

Intelligence Divide  
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A number of times during my many years of writing columns, I have noticed the great gulf in human intelligence. It does not seem genetic, but it does seem cultural. Culture is formed by conscious decisions among groups of people and is subject to change as people have new experiences.

Watching Richard Branson last month, floating in the weightlessness of space on his own spacecraft reminded me of all the intelligence required to perform such a feat. This 70-year-old billionaire had the look of a 12-year-old, eager, fearless, and joyful. It was a pleasure to watch him and filled me with awe over his intelligence and enthusiasm.

Not everyone has the capability of Branson, but happily, the majority of our fellow citizens demonstrate the intelligence to know where to get reliable information, live lives of decency, obey the law, and have the willingness to help others in need and serve as "helpers" when disaster strikes. We have recently seen this demonstrated when a residential tower collapsed in Florida and hordes of helpers rushed in to find survivors, provide care for them, comfort the grieving, and set about intelligently investigating what was amiss in the construction.

Another disaster demonstrated the decency and intelligence of the majority of us during the worst pandemic in a century. We knew that our medical authorities were dealing with an unknown disease, but also knew that they were using their intelligence to find a treatment and cure. Our interim necessity was to prevent further contagion: wearing face masks and keeping a social distance, both requirements annoying but necessary. Most people did just that, and when a vaccine was developed, hastened to get vaccinated.

I am constantly amazed by the minority of our fellow citizens who are the opposite of intelligent: those who wear disbelief as a badge of honor. Our former President's main talent was evoking fear, anger, and self-destructive behavior among his followers and cynical deliberate disinformation among others who are motivated only by political power.

We, the majority, have been vaccinated and are protected from the ravages of the pandemic. But the duped and unintelligent minority refuse to get vaccinated, disdain "elite authorities" who are offering real protection, seek information from hearsay, the Internet, and right-wing cynical pseudo-news platforms (Fox, etc.).

Educated politicians such as Rand Paul, Ron Johnson, Ted Cruz, and Jim Jordan, disgrace their educations by spewing disinformation and slavish support of their mentor, President Trump, a man known for reckless lying who still lies that he did not lose the election to President Joseph Biden.

During his presidency, Trump modeled the behavior that duped his gullible followers to emulate: wear no masks, disbelieve that Covid-19 was just a little Flu, and violently demonstrate against elected officials who were trying to protect the public.

The cynicism of these Congressmen's behavior included getting vaccinated privately yet discouraging their followers from doing so, luring followers into attending political rallies with no masks and no social distancing. This resulted in many otherwise unnecessary deaths among them, or among their hapless relatives. When Trump himself nearly died of COVID he was saved by the very "experts" that he so disparaged. He received an experimental drug that enabled him to stay alive and continue his campaign against the "elites."

Today, we are having a resurgence of COVID that is hospitalizing and killing the followers of the cynical liars. It is a medical fact that 99.5% of all COVID-related deaths in the US are among the unvaccinated. Those villains frightening ignoramuses that the vaccines are "unproven," "filled with computer chips," "turning people into zombies," are creating a death lottery, as noted by West Virginia's Republican governor. Of course, leaders who speak the truth are immediately recipients of death threats from ignorant followers serving the lying Death Cult.

Inevitably, this minority of cynics and the ignorant will continue to melt down in numbers. Ignorance can and will kill.

Intelligent and decent Republicans are fleeing their party and decrying its subservience to former President Trump. Truly intelligent people are not governed by fear, violent behavior, hatred, and lying. They know how to think.

686 words

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