

Prof. Robert Dingwall on Corona, Sociology and the UK situation

Interview, November 16, 2020, by Dr. Clemens Heni, political scientist and Prof. Robert Dingwall:

Robert Dingwall is a Professor at Nottingham Trent University and one of the UK's leading sociologists, having advised on government policy for pandemics since the Blair government of the early 2000s. He is currently part of two advisory groups supporting the UK Government on their response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Topics of this interview are:

- the role of sociology during the pandemic
- the troubling focus on economy only in the UK – and not on all of social sciences
- the ignorance of existing epidemic plans (for Influenza) during Covid-19
- no scholarly justification for school closures, mask wearing and 2 meter distancing (one meter was the rule before)
- population or herd immunity
- discussion about the Great Barrington Declaration
- nasty defamation of critics in the Guardian (like against epidemiologist Prof. Sunetra Gupta from Oxford University)
- place for critics in the Daily Mail, strange new friends or allies during the Corona crisis
- situation of students in Manchester and the UK during Corona
- mental health problems when locked down
- at the end: a few remarks about Nottingham Forest and

football, of course

How irrational will Biden's Corona policies be?

The Times of Israel (Blogs) | Nov. 11, 2020 |

The incredibly egotistic Corona politics of the Western world is killing people and does not save a single 84-year-old person in a nursing home. Ever since March 2020, politicians keep on destroying our democracies by pretending to be able to stop an acute respiratory virus. That is, from an epidemiological point of view, unscholarly in nature, as far as I understand research in that field. I dealt with the Great Barrington Declaration in my last piece a few days ago.

Let's listen to Professor Sunetra Gupta from Oxford:

Sunetra Gupta, professor of theoretical epidemiology in the Department of Zoology at the University of Oxford, told The Australian our government's "self-congratulatory" approach is misguided and will have negative long-term consequences for the nation.

She said if we let the virus – which 80 to 90 per cent of the population will only get asymptotically – spread naturally, with strong protections for those most vulnerable, it would protect all Australians from future viral threats and save our economy.

The cynicism of our world today goes like this: "You shall not die from Covid – if you die of isolation, despair, hunger or other serious diseases, that does not matter at all. You shall not die from Covid, that is what our life is all about in the future."

We know that the infection fatality rate (IFR) of Covid-19 is 0.23 percent at the maximum. This is the number the World Health Organization (WHO) is spreading via a bulletin of Professor John P.A. Ioannidis, who analyzed over 60 studies worldwide about the IFR of Corona. What most people still do not understand, and the media refuses to tell them: America has not a small number of 9.9 million Corona cases, as all media outlets and politicians pretend.

The US is more likely to have some 103 million Corona cases right now! Why and what does that mean? First of all, that is good news, not panic-driven maniac like mainstream prefers. Secondly, some 103 million Corona cases might be the correct number which translates into the 238.000 deaths attributed to Corona in 2020 so far in the US, based on an IFR of 0.23 percent. The WHO most recently proclaimed that we have some 750 million Corona cases worldwide – and not the official number of some 51 million as of Nov. 10, 2020. In the WHO bulletin, Ioannidis speaks about more than half a billion Corona cases, as of mid September 2020:

Acknowledging these limitations, based on the currently available data, one may project that over half a billion people have been infected as of 12 September, 2020, far more than the approximately 29 million documented laboratory-confirmed cases. Most locations probably have an infection fatality rate less than 0.20% and with appropriate, precise non-pharmacological measures that selectively try to protect high-risk vulnerable populations and settings, the infection fatality rate may be brought even lower.

You see the difference? Some official 50 million people compared to over 500 million people, who are Corona cases – almost all of them with no knowledge about it, as the infection did not make them sick, no symptoms, nothing. Read: most people worldwide have asymptomatic Corona cases and are not counted in the official numbers. Why is the mainstream media still so unprofessional and unscholarly in nature and ignores these facts?

We must fear, though, that the too-old-for-President Joe Biden will push the US into even more panic. He wants a nation-wide mandatory mask-wearing, despite not a single scholarly study before 2020 that could show that masks in public work. The latter is the result of an article in a mainstream medical journal by Professor Ines Kappstein from Germany, an expert in hospital hygiene. It was published on August 18, 2020 (online, as well as printed) about the uselessness of the ordinary face-mask. She comes to the conclusion, that there is no scholarly evidence that masks in public work. Worse: they may rather make people sick and do not prevent them from receiving the virus either, according to Kappstein. What masks do, however, is to destroy our Western democracies from inside. They destroy the very nature of human beings – smiling, interacting via the face in the first place. If we keep on pretending that Corona is a threat to the entire society, we ignore scholarship on the fatality rate and we destroy our entire culture, economy, and social life.

Then, look at a paper in the British Telegraph by Israeli and American scholars, who emphasize the T-cell cross-immunity of most people on earth – otherwise, the death toll would be much higher. Lockdowns, though, are a disaster:

Any rational government should urgently invest effort in conducting surveys of cross immunity and other types of preexisting cellular immunity, which cost next-to-nothing compared to the funds spent on PCR testing, contact tracing, and of course, lockdowns. In short, it is extremely likely

that most of us are at least partially immune to Covid-19. Let's accept this fact and try to quantify it. Continued self-destruction is a bad alternative.

We need to protect the most vulnerable and to restart living normal lives. Corona will be with us like Influenza for the years to come and that is no catastrophe at all. The authoritarian behavior of our governments, the panic-driven media and people, who defame all critics of the irrational Corona policies for being neo-Nazis and conspiracy-driven maniacs (many are, but not all!), is a catastrophe for our democracy, though. Spread the positive word: We can live with Corona as we can live with many other viruses. Hope is in the air.

I doubt, though, that Joe Biden has good scholarly advice, when it comes to Corona – compared to the Governor of Florida, Ron DeSantis, for example. His and his allies or expert's propaganda in recent months and his obsessive mask-wearing indicate that he is out of touch with the most updated research in epidemiology, virology, immunology and – most importantly – public health and the social sciences, let alone the humanities. From the very beginning, Biden said, “follow the experts”, while ignoring many of them, like star epidemiologist John Ioannidis, who warned as early as March 2020 about a fiasco in the making.

Never has there been such an anti-intellectual climate in all our western countries. Philosophy and the understanding of risks have been treated like useless parts of the ivory tower. Unscholarly testing via PCR – a test never developed for diagnosis by Nobel Prize Laureate Kary Mullis (1944-2019)* – and 24/7 panic statements from Fauci, Biden or CNN are not helpful. According to a response by the German state of Berlin to an inquiry, PCR tests are not able to trace augmentable portions of the virus. Most recently, the football team of Salzburg in Austria has been tested for Covid, and the results

changed from negative to positive, and then to negative again for the very same players in a few days – and in the very same laboratory. This is just the latest inaccuracy based on these PCR tests.

We need an approach that is not cynically saying that all kinds of death of young and not so old people (under 70) are OK – like hunger, suicide due to economic or cultural and social despair – as long as these people do not die of Covid. That must stop. Period.

Trump was a shame for America, will Biden be better? I fear, when it comes to Corona, Biden will also become a failure for America and the Western world. Contrary to most European countries, though, at this point, Biden seems to be against another lockdown – at least, he insinuated like this before he was elected. NOW, though, he seems to be open for any kind of devastating lockdown, again, as FoxNews reports Nov 11, 2020. This report includes statements from well-known feminist Naomi Wolf, who voted for Biden and now says that she would never have voted for him in the first place if he had said during the campaign, that lockdowns are a great option for him.

But mandatory masks might just be another lockdown for many people as well, as a 24/7 masked society in public is no longer a society – protecting the vulnerable would be much more important a thing to do, without fueling panic among the entire nation. Perhaps Ron DeSantis can explain to Biden, how to scholarly analyze Corona in a calm and serious manner, like he did in his legendary press conference on Sept. 25, 2020, when Florida's Governor lifted most Corona restrictions in his state.

About the Author

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- You see the very unscholarly nature of our press – here: Reuters – who deny that Mullis said that any PCR test

was not developed for diagnosis, while they very well understand, that PCR tests cannot say at all if a person is infectious – and that is the only reasons why we are tested in the first place!! Reuters claims: “It is important to note that detecting viral material by PCR does not indicate that the virus is fully intact and infectious, i.e. able to cause infection in other people. The isolation of infectious virus from positive individuals requires virus culture methods. These methods can only be conducted in laboratories with specialist containment facilities and are time consuming and complex.”

- In this video, Mullis explains, that one can decode any kind of molecule, if you use many cycles. He also says, that a positive PCR test does not at all indicate that someone is sick – or infectious. Reuters does not even analyze how unscholarly any Ct-value above 30 is, based on serious scholarship in molecular biology. Only less than 30 cycles (Ct-values) may indicate that a person indeed may be infectious, but most laboratories in the US use way over 30 cycles, up to 40 cycles, as the New York Times reported months ago: “In three sets of testing data that include cycle thresholds, compiled by officials in Massachusetts, New York and Nevada, up to 90 percent of people testing positive carried barely any virus, a review by The Times found. On Thursday, the United States recorded 45,604 new coronavirus cases, according to a database maintained by The Times. If the rates of contagiousness in Massachusetts and New York were to apply nationwide, then perhaps only 4,500 of those people may actually need to isolate and submit to contact tracing. One solution would be to adjust the cycle threshold used now to decide that a patient is infected. Most tests set the limit at 40, a few at 37. This means that you are positive for the coronavirus if the test process required up to 40 cycles, or 37, to detect the virus.” The Reuters fact-checkers fail and do

not indicated how poorly PCR test work in reality.

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