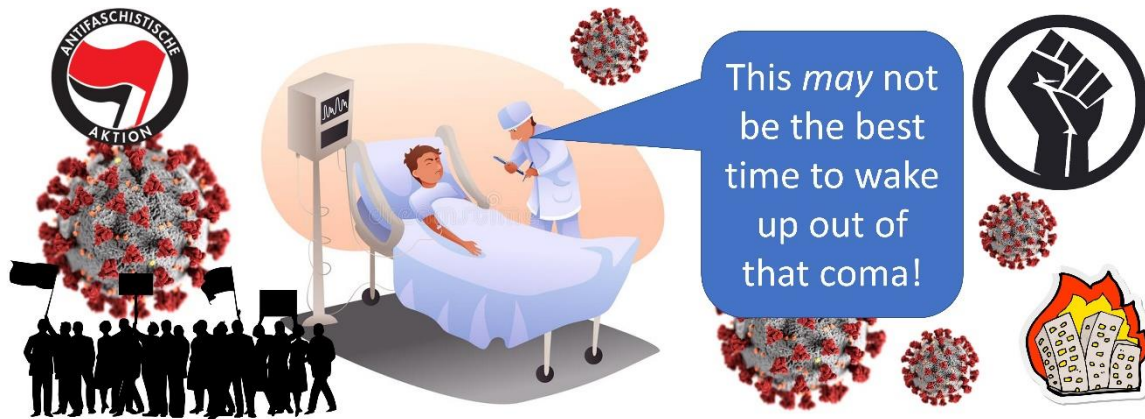


# Waking Up Now from a Coma Would be Mind-Blowing

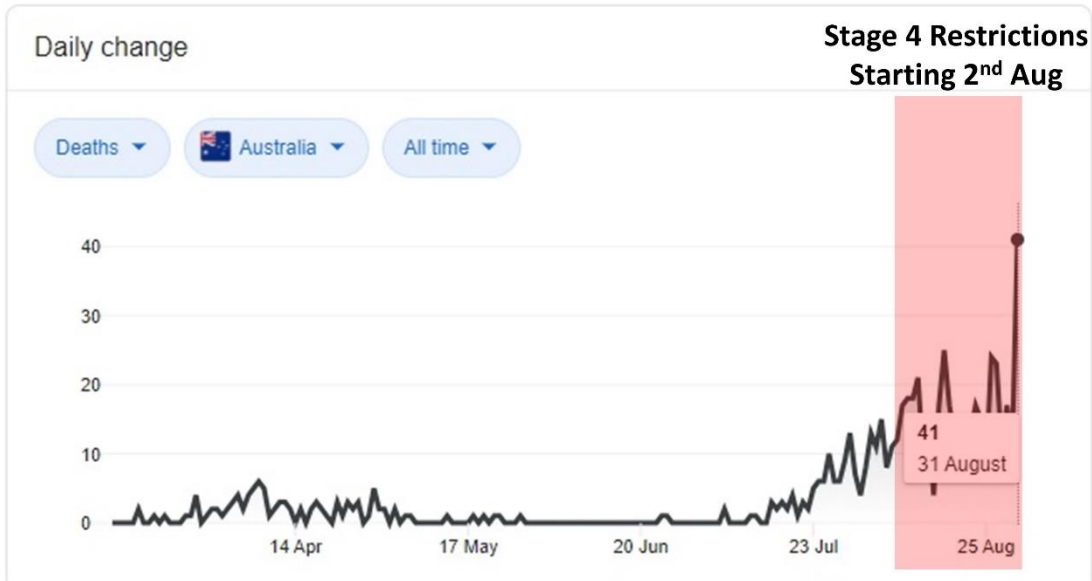
Shôn Ellerton, September 5, 2020

*Can you imagine if you had been in a coma since February 2020 and then, to wake up in early September to a world of madness?*



Today is a relatively cold blustery day in Adelaide as we transition from winter into spring, although, one could argue that Adelaide's winters are not winters at all, but rather, a normal summer's day for those living in extreme latitudes. The train home from work is quite busy. No one is wearing a mask. No one is 'social distancing'. The orange clad COVID decontamination crews that frequently trawl up and down the corridors of the train spraying and cleaning the inside of the train carriages like incensed bees are nowhere to be seen. On my way to the train station, cafes, bars, restaurants, and shops are open as usual. In all honesty, you would never be aware that there is a pandemic in existence.

However, just over the border in the state of Victoria is a vastly different world. Melbourne made international news having had a second wave of COVID cases and a rise in new death counts attributable to the virus.



On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August, Victoria imposed Stage 4 restrictions for a total of six weeks. Those who are not familiar with what these restrictions are may be surprised how draconian they are. In a nutshell, you are not allowed to leave your home unless you have a work permit or if you are going for one hour of exercise or going shopping. You are also limited to be within a 5km radius from home. There are other special exemptions but, in general, those are the restrictions. To cap it off, there is a curfew in place between 8pm and 5am meaning no one is allowed outside their homes during this time except for essential work, medical care, and emergencies. No dining in restaurants. No shopping unless for essentials. No museums, cinemas, or other venues for entertainment. No schools except for those who are essential workers. No weddings or funerals. It is, to be frank, not too dissimilar to being under house arrest.

Now I am not proclaiming to be writing anything new on this subject. Far from it. However, I am truly staggered how this has come to take place and how we got here. Can you imagine if, say, you were in a coma since February and you have just woken up to read about what is happening in Melbourne? Think about this for a second or two. What would your first thoughts be? I will tell you what mine would be. My initial thought is that something atrociously bad has happened in Melbourne. And yes, my thoughts would be of that of a devastating pandemic that is killing thousands and thousands of people each day, on top of the daily regular deaths that occur each day every day.

The first book I might recall would be *The Plague* by Albert Camus, a story about a bubonic plague that ravishes the Algerian town of Oran on the north African coast, a city which is completely quarantined and sealed for several months. Nobody goes in. Nobody goes out. The story is particularly interesting because it is also a brutal allegory of Vichy France and its collaboration with Nazi Germany. Both the story of the disease along with its associated quarantine *and* the political allegory attached to it is ever so near to mirroring today's situation in Melbourne. The book describes a city descending into chaos, bodies and more bodies being unceremoniously dragged to mass graves, a new underclass in society cast beautifully by a stumpy little character called Cottard who does very well for himself during the crisis, only to be given his 'just desserts' when the epidemic is over and he loses his mind and starts randomly shooting people only to be arrested by the police. One could loosely compare Cottard with the social media giants who are doing rather well for themselves as of late, both in terms of profit and power. However, what is noteworthy of difference between Camus's *The Plague* and the situation in Melbourne is that the death count is many-fold times less than that portrayed in the book. Let me put that another way. In the book, if one catches the plague, the chance of dying is extremely high, and survival is always on the edge. Contrast this to Melbourne--and the coronavirus in general--where *case* counts are much higher than death counts. The chance of survival is extremely high. And of those thousands of body bags in *The Plague*? This is not happening in Melbourne, and I trust we all hope, that this never happens.

Returning on the assumption that you have just woken up from a coma since February, or that one has taken some form of absence with no knowledge of what has happened, the next likely course of action would be to scavenge through the highlights of world news in general. Groups and organisations which one may have vaguely heard of before like Black Lives Matter, Antifa, QAnon or other bizarre outfits which one could associate with at a students' union at a university and have somehow, crossed the threshold of obscurity and harmlessness into the global spotlight. And what about the groups you have never heard before? Blue Lives Matter, All Lives Matters, and really outlandishly weird groups like [The Mermaids](#), a group that helps gender-diverse kids, a cause I personally find challenging to think about. To be fair, many of these groups have existed long before February, but since the last few months, such obscure and arcane organisations have risen well above the parapet. Then you read about cities under perpetual riots, attempts at history being re-written,

monuments and statues being torn down, banning of long-established drugs, people losing jobs over tweets claiming that men are men and women are women, and so on. Seriously, I think I would have just ventured into a dark parallel universe. Kind of like the one in *Back to the Future II* when our heroes travel back to an alternative 1985 of a dystopian kind but worse. The very thought of expressing disapproval or disgust with some of the groups I cited above could land you in big trouble. However, expressing *approval* for Trump, arguably the most hotly contested president we have had in modern US history, could land you in a spot of trouble as well, but, bizarrely, not the other way round with Biden. If you are of a logical disposition, you have just entered ‘nonsense-land’, of Mr Men fame! At this point, one would be forgiven into thinking that they woke up from the coma too early!

For most of us who have some knowledge of what has been going on during the last few months and not being in a coma or having their heads in the sand will not be so shocked as to what is happening in Melbourne or other cities that have been under similar enforced restrictions. I could also extend this same line of reasoning to other non covid-related events as described above. This, in my opinion, is the most frightening aspect out of all this. This creeping normalcy, the frog in slowly heated up water, or call it what you will, is the monster on our doorsteps. Being a fan of Star Trek, I compare this monster with that of the [Borg](#), an alien group living in peculiar cube-shaped spacecraft that has every intention of assimilating as many earthlings as possible into its alien collective for the sole goal of achieving perfection. Resistance may not be necessarily futile--as with the Borg--but it can be dangerous, and I am not exaggerating here either. Ask yourself if you have been partly or wholly assimilated into the Borg by reading through these bullet points below. If you display no shock or recoil, then you have been completely assimilated!

- Closed borders
- Police check points
- Work permits
- Drone surveillance
- Chopper patrols
- 23hr home confinement
- 1hr exercise
- Mandatory medical procedures
- Banned travel

- Closed churches
- Denied sunshine
- School closures
- Mandatory masks
- Shopping times restricted
- Police authority to enter homes without a warrant
- Children removed from parents without a court order
- No weddings
- No gatherings or public gatherings
- A recession
- No family visits
- Remain within 5km radius
- Military patrols on streets
- Censorship across most social media
- Mass bankruptcy
- Astronomical unemployment
- Massive increase in suicide and domestic violence
- Bad health through increased alcohol, substance abuse and overeating
- Curfew

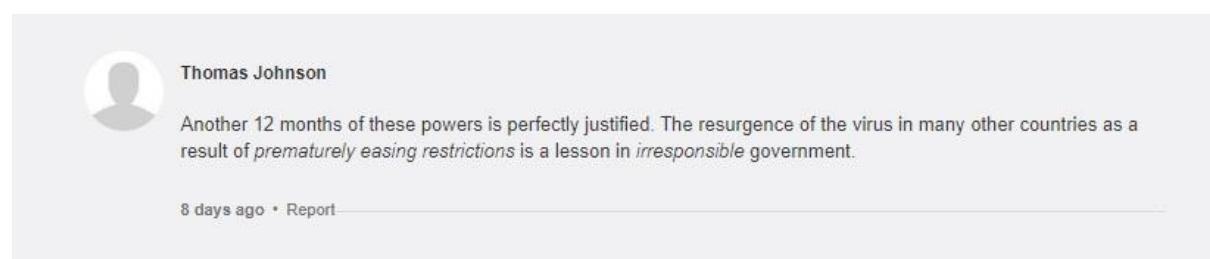
How did you do? What outcome did you arrive to? Are you in shock? Are you incensed? Are you nodding your head in approval? If it is this last outcome you have come to of being in approval and unshocked, then we have arrived at the gates of the [Stockholm Syndrome](#). If you do not know what this is, it is the phenomenon when those being captured or taken hostage start to form a sort of bonding and trust with their captors. It can develop to the point that *outside assistance* to rescue those being captured can be met with resistance by those in captivity! In the case of prolonged lockdowns, it is outside *thinking* which is the transgressor. And this is a huge concern.

Only a couple of days ago, there was a video of a pregnant woman that got arrested in her pyjamas in the rural town of Ballarat in Victoria accused of incitement by posting on Facebook a plan to have a peaceful anti-lockdown protest. It was quite disturbing to watch. The police came in with a warrant for her arrest. She asked why. They said incitement. At this point, it was like a piece out of Kafka's *The Trial*. They eventually told her what she did was wrong by posting the material. The husband, who thankfully was *livestreaming*

all this to the cloud in real time, politely asked the police if they could ask her to delete the post and caution her. The police would have none of it. Instead, they clasped her in handcuffs in front of her kids while she was just starting to break down until the police finally confiscated the husband's phone, or at least told him to switch it off. She was about to go to an ultrasound appointment for her unborn baby by the way. Because this was all livestreamed, the police could not do a damned thing to prevent this video from going viral. And it did. It made international news from the United States to Russia. However, this is the corker. Despite the outrage many felt about the draconian measures the police had taken with this woman, some felt this was absolutely vindicated and the police did exactly the right thing. That may be so; however, the argument falls flat on its face because, only a few weeks ago, the police fined only three people during the Black Lives Matter demonstrations, of which around ten thousand gathered during this pandemic. Despite the sheer hypocrisy, there is an effort by some to convince the public that this was purposely staged by the pregnant woman and her husband to muddy the waters. Yes, the conspiracies come out again!

Perhaps, and I fear that many will think like this, is that, if we put all these draconian measures in place, the virus will stop dead in its tracks. A great example of this is when I read an article in The Conversation titled [Why is the Victorian Government Extending the State of Emergency and is it Justified.](#) What surprised me was the large number of comments that *approve* of the emergency measures in Victoria and how we must all make sacrifices to defeat the virus. Below is one of the comments I pulled out.

“Another 12 months of these powers is perfectly justified. The resurgence of the virus in many other countries as a result of *prematurely easing restrictions* is a lesson in *irresponsible* government”



What makes this so damning is that the same government who is perpetuating these measures relaxed its guard in July and allowed many thousands of people to protest in the Black Lives Matter movement. Still to this day, many mainstream media outlets make every attempt to purport the notion that there is



no proof that COVID cases were linked to this protest, or more accurately, demonstration. For the moderately intelligent amongst us, a virus *so* contagious and the knowledge that the ability to trace the source of any virus conclusively is insanely difficult, it smacks of insanity to dismiss the possibility that no cases could be spread from such a large crowd of people, many of which did not wear masks and certainly not socially distance from each other. This is ‘Statistics 101’, a subject that those who are peddling fear and misinformation really do not wish the masses to be too knowledgeable in.

The most striking symptom of today’s Stockholm Syndrome in Australia, is, funnily enough, the narrative that Australia is doing the right thing and Sweden (along with Taiwan and Switzerland, and now Germany) is doing the wrong thing. Funny in the sense that the only remotely Swedish trait Australia is exhibiting, is perpetuating the effects of a syndrome named after Stockholm! I concede, that it is not necessarily that black and white, but there is an amazing effort by the government-controlled media to downplay any success taken by these other countries and why they will not work here in Australia. The ABC put out an article on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August on this very subject going even further to include the name of Pauline Hanson, a public figure heavily demonised by the ABC as being right-wing and racist, which, if anyone had read up comprehensively on Hanson, is highly exaggerated and absurdly biased. Here is the [link to the article](#). Having lived in the UK prior to 2008, I knew of Pauline Hanson from BBC coverage. The BBC, who many of us know, is the equivalent government-controlled media outlet for the UK. During that time, I held high esteem with the ‘neutrality’ of the BBC, but not so these days. For me, prior to 2008, the BBC portrayed her as a disgusting racist woman who wanted nothing better than for minorities and aboriginals to be rid of and out of the country. Thinking back, I shudder to think of how many other Brits were brainwashed by the BBC characterising her as this monster of a would-be evil white colonial empire. The power of manipulating the news is simply incredible.

To put an end to this article, I find it most sad that so many choose not to fight or, at least, take a stand against the continual erosion of the values of liberty, free speech and the adoption of reason, rationality and logic to many of today’s destructive movements in play. It is most likely that if one did suddenly wake up from a coma into the madness that has descended upon us, we simply may not believe it. The feeling may not be too dissimilar when those aeroplanes dashed into the World Trade Center buildings in New York City. I remember so

vividly this experience as I watched this on TV at my father's home in Shropshire, England. We must overcome our fear and speak out, because if we do not, what kind of legacy will we leave for our next generation? I often quote this, but one of my favourites is from a statesman by the name of Patrick Henry during a convention that took place in Virginia in 1775.

***'Give me liberty, or give me death!'***