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White House Coronavirus Response Coordinator Debbie Birx holds a chart showing how the coronavirus testing process will work, during a press conference led by President Donald Trump, who announced a national emergency with regard to the coronavirus in the White House Rose Garden in Washington on March 13, 2020. (Charlotte Cuthbertson/The Epoch Times)

## VIEWPOINTS

# Dr. Birx Praises Herself While Revealing Ignorance, Treachery, and Deceit



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July 18, 2022 Updated: July 18, 2022



Print

*Commentary*

The December 2020 resignation of Dr. [Deborah Birx](#), White House Coronavirus Response Coordinator under Trump, revealed predictable hypocrisy. Like so many other government officials around the world, she was caught violating her own stay-at-home order. Therefore she finally left her post following nine months of causing unfathomable amounts of damage to life, liberty, property, and the very idea of hope for the future.

Even if Anthony Fauci had been the front man for the media, it was Birx who was the main influence in the White House behind the nationwide [lockdowns](#) that did not stop or control the pathogen but have caused immense suffering and continue to roil and wreck the world. So it was significant that she would not and could not comply with her own dictates, even as her fellow citizens were being hunted down for the same infractions against “public health.”

In the days before Thanksgiving 2020, she had [warned](#) Americans to “assume you’re infected” and to restrict gatherings to “your immediate household.” Then she packed her bags and headed to Fenwick Island in Delaware where she met with four generations for a traditional Thanksgiving dinner, as if she were free to make normal choices and live a normal life while everyone else had to shelter in place.

The Associated Press was first out with the [report](#) on Dec. 20, 2020.

“Birx acknowledged in a statement that she went to her Delaware property. She declined to be interviewed.

“She insisted the purpose of the roughly 50-hour visit was to deal with the winterization of the property before a potential sale – something she says she previously hadn’t had time to do because of her busy schedule.

“‘I did not go to Delaware for the purpose of celebrating Thanksgiving,’ Birx said in her statement, adding that her family shared a meal together while in Delaware.

“Birx said that everyone on her Delaware trip belongs to her ‘immediate household,’ even as she acknowledged they live in two different homes. She initially called the Potomac home a ‘3 generation household (formerly 4 generations).’ White House officials later said it continues to be a four-generation household, a distinction that would include Birx as part of the home.”

So it was all a sleight-of-hand: she was staying home; it’s just that she has several homes! This is how the power elite comply, one supposes.

The BBC then quoted her [defense](#), which echo the pain experienced by hundreds of millions:

“My daughter hasn’t left that house in 10 months, my parents have been isolated for 10 months. They’ve become deeply depressed as I’m sure many elderly have as they’ve not been able to see their sons, their granddaughters. My parents have not been able to see their surviving son for over a year. These are all very difficult things.”

Indeed. However, she was the major voice for the better part of 2020 for requiring exactly that. No one should blame her for wanting to get together with family; that she worked so hard for so long to prevent others from doing so is what is at issue.

## Sin of Omission

The press piled on and she announced that she would be leaving her post and not seeking a position at the Biden White House. Trump tweeted that she will be missed. It was the final discrediting—or should have been—of a person that many in the White House and many around the country had come to see as an obvious fanatic and fake, a person whose influence wrecked the liberties and health of an entire country.

It was a fitting end to a catastrophic career. So it would make sense that people might [pick up her new book](#) to find out what it was like to go through that kind of media storm, the real reasons for her visit, what it was like to know for sure that she must violate her own rules in order to bring comfort to her family, and the difficult decision she made to throw in the towel knowing that she has compromised the integrity of her entire program.

One slogs through her entire book only to find this incredible fact: she never mentions this. The incident is missing entirely from her book.

Instead at the moment in the narrative at which she would be expected to recount the affair she says almost in passing that “When former vice president Biden was declared the winner of the 2020 election, I’d set a goal for myself—to hand over responsibility for the pandemic response, with all its many elements, in the best possible place.”

At that point, the book skips immediately to the new year. Done. It’s like Orwell, the story, even though it was reported for days in the world press and became a defining moment in her career, is just wiped out from the history book of her own authorship.

Somehow it makes sense that she would neglect to mention this. Reading her book is a very painful experience (all credit to Michael Senger’s [review](#)) simply because it seems to be weaving fables on page after page, strewn with bromides, completely lacking in self awareness, punctuated by revealing comments that make the opposite point of what she is seeking. Reading it is truly a surreal experience, astonishing especially because she is able to maintain her delusionary pose for 525 pages.

## Chief Lockdown Architect

[Recall](#) that it was she who was tasked—by Anthony Fauci—with doing the really crucial thing of talking Donald Trump into green-lighting the lockdowns that began on March 12, 2020, and continued to their final hard-core deployment on March 16. This was the “15 Days to Flatten the Curve” that turned into two years in many parts of the country.

Her book admits that it was a two-level lie from the beginning.

“We had to make these palatable to the administration by **avoiding the obvious appearance of a full Italian lockdown**,” she writes. “At the same time, we needed the measures to be effective at slowing the spread, which meant matching as closely as possible what Italy had done—a tall order. We were playing a game of chess in which the success of each move was predicated on the one before it.”

Further:

“At this point, **I wasn’t about to use the words lockdown or shutdown**. If I had uttered either of those in early March, after being at the White House only one week, the political, nonmedical members of the task force would have dismissed me as too alarmist, too doom-and-gloom, too reliant on feelings and not facts. They would have campaigned to lock me down and shut me up.”

In other words, she wanted to go full CCP just like Italy but didn't want to say that. Crucially, she knew for sure that two weeks was not the real plan. "I left the rest unstated: that this was just a starting point."

"No sooner had we convinced the Trump administration to implement our version of a two-week shutdown than I was trying to figure out how to extend it," she admits.

"Fifteen Days to Slow the Spread was a start, but I knew it would be just that. **I didn't have the numbers in front of me yet to make the case for extending it longer**, but I had two weeks to get them. However hard it had been to get the fifteen-day shutdown approved, getting another one would be more difficult by many orders of magnitude. In the meantime, I waited for the blowback, for someone from the economic team to call me to the principal's office or confront me at a task force meeting. None of this happened."

It was a solution in search of evidence she did not have. She told Trump that the evidence was there anyway. She actually tricked him into believing that locking down a whole population of people was somehow magically going to make a virus to which everyone would inevitably be exposed somehow vanish as a threat.

Meanwhile, the economy was wrecked domestically and then all over the world, as most governments in the world followed what the United States did.

Where did she come up with the idea of lockdowns? By her own report, her only real experience with infectious disease came from her work on AIDS, a very different disease from a respiratory virus that everyone would eventually get but which would only be fatal or even severe for a small cohort, a fact that was known since late January. Still, her experience counted for more than science.

**"In any health crisis, it is crucial to work at the personal behavior level,"** she says with the presumption that avoidance at all costs was the only goal. "With HIV/AIDS, this meant convincing asymptomatic people to get tested, to seek treatment if they were HIV-positive, and to take preventative measures, including wearing condoms; or to employ other pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) if they were negative."

She immediately hops to the analogy with COVID. “I knew the government agencies would need to do the same thing to have a similar effect on the spread of this novel coronavirus. The most obvious parallel with the HIV/AIDS example was the message of wearing masks.”

Masks = condoms. Remarkable. This “obvious parallel” remark sums the whole depth of her thinking. Behavior is all that matters. Just stay apart. Cover your mouth. Don’t gather. Don’t travel. Close the schools. Close everything. Whatever happens, don’t get it. Nothing else matters. Keep your immune system as unexposed as possible.

I wish I could say her thought is more complex than that but it is not. This was the basis for lockdowns. For how long? In her mind, it seems like it would be forever. Nowhere in the book does she reveal an exit strategy. Not even vaccines qualify.

## Myopic Focus

From the very beginning, she revealed her epidemiological views. On March 16, 2020 at her press conference with Trump, she [summarized](#) her position: “We really want people to be separated at this time.” People? All people? Everywhere? Not one reporter raised a question about this obviously ridiculous and outrageous statement that would essentially destroy life on earth.

But she was serious—seriously deluded not only about how society functions but also about infectious disease of this sort. Only one thing mattered as a metric to her: reducing infections through any means possible, as if she on her own could cobble together a new kind of society in which exposure to airborne pathogens was made illegal.

Here is an example. There was a controversy about how many people should be allowed to gather in one space, as in home, church, store, stadium, or community center. She addresses how she came up with the rules:

“The real problem with this fifty-versus-ten distinction, for me, was that it revealed that the CDC simply didn’t believe to the degree that I did that SARS-CoV-2 was being spread through the air silently and undetected from symptomless individuals. The numbers really did matter. As the years since have confirmed, in times of active viral community spread, as many as fifty people gathered together indoors (unmasked at this point, of course) was way too high a number. It increased the chances of someone among that number being infected exponentially. **I had settled on ten knowing that even that was too many, but I figured that ten would at least be palatable for most Americans**—high enough to allow for most gatherings of immediate family but not enough for large dinner parties and, critically, large weddings, birthday parties, and other mass social events.”

She puts a fine point on it: “if I pushed for zero (**which was actually what I wanted** and what was required), this would have been interpreted as a ‘lockdown’—the perception we were all working so hard to avoid.”

What does it mean for *zero* people to gather? A suicide cult?

In any case, just like that, from her own thinking and straight to enforcement, birthday parties, sports, weddings, and funerals came to be forbidden.

Here we gain insight into the sheer insanity of her vision. It is nothing short of a marvel that she somehow managed to gain the amount of influence she did.

Notice her above mention of her dogma that asymptomatic spread was the whole key to understanding pandemic. In other words, on her own and without any scientific support, she presumed that COVID was both extremely fatal and had a long latency period. To her way of thinking, this is why the usual tradeoff between severity and prevalence did not matter.

She was somehow certain that the longest estimates of latency were correct: 14 days. This is the reason for the “wait two weeks” obsession. She held onto this dogma throughout, almost like the fictional movie “Contagion” had been her only guide to understanding.



Later in the book, she writes that symptoms mean next to nothing because people can always carry around the virus in their nose without being sick. After all, this is what PCR tests have shown. Instead of seeing that as a failure of PCR, she saw this as a confirmation that everyone is a carrier no matter what and therefore everyone has to lock down because otherwise we'll deal with a black plague.

Somehow, despite her astonishing lack of scientific curiosity and experience in this area, she gained all influence over the initial Trump administration response. Briefly, she was godlike.

But Trump was not and is not a fool. He must have had some sleepless nights wondering how and why he had approved the destruction of that which he had seen as his greatest achievement. The virus was long here (probably from October 2019), it presented a specific danger to a narrow cohort, but otherwise behaved like a textbook flu. Maybe, he must have wondered, his initial instincts from January and February 2020 were correct all along.

Still, he very reluctantly approved a 30-day extension of lockdowns, entirely on Birx's urging and with a few other fools standing around. Having given in a second time—still, no one thought to drop an email or make a phone call for a second opinion!—this seemed to be the turning point. Birx reports that by April 1, 2020, Trump had lost confidence in her. He might have intuited that he had been tricked. He stopped speaking to her.

It would still take another month before he would fully rethink everything that he had approved at her behest.

It made no difference. The bulk of her book is a brag fest about how she kept subverting the White House's push to open up the economy—that is, allow people to exercise their rights and freedoms. Once Trump turned against her, and eventually found other people to provide good advice like the tremendously brave Scott Atlas—five months later he arrived in an attempt to save the country from disaster—Birx turned to rallying around her inner circle (Anthony Fauci, Robert Redfield, Matthew Pottinger, and a few others) plus assembling a realm of protection outside of her that included CNN reporter Sanjay Gupta and, very likely, the virus team at the New York Times(which gives her book a glowing [review](#)).



Recall that for the remainder of the year, the White House was urging normalcy while many states kept locking down. It was an incredible confusion. The CDC was all over the map. I gained the distinct impression of two separate regimes in charge: Trump's vs. the administrative state he could not control. Trump would say one thing on the campaign trail but the regulations and disease panic kept pouring out of his own agencies.

Birx admits that she was a major part of the reason, due to her sneaky alternation of weekly reports to the states.

"After the heavily edited documents were returned to me, I'd reinsert what they had objected to, but place it in those different locations. I'd also reorder and restructure the bullet points so the most salient—the points the administration objected to most—no longer fell at the start of the bullet points. I shared these strategies with the three members of the data team also writing these reports. Our Saturday and Sunday report-writing routine soon became: **write, submit, revise, hide, resubmit.**

**"Fortunately, this strategic sleight-of-hand worked.** That they never seemed to catch this subterfuge left me to conclude that, either they read the finished reports too quickly or they neglected to do the word search that would have revealed the language to which they objected. **In slipping these changes past the gatekeepers and continuing to inform the governors of the need for the big-three mitigations—masks, sentinel testing, and limits on indoor social gatherings—I felt confident I was giving the states permission to escalate public health mitigation with the fall and winter coming."**

As another example, once Scott Atlas came to the rescue in August to introduce some good sense into this wacky world, he worked with others to dial back the CDC's fanatical attachment to universal and constant testing. Atlas knew that "track, trace, and isolate" was both a fantasy and a massive invasion of people's liberties that would yield no positive public-health outcome. He put together a new recommendation that was only for those who were sick to test—just as one might expect in normal life.

After a week-long media frenzy, the regulations flipped in the other direction.

Birx reveals that it was her doing:

“This wasn’t the only bit of **subterfuge** I had to engage in. Immediately after the Atlas-influenced revised CDC testing guidance went up in late August, I contacted Bob Redfield .... Less than a week later, Bob [Redfield] and I had finished our rewrite of the guidance and surreptitiously posted it. We had restored the emphasis on testing to detect areas where silent spread was occurring. It was a risky move, and we hoped everyone in the White House would be too busy campaigning to realize what Bob and I had done. We **weren’t being transparent** with the powers that be in the White House ...”

One might ask how the heck she got away with this. She explains:

“[T]he guidance gambit was only the tip of the iceberg of **my transgressions in my effort to subvert** Scott Atlas’s dangerous positions. Ever since **Vice President Pence told me to do what I needed to do**, I’d engaged in very blunt conversations with the governors. I spoke the truth that some White House senior advisors weren’t willing to acknowledge. Censoring my reports and putting up guidance that negated the known solutions was only going to perpetuate Covid-19’s vicious circle. What I couldn’t sneak past the gatekeepers in my reports, I said in person.”

## Missing: Self-reflection

Most of the book consists of her explaining how she headed a kind of shadow White House dedicated to keeping the country in some form of lockdown for as long as possible. In her telling, she was the center of everything, the only person truly correct about all things, given cover by the VP and assisted by a handful of co-conspirators.

Largely missing from the narrative is any discussion of the science gathering outside the bubble she so carefully cultivated. Whereas anyone could have noted the studies pouring out from February onward that threw cold water on her entire paradigm—not to mention 15 years, or make that 50 years, or perhaps 100 years of warnings against such a reaction—from scientists all over the world with vastly more experience and knowledge than she. She cared nothing about it, and evidently still does not.

It's very clear that Birx had almost no contact with any serious scientist who disputed the draconian response, not even John Ioannidis who [explained](#) as early as March 17, 2020, that this approach was madness. But she didn't care: she was convinced that she was in the right, or, at least, was acting on behalf of people and interests who would keep her safe from persecution or prosecution.

For those interested, Chapter 8 provides a weird look into her first real scientific challenge: the seroprevalence study by Jayanta Bhattacharya [published](#) April 22, 2020. It demonstrated that the infection fatality rate—because infections and recovery was far more prevalent than Birx and Fauci were saying—was more in line with what one might expect from a severe flu but with a much more focused demographic impact. Bhattacharya's paper revealed that the pathogen eluded all controls and would likely become endemic as every respiratory virus before. She took one look and concluded that the study had unnamed “fundamental flaws in logic and methodology” and “damaged the cause of public health at this crucial moment in the pandemic.”

And that's it: that's Birx grappling with science. Meanwhile, the article was published in the International Journal of Epidemiology and has over 700 citations. She saw all differences of opinion as an opportunity to go on the attack in order to intensify her cherished commitment to the lockdown paradigm.

Even now, with scientists the world over in outrage, with citizens furious at their governments, with governments falling, with regimes toppling and anger reaching a fevered pitch, while studies pour out by the day showing that lockdowns made no difference and that open societies at least protected their educational systems and economies, she is unmoved. It's not even clear she is aware.

Birx dismisses all contrary cases such as Sweden: Americans could not take that route because we are too unhealthy. South Dakota: rural and backwater (Birx is still mad that the brave Governor Kristi Noem refused to meet with her). Florida: oddly and without evidence she dismisses that case as a killing field, even though its results were better than California while the population influx to the state sets new records.

Nor is she shaken by the reality that there is not one single country or territory anywhere on the planet earth that benefitted from her approach, not even her beloved China which still pursues a zero-COVID approach. As for New Zealand and Australia: she (probably wisely) doesn't mention them at all, even though they followed the Birx approach exactly.

The story of the lockdowns is a tale of Biblical proportions, at once evil and desperately sad and tragic, a story of power, scientific failure, intellectual insularity and insanity, outrageous arrogance, feudalistic impulses, mass delusion, plus political treachery and conspiracy. It is real-life horror for the ages, a tale of how the land of the free became a despotic hellscape so quickly and unexpectedly. Birx was at the center of it, confirming all of your worst fears right here in a book anyone can buy. She is so proud of her role that she dares to take all credit, fully convinced that the Trump-hating media will love and protect her perfidies from exposure and condemnation.

There is no getting around Trump's own culpability here. He never should have let her have her way. Never. It was a case of fallibility matched by ego (he has still not admitted error), but it is a case of enormous betrayal that played off presidential character flaws (like many in his income class, Trump had always been a germaphobe) that ended up wrecking hope and prosperity for billions of people for many years to come.

I've tried for two years to put myself in that scene at the White House that day. It's a hothouse with only trusted souls in small rooms, and the people there in a crisis have the sense that they are running the world. Trump might have drawn on his experience running a casino in Atlantic City. The weather forecasters come to say a hurricane is on the way, so he needs to shut it down. He doesn't want to but agrees in order to do the right thing.

Was this his thinking? Perhaps. Perhaps too someone told him that China's President Xi Jinping managed to crush the virus with lockdowns so he can too, just as the WHO said in its Feb. 26 [report](#). It's also difficult in that environment to avoid the rush of omnipotence, temporarily oblivious to the reality that your decision would affect life from Maine to Florida to California. It was a catastrophic and lawless decision based on pretense and folly.

What followed seems inevitable in retrospect. The economic crisis, inflation, the broken lives, the desperation, the lost rights and lost hopes, and now the growing hunger and demoralization and educational losses and cultural destruction, all of it came in the wake of these fateful days. Every day in this country, even two and a half years later, judges are struggling to regain control and revitalize the Constitution after this disaster.

The plotters usually admit it in the end, taking credit, like criminals who cannot resist returning to the scene of the crime. This is what Dr. Birx has done in her book. But there are clearly limits to her transparency. She never explains the real reason for her resignation—even though it is known the world over—pretending like the entire Thanksgiving fiasco never happened and thus attempting to write it out of the history book that she wrote.

There is so much more to say and I hope this is one review of many because the book is absolutely packed with shocking passages. And yet her 525-page book, now selling at a 50 percent discount, does not contain a single citation to a single scientific study, paper, monograph, article, or book. It has zero footnotes. It offers no go-to authorities and displays not even a hint of humility that would normally be part of any actual scientific account.

And it nowhere offers an honest reckoning for what her influence over the White House and the states foisted on this country and on the world. As the country masks up yet again for a new variant, and is gradually being groomed for another round of disease panic, she can collect whatever royalties come from sales of her book while working at her new gig, a consultant to a company that makes air purifiers (ActivePure). In this latter role, she makes a greater contribution to public health than anything she did while she held the reins of power.

*From the [Brownstone Institute](#)*

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