

## **Covid inquisitors**

In a general sense, an inquisitor is one whose actions are a result of an unshakable belief in a fixed axiom or purpose. The fixed belief causes the inquisitor to become, in the extreme, a fanatic capable of committing any evil.

The fanatic absolutizes his truth and believes his absolutization unconditionally. He gives no room for any other opinion or rational argumentation that might lead to conclusions that in any way challenge his beliefs. He seeks to destroy the holders of such views - physically in the past, today by slander and dehumanisation.

The inquisitor interferes with the rights and liberties of others, either directly in the past or today through his significant influence on the executive branches of the state. In addition to powerful people with social status and high standing, inquisitors can also be considered to be their "sycophants", both the generally respected ones and, for example, unsuccessful yet highly ambitious scientists.

### **Who is the Covid Inquisitor?**

The belief of the Covid Inquisitor is the utility function of "minimizing COVID deaths". He subordinates everything to this purpose, with minimal reflection on the fundamental consequences of COVID measures on the population. He cannot see the wood from the trees and refuses to perceive the serious consequences of restrictions on the mental and physical health of the entire population, including children, resulting in enormous amounts of trauma and suffering. The measures ultimately shorten human lives and cause more loss of life than the virus itself, as I explain in the blog post [Corona in Mathematics and Humanity](#). Another major issue is, of course, the economic impact, the consequences of which are yet to be seen.

Covid's inquisitors are therefore ultimately highly irrational. However, they have succeeded in confusing a section of the public and creating the impression that they are the only bearers of truth. They gleefully label their opponents as modern-day heretics - irrational disinformers.

A concrete example of Covid's inquisitors, in my opinion, are, for example, certain people from the Snow Initiative, who to a significant extent fulfil these characteristics.

### **Why this name?**

In the past, inquisitors have both adjudicated and judged, and to do so they had to at least pretend to be able to think rationally. Today's Covidian Inquisitors do not have as much official power, but the principles of rational thought coupled with unwavering fanatical thinking are the same.

### **Inquisitor past and present - the advantage of haunting**

What unites historical and modern inquisitors is the misuse of the trappings of rational argument to justify fixed, fanatical beliefs. At the extremes, inquisitors are convinced beyond any doubt of their absolute "truth". Conditional on the unquestioned validity of the axiom or axioms, their inferences and constructions are

indeed firmly rational. However, this "narrow" rationality is actually irrational because of its absolutization of truth.

The Covid inquisitor abuses both some scientific arguments from the specialized fields of virology, epidemiology or medicine, and mathematical modeling with many misguided predictions. All of this is quite clearly designed to frighten people and to promote ever more measures that restrict freedom and have a major negative impact on the health and lives of us all. For the sake of illustration, I give an example and commentary on the [presentation by the IMIS](#).

The popularity of COVID inquisitors is fueled by the human psyche, with a small minority of scientists being the most vocal. Why is this so? Because it is far more profitable to scare and encourage closure than to call for optimism and courage. He who scares does not take risks. If the scaremonger's prediction doesn't pan out, he simply says he only meant to warn and still takes credit for it. But conversely, the scientist who wants to encourage people to be brave and reassures the public by predicting positive developments risks losing prestige if the situation unexpectedly deteriorates. Moreover, this asymmetry in favour of scaremongering is also bad because fear and stress have a proven adverse effect on human health and significantly reduce immunity.

Fortunately, COVID inquisitors do not burn witches, but by scaring people, dehumanising opponents and manipulating governments in favour of COVID measures, they cause loss of life in other ways that is quantitatively worse. Especially terrible is the fact that the COVID inquisitors of the Czech Republic are willing to sacrifice the education and future of our children on purpose, based on unsubstantiated would-be mathematical predictions. Today, we already have studies from our own and other countries which show that an infected child has much lower viral loads, and that closing schools does not have a major effect on the spread of the virus. Moreover, the long-term closure of schools is untenable because of its drastic consequences, even if transmission in schools were relatively significant.

The excessiveness of the measure is viewed similarly by many real scientists, they just may not be as vocal.

### **How will we live?**

Because of an overall relatively mild virus, we have had our freedoms curtailed in an extraordinarily dramatic way over the past year. We are threatened with a new Dark Age, totalitarianism in the name of (quasi)science and the apparent protection of human health. This must be prevented. Fortunately, we have a fundamental and principled advantage over the past: we will never forget Giordano Bruno or Jan Hus.

We have information, historical experience, we are not stupid and we will not be intimidated. At least some of us, in the foreseeable future perhaps the vast majority of us. We can learn our lessons and not give anyone absolute control over our lives, even if they advocate it in a seemingly rational way. And we will never stop defending free scientific debate, even when many try to misrepresent it.

I see three basic scenarios for future developments. The second worst is that our

civilization will soon collapse and we will destroy ourselves. For me and many others, however, the clearly worse case is the absolute loss of freedom, a life perhaps with material almost-certainty, but in bondage to fear and the dictates of power. We will do our utmost for the vision of a free society of [Humanity 21](#), where we live with human values, in respect and friendship, and where true science together with the arts are the pillars of civilization.

I believe that it makes sense to stake one's life rather than lose one's freedom.