

Inquiring Minds: Herd Immunity and Herd Mentality

#60 Sept 2020 “Blind belief in authority is the greatest enemy of truth.” — Albert Einstein [More quotes on Independent thinking](#)

[Intro](#). Past Issues, 2011 to 2020: [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) [7](#) [8](#) [9](#) [10](#) [11](#) [12](#) [13](#), [14](#) [15](#) [16](#) [17](#) [18](#) [19](#) [20](#) [21](#) [22](#) [23](#) [24](#) [25](#) [26](#) [27](#) [28](#) [29](#) [30](#) [31](#) [32](#) [33](#) [34](#) [35](#) [36](#) [37](#) [38](#) [39](#) [40](#) [41](#) [42](#) [43](#) [44](#) [45](#) [46](#) [47](#) [48](#) [49](#) [50](#) [51](#) [52](#) [53](#) [54](#) [55](#) [56](#) [57](#) [58](#) [59](#)

TWO OF MY FAVORITE REAL-LIFE HEROINES (OUT OF MANY): RUTH AND RACHEL

Just as I was researching talk show host, [Rachel Maddow](#), I remembered that it was 6 pm and time for



her show on MSNBC. It was then that I heard her interviewing Hillary Clinton about the death of Supreme Court Justice [Ruth Bader Ginsberg](#). Shocked, I put on my headset so I could listen in my office as I wrote about what Rachel had reported two days earlier about the president’s most recent misinformed belief which is detailed below.

TRUMP’S LATEST NON-SCIENTIFIC BELIEF COULD COST MILLIONS OF LIVES IF FOLLOWED

Maddow told how Stanford retired Radiologist and Fox News frequent guest, Dr. Scott Atlas, a non-epidemiologist whose views, subsequently [condemned by 78 of Stanford staff](#), caught the attention of our 45th president who then made Atlas his advisor. [Atlas discourages masks and social distancing, hoping that more young people catch the virus and promote natural herd immunity. This belief was concretized into action](#)

1) by letters from the Administration to Republican Governors, giving them rationale and impetus to make legally binding policy for their constituents; 2) by DT’s blatant disregard for existing Arizona law, where he held an indoor political rally, ignoring social distancing, mask wearing, and the prohibition of groups greater than 50; and 3) by the dissemination of dangerous misinformation, contradicting the CDC.

HERD IMMUNITY EXPLAINED AND DEFINED

Herd immunity, not “herd mentality,” as the president mistakenly referred to it, is defined as the percentage of the public who need to become immune to any particular disease for the likelihood of the disease to stop spreading. (1) It is not known, however, if having had Covid-19 will lead to individual immunity and thereby supporting the herd immunity theory. (2) Having the full blown illness might have serious life-

long effects, so a vaccine would be a preferable alternative to achieve herd immunity.

RACHEL’S ROUGH ESTIMATES OF MORE DEATHS BY FOLLOWING NATURAL HERD IMMUNITY

Leave it to Ms. Maddow to work the math even on this harebrained idea. BEST ESTIMATES DATA: 1) [Johns Hopkins estimate is 3%](#) for the coronavirus versus 0.1% for the flu). 2) 60-70% of people must be immune to reach [herd immunity](#), possibly by surviving the virus. 3) The population of the US is about 350 million people. Rachel figured that a very rough, simplistic, and conservative formula would be 1% mortality x (65% herd immunity of 350,000,000 people) would yield below:

$.01 \times (.65 \times 350,000,000) = \mathbf{2,275,000 \text{ more deaths on the possibility that herd immunity will even work!}$ This is not just an idle thought because “45” (as my brother calls him) is implementing this rationale for actually promoting ways of catching the virus, as mentioned above; trying to excuse his inability to provide real leadership in fighting it, while blaming others, lying, threatening, watching TV, tweeting, and playing golf like no president ever has done before, and, hopefully, will never do again.

“HERD MENTALITY” AND ITS CONNECTION TO “HERD IMMUNITY” BECOMES APPARENT

“**Herd Mentality or mob mentality**...describes how people can be influenced by their peers to adopt certain behaviors on a largely emotional, rather than rational, basis. When individuals are affected by mob mentality, they may make different decisions than they would have individually.” -wikipedia

Consider how naive people were duped by charismatic but damaged people such as Jim Jones, Charles Manson, Joe McCarthy, Richard Nixon, etc., even to their deaths. Some saw the error and survived. Some “[drank the Koolade](#),” while others, as in Nixon’s case, when confronted with the actual taped evidence of his crimes forced him to resign. With the new tapes from [Bob Woodward](#), who brought down Nixon, and so many other recent revelations, we shall see. —Best, JB