



Hand Sanitisers Can Kill You

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I tottered to the shops today.

And what a sad, depressing experience it was.

The ambitious new world leaders, led by the Myra Hindley and Ian Brady Foundation, Josef Stalin's Academy for the Weak Spirited and the Mao tse Tung school of obedience have destroyed the High Street.

Small shops were already suffering – destroyed by a combination of the internet, charity shops and obscenely high local taxes – but now the shops are on the ward where everyone walks on tip toes and whispers. The sort of ward where, in the old days, you'd be as likely to see a priest, a vicar, a rabbi or an imam as you would to see a doctor or a nurse. These days, of course, the men and women of religion are all hiding in the cupboard under their stairs, shivering with fright.

There weren't many people buying anything. Shopping has become a miserable experience. The charity shops were all shut so I took a pile of DVDs to an establishment which would have been called a junk shop in the old days but which is probably a curio specialist or an antique dealer now. The woman behind the counter seemed pleased enough.

Not many people were wearing masks and I was pleased to see that most people seemed to be happily ignoring the rules about social distancing.

But there were some terrified souls about. There were a couple of young families, all masked up, with even tiny tots wearing masks, and one or two older folk were wearing masks too. Half of them were, I noticed, wearing their masks over their mouths but not their noses which made the effort pretty pointless, of course. One middle aged couple were wearing masks, yellow rubber washing up gloves and hats to which they'd sewn material so that their necks were covered. I wish I was making this up. Honestly, I wish I was making it up. I bet they'd blocked their back door keyhole so that the bug couldn't get in that way.

They looked so truly pathetic that I felt sorry for them and I was filled with anger for the people who have been busy promoting the fear.

Tom Hanks, who appears to have completed a medical degree since his last film, has been telling us all that he won't respect us in the morning if we don't wear our masks like good little children.

Well, screw you Tom. Your arrogance in thinking that I give a toss about your respect is matched only by your arrogance in thinking that you know what you are talking about.

It is reported that a scientist from the Royal Society has said much the same thing, though as far as I know he didn't have a film to promote. He didn't seem to have a medical degree either.

A professor of chemical engineering also said we should wear masks.

I wonder if any of them know that two Chinese boys died wearing masks. I wonder if any of them have read the video I made about the research that has been done into mask wearing.

These, and people like them, reminded me that when I was younger and we were allowed out more, I used to go and watch cricket and if there was a Test Match on there would invariably be a call for a doctor to go to the pavilion because one of the players needed medical attention.

I would go along and find myself at the back of a queue of blokes all anxious to help. And none of them would be medical doctors. One would have a doctorate in philosophy, another would have a doctorate in music and the third would be a bishop with a doctorate in theological studies. They all turned up wanting to get into the dressing room and rub shoulders with the cricketers and they all seemed surprised that they weren't needed.

'Oh, I didn't know you needed a medical doctor,' they would say, apparently astonished, as they backed out of the dressing room when their inappropriate skills had been rejected.

Dr Tom thingy and the bloke from the Royal Society reminded me of those idiots.

And now, of course, a pile of 239 assorted scientists have decided that the bug can hang around long after someone has sneezed. And the WHO has leapt on the idea as enthusiastically as a 7-year-old leaping on the sticky bun plate at a children's party. The quickest way to become important and famous is to say something that fits in with the WHO's current lunacies and pro vaccine propaganda.

Gosh and golly what a surprise that was. The bug can hang around. Who would have thought it? I bet they want us to have more social distancing. A hundred yards perhaps, or maybe two hundred yards out of doors and a slightly longer distance indoors. I don't know if any of them were doctors but what does any of this matter other than as a means to terrify the ignorant and the susceptible? If 239 market gardeners had said we all needed to smear ourselves with custard, the WHO would have been thrilled. As long as Mr Gates approved, of course. I can't wait for the Manchester United supporters club to make a statement on the use of masks.

Meanwhile, I wonder what you call 200 moronic scientists?

A diarrhoea of scientists, perhaps?

None of these buffoons seems to have noticed that it isn't how many people get an infection that matters – it's how many die of it. And you have to look at the risk benefit ratio. You have to look at how many are harmed by wearing masks. You have to look at the way people's quality of life is affected adversely.

If we need to wear masks because of the coronavirus then we need to wear masks all the time to protect us against the flu. Is that really what people want?

Back to my shopping expedition.

In one establishment I was asked to take a photograph of one of those funny squiggly black and white things on my phone and to download an app so that they could make a record of all my details. I showed them the old phone which I carry with me. It was built in the 1990s and it doesn't have a camera. It'll only just about make and receive calls.

'Oh, that's all right, sir,' said the bloke at the door, looking rather sorry for me. 'Just write your name, address and phone number on a piece of paper and leave it with us.' He pointed to some scraps of paper and a cheap pen.

I thought that was fine. I don't mind anyone knowing that my name is B. Johnson, that I live at 10 Acacia Avenue in Milton Keynes and that I happen to have the same telephone number as Buckingham Palace. Three days ago, I was D. Crockett of The Alamo, Texas. Sometimes I'm Dr John Holliday of the OK Corral. If my very good lady and I go out together we are Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow and we are moving about a good deal so can't give a permanent address.

'Are you any relation to Davy Crockett?' asked a youth, the last time I was D. Crockett. I said he was my great grandfather and that I'd still got his coonskin cap in a drawer at home.

You mustn't do this, of course. It might be naughty. I'm in so much trouble it no longer makes any difference.

Oh, and before you think I might get found out by my credit card - I always pay cash. If they won't

take cash I don't buy.

As I wandered around the shops I couldn't help noticing that there was a lot of sanitiser around. Every time I went into a shop I was invited to try their sanitiser. It was like passing the perfume counter in a department store. Would you like to try this aftershave? A squirt here and a little squirt there. Visit six shops and you'd have had six squirts of sanitiser. Well, some folk might have. I said no thanks and marched past them and no one ran after me. The few customers who were around couldn't buy anything because they were all constantly trying to wipe the goo off their hands. When you've used six lots of sanitiser, the layers of stickiness must take hours to remove. The ones doing social distancing looked very strange as they rubbed their hands and dodged first to the left and then to the right and then back again. My level of social distancing is to try to avoid bumping into people.

What none of these shoppers knew is that there is evidence that it isn't just masks which can kill people. Sanitisers can be deadly too.

In America, the FDA has warned of a sharp increase in the number of hand sanitiser products that are labelled to contain ethanol but which actually contain methanol – which can be toxic when absorbed through the skin and can be life threatening if swallowed. So some hand sanitisers can cause nausea, vomiting, headache, blurred vision, permanent blindness, seizures, coma, permanent damage to the nervous system or the ultimate side effect – death. That's the type of death that you only get once. If repeatedly used as a hand rub skin absorption can cause chronic toxicity and sight damage.

A paper I have seen in 'Infectious Diseases Consultant' confirms the danger. And there is a two year old paper in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health entitled 'Methanol as an unlisted ingredient in supposedly alcohol based hand rubs can pose serious health risk'.

It's nigh on impossible to know which sanitisers are deadly because some of them are mislabelled. And besides, when a shop insists that you use their hand sanitiser are you really going to try to read the label? Even if it's got a label. They probably got the stuff from a bloke who usually does their drains and bought a supply from a mate on the market who knows someone in China. You could use some sanitising gels to strip paint.

If a shop assistant ever does run after me demanding that I use their store sanitiser I shall simply say that I have a skin allergy and that I'll develop a serious rash and possibly go into anaphylactic shock if I succumb to their blandishments.

'I have two lawsuits outstanding against retail establishments,' I'll point out regretfully. 'But if you insist on taking the risk, could I have your name first?'

I'll lay decent odds they'll suddenly decide I don't need to use the goo after all.

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Vernon Coleman's books on medicine include 'How to stop your doctor killing you' and 'Coleman's Laws' – both of which are available on Amazon as paperbacks and eBooks.

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