations were only one-sixteenth his grim prediction. South Dakota's relatively high mortality ranking is worthy of comment, but seven other lockdown states being worse is not noteworthy for Fauci. In fact he praised New York's performance last July. On 19 March, NY had 2,547 deaths per million compared to South Dakota's 2,169. Nor can Governor Andrew Cuomo match Noem's boast of 'the lowest unemployment rate in the nation'.

Last month, the Economist said without vaccinations, ‘the pandemic threatened to take more than 150m lives’, with no source or explanation for this Spanish Flu-like estimate. I wrote previously of Neil Ferguson’s lineage on catastrophically wrong modelling. On 16 March 2020, Deputy Chief Medical Officer Paul Kelly said 50,000-150,000 Australians could die from the coronavirus with 20-60 per cent of the population being infected. ‘The death rate is around 1 per cent. You can do the maths’. ‘This is a horrendous scenario’, Chief Medical Officer Brendan Murphy said on 7 April. ‘A daily demand for new intensive care beds of 35,000-plus’. Against those grim warnings, Australia’s Covid-19 deaths to date are 909, cases under 30,000 and ICU daily peak occupancy never topped 100. Yet Murphy was rewarded by being appointed Health Secretary and Kelly succeeded him as Chief Medical Officer.

An article in the New Republic on 18 June warned ‘Florida Man Leads His State to the Morgue’. Yet Florida today has above average results on key pandemic metrics. Among people over 65, its death rate is 50 per cent lower than New York’s and 20 per cent below California’s, according to Allysia Finley using CDC data. Florida’s employment fell by 4.6 per cent last year, compared to 8 per cent in California and 10.4 per cent in New York. In the leisure and hospitality sector specifically, the declines were 15 per cent, 30 per cent and 39 per cent, respectively. In an MSNBC interview on 17 February, Biden’s coronavirus adviser Andy Slavitt visibly struggled to explain lockdown California’s and open Florida’s health outcomes: ‘that’s just a little beyond our explanation’. You don’t say.

Governor Ron DeSantis credits Florida’s better results in protecting seniors to the advice of the authors of the Great Barrington Declaration and their advocacy of ‘focussed protection’. Like him, they’ve been vilified by the medical,

epidemiological and public health establishment and smeared by public commentators who warned Florida would become a death trap because of reckless and unscientific policies. Americans have been voting with their feet, moving out of California and New York but into Florida, such that construction wages and salaries fell by 4.8/9.3 per cent in the first two but rose by 3.2 per cent in Florida. In March the Wall Street Journal became the first major newspaper to endorse the Great Barrington Declaration. While DeSantis is finally receiving national credit, albeit grudgingly from the NY Times, New York's Andrew Cuomo has gone from hero in 2020 to zero this year with lies, evasions and cover-ups on nursing home deaths and multiple allegations of sexual misconduct towards subordinates, and California's Governor Gavin Newsom is battling a recall campaign. Hopefully, the gathering revolt by US states will cascade across the world to restore balance, proportionality and the old normal.