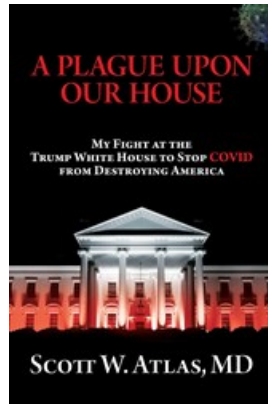


## Deborah Birx: The Pandemic's Master of the Lockdown

By Wendi Strauch Mahoney - June 6, 2023



According to a book by Dr. Scott Atlas, Deborah Birx, White House Coronavirus Response Coordinator for the Trump Administration, controlled most of the messaging and communication coming from the Coronavirus Task Force to the American people and governors. In his book, "[A Plague Upon Our House](#)," he describes his time as an advisor to the



During his brief tenure, Atlas was a lone voice against Birx's absurd fixation on COVID cases rather than infection rate fatality data as a metric to justify the widespread lockdowns that destroyed the lives of many Americans for almost three straight years. He and many others believe the lockdowns probably did more harm to the American people than the virus itself.

Atlas is a neurologist and a Robert Wesson Senior Fellow in health policy at Stanford University's Hoover Institute. His expertise in public policy far exceeded others on the task force, including Birx. Atlas served as a dispassionate, apolitical, and objective voice in the White House. His many relationships with respected scientists outside D.C. also served him well.

Atlas was in contact with brilliant minds like John Ioannidis, a world-renowned epidemiologist at Stanford. Looking back, [Ioannidis](#) proved to be remarkably accurate in his predictions. He had conducted a serology study early in the pandemic, finding that much more of the population had been infected with COVID-19 than others were projecting. Notably, he said the "*true infection rate fatality was in the ballpark of seasonal influenza.*" The denominator was much larger than was being discussed.

## Atlas Joins in July 2020: Birx in Control

By the time Atlas joined the task force, Birx was well ensconced in her role as the chief purveyor of the truth about the dangers of the SARS-2 coronavirus. While Pence did not hire her, they were undoubtedly close by Atlas' account.



Atlas did not immediately attend the task force meetings. Jared Kushner and other presidential advisors advised him to keep his distance from Birx because she was "easily threatened." In fact, he spent several weeks listening in by phone so as not to ruffle her feathers. In mid-August, he was convinced by Trump advisors to join in person, and join he did. *"Much had transpired in the 6 months prior"* to his arrival, writes Atlas. But *"Trump never once attended a COVID Task Force Meeting."* Atlas believes that most of Trump's advisors looked the other way because the election was approaching.

Atlas quickly realized what many Americans were also slowly intuiting from watching the disconnects between President and the Fauci/Birx in the public messaging about the pandemic. It was a confusing mess because Fauci and Birx constantly contradicted the President's policy decisions, decisions he had every right to promote given his position as Chief Executive. Before Atlas' first task force meeting in mid-August, conversations with a friend in the White House revealed the *"task force doctors were fixated on a single-minded view that all cases of COVID must be stopped or millions of Americans would die."* This was a goal that was absurd on its face.

In addition, Atlas had repeated interactions with advisors and task force members, including Jared Kushner, who was apparently *"tired of Atlas' attempts to show him the data and agnostic about the pandemic."* Atlas reports there was stubborn resistance from these *"unelected bureaucrats"* to identifying high-risk people, *"including nursing home patients who already lived in a controlled environment."*

All of the policies emanating from the task force emphasized mass testing of the symptomatic and asymptomatic alike, widespread masking of a virus that could easily escape a cloth mask, charts from Birx on the rising cases, which were meaningless in terms of sane COVID public health policy, and fear-mongering messaging that repeatedly concluded lockdowns and a vaccine were the only way out. According to Atlas, *"PCR and cycle thresholds were never mentioned by Birx."* She never recognized that the high thresholds *"produced positive tests that were worse than meaningless."*

All in all, the task force recommendations represented the wants and needs of elitists who themselves would never suffer the way average Americans would and did.

## No One Listened to President Trump

The most egregious part, however, was the task force's complete resistance to following Trump's wishes for the country. With the advice of scientists from around the country, President Trump understood there were treatments for the SARS-2 virus. The President believed masks should be used only when in close proximity and indoors. Atlas writes that Trump was *"on record that he wanted to both protect the vulnerable and reopen schools."* Trump also wanted the mass lockdowns to end but left those decisions to governors.



So while Trump *"stressed protecting the high-risk population while opening businesses and allowing healthy Americans to work; [Birx and Fauci] wanted widespread testing and confinement of healthy people with closures of business and significant restrictions on."* The contradictory messaging alone, says Atlas, caused undue confusion and harmed the American psyche.

It was clear to many that fear alone had the effect of vanquishing the ability to process any other data or facts outside the messaging coming from the task force and the media. It also didn't help that there was an entire, [hidden governmental apparatus](#) in place that sought to suppress and destroy information that was outside the approved narrative.

## Birx Dictates School Closures

One of the most important issues highlighted in the book was the discussion around the closure of K-12 schools and universities. In August 2020, Birx began to focus much of her travel and messaging on the safety of children and young adults—populations that were by then well-known to be at significant risk for severe illness or death. In chapter 8 of his book, Atlas explains that Birx and sometimes Pence were the only individuals who traveled to meet with governors and university personnel to advise on COVID-19 mitigation strategies.

During one of these trips, Birx phoned in to speak with the task force to report on her discussions with governors and university leaders. During the call, Atlas sat there in shock over her insistence on testing children and young adults who were asymptomatic. Atlas spoke up, but no one in the meeting supported his data. Pence listened but ultimately ignored the facts presented by Atlas.

Birx insisted that campuses were “dangerous,” even though anyone who paid attention knew by then that campuses were the best place for young people. Shutting down schools meant those young people would more likely expose their grandparents, who were at high risk, to the virus. Birx actually said these words during a meeting in August, according to Atlas, *“We really need to start testing the toilet water from the dorms, the drainage from their sewer systems. Otherwise, we will never find the cases. No one will know what they had.”* Put that in your pipe and smoke it for just a minute. Unfortunately, no one listened to Atlas’s advice, and Birx’s policies were amplified by the media to the exclusion of everything else.

Atlas knew that, by then, the data did not support sending kids home or even online classes. According to Atlas:

*“Thousands of cases were reported from campuses across the country. Almost none needed medical care of any kind. Of the first 111,000 cases as defined by [the often flawed] positive tests, zero were hospitalized. Soon over 25k cases of positive tests in mostly asymptomatic students were registered, yet with all of those cases, ZERO hospitalizations and no illnesses requiring significant medical care.”*

Atlas also wrote the following in his book concerning the data he presented to the task force at the time. He told the task force in August that campuses were “one of the lowest-risk environments one could imagine.”:

*“I pointed to the CDC statistics that only 0.2% of the first 164,280 deaths cataloged by the CDC had been in those*

*I noted that hospitalization rates for those 18-29 are very small compared to older age groups. 1/8th of those 75-84 and 1/13th of those over 85. And I spoke about the relevant demographics on campus 90% of full-time students in public colleges are under 25, and 98% are under 34 old club court. A few university faculty members were elderly. Since 2/3 are under 55 and only 13 % are older than 65, the risk to that age group was extremely low, and the campus was one of the lowest-risk environments one could imagine."*

Atlas's Sept. 15, 2020 [article](#) discusses college lockdowns at length. The book also touches on some of the [statistics](#) Atlas cites from August and September 2020. Birx's policies were an abject failure; she either refused to look at the correct data or didn't understand it. According to Atlas, her behavior in many meetings when disagreements with her arose was something to behold.

It should be noted that the lone state visit outside of Birx's was Atlas's visit to Florida. Gov. DeSantis invited Atlas to advise him on strategies for his state, particularly because of its older demographic. The elderly were in nursing homes and retirement communities, making them vulnerable to disease. Based on advice from Atlas, DeSantis employed important measures that made a huge difference in the state for the most vulnerable.

Atlas also writes that DeSantis was a voracious reader of published studies and data from his state. As he looked at the evidence, he shifted his state's policies on lockdowns, schools, masks, and other safety measures. Atlas describes DeSantis' masterful grasp of the data and evidence at the time.

While Kristi Noem of So. Dakota was the only governor to keep businesses open early on, DeSantis was able to shift gears. As a result, Florida schools opened in August. Atlas notes that by August, European countries had begun to open their schools.

It was obvious to many early on that Trump had a feel for the truth of the pandemic. He understood the cost of lockdowns and would often speak up in broadcasts. But the press would hijack and weaponize his inability to accurately articulate his thoughts on a given matter. Light therapies, Hydroxychloroquine, and [Ivermectin](#) were all effective treatments. Still, every time Trump attempted to project them to the public, the media and the task force would sweep in to contradict him and ridicule his thoughts because of his delivery.

Atlas writes that Trump understood all the concepts, excess mortality, and why cases were not a good metric. He states that Trump saved many lives by shutting down travel from China, even when others cried racism and Fauci, and others

"Warp Speed" delivered them in record time. Monoclonal antibodies and other drugs were developed and marketed in record time.

However, as Atlas clearly states in his book, President Trump's *"actions, and inactions were a massive error. He delegated authority to medically inexperienced bureaucrats and failed to correct his decision."* He was the Chief Executive. He disagreed with them and did nothing. Great leaders are those who exhibit courage in the face of adversity. Trump knew and failed to meet the moment when it came to ignoring advice that wasn't serving the country.



For those who continue to contend that Americans couldn't have known what COVID-19 would bring in Spring 2020, it is simply untrue. UncoverDC compiled an entire issue called "[Uncover COVID](#)" on the pandemic and reported on all [manner of data](#) early on.

While it is easy to understand why so many Americans allowed fear to dictate their decisions, it is categorically untrue that solid, factual information was unavailable and unactionable early in the pandemic. Many found their way to restorative treatments. Even elderly people were cured. Many knew that masks didn't work. And many saw that the lockdowns were only doing harm.

It is also well understood that there was an unstoppable governmental apparatus in place that would [frustrate](#) the ability to get new information to the American people. To be clear, these thoughts are not to badger but to prepare. It is critically important to recognize that life-saving information was and still is available to those who want to see it. Just know that the

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