



Episode 1,750: Rational COVID Reporter vs. the Lockdowners

Guest: Jennifer Cabrera

WOODS: You have become one of the half dozen Twitter feeds that I just go to. I don't wait for you to show up in my Twitter feed; I go directly to you and see what you've been posting. Because for some people, I'm the person who keeps them sane, but in turn, I need people to keep me sane. And you've been doing a heroic job of that for quite some time, and it just seems to me that you should have a much bigger platform than you do because of the quality of the work you're doing. So first of all, let's start off with your background. You have rather impressive academic credentials, as I discovered when I – I do my research for these episodes here. The old man likes to stay on top things. So tell me about your background educationally and otherwise.

CABRERA: I did my undergrad at Princeton in electrical engineering. I then went to work for GE in nuclear energy, and they sent me to Berkeley for a master's in electrical engineering. I stayed in that field for the next six years, and then I moved and tried to stay home with my daughter. I ended up working for my dad's company for most of my adult life. As he moved into retirement, I started working in software, trying to use my engineering degree. And I ended up as an independent iPhone developer, and got frustrated with that because iOS keeps changing and everything I designed for my customers keeps breaking.

And I found myself yelling at my local newspaper every morning, because they're just pushing a narrative. The headlines don't even match the story sometimes. It's all trying to tell people how to think about the news. So I decided with absolutely no background in any of this that I was going to start a local news site. And I started *Alachua Chronicle*, which you can find at AlachuaChronicle.com or @AlachuaChronic1 on Twitter. But it's 100% local news.

And then how the COVID thing happened is, from the very beginning – the *Alachua Chronicle* is essentially me and my husband, Len Cabrera. And from the very beginning, we thought this is not the way to handle this. We have a constitution, we have civil liberties. And maybe people should voluntarily slow down for a couple of weeks, but this whole idea that under emergency orders, you can just write any law you want, you can tell people to shelter in place, you can tell people to close their businesses, and it's now moved on to wearing masks – that that's just not what the United States Constitution is about. That's not supposed to be America. And Len started writing about this on March 23rd, so we've been early on pushing back against the whole "COVID is so dangerous that it trumps everything" narrative.

And along the way, we started digging into the COVID data, because I wrote an article every single day at *Alachua Chronicle* on our local situation, how many new cases, what's the 14-day trend, all that fun stuff. And as I dug into the data, you start seeing patterns when you look

at it every single day, and we started seeing that this was not what we were being told. And the real breakthrough came when another – he calls himself the Internet Cat, El Boriqua Gato, El Gato Malo –

WOODS: One of my half dozen. He's another one, right there.

CABRERA: He's awesome. And he found for me the hidden link on Florida's House website, where they generate their graph of the deaths by day. And so by keeping my own spreadsheet and tracking the changes on that page from day to day, I can tell you which days changed. I am doing that every day now, telling people that, for example, today we have 55 net deaths. It was 89 added, 34 removed, changes over 57 different days. The media always runs with this, especially the days that we had 274 deaths. *274 people died in Florida yesterday*. No, they didn't. That was over several months. Most of those were months old. And what we're seeing now is they're going back and actually taking a bunch of them away. I don't really know what's going on, because they won't talk about it.

But anyway, I'm the only one doing that except for Florida Atlantic University, which has their own dashboard. And John Taylor, who works with them, does my charts for me every day. I gather all the data myself, and I post about it. And that's where my Twitter following has come from, is just doing that. And then building on that, I was asked to join the Rational Ground group. RationalGround.com is a great source for COVID data, COVID articles. I'm a contributor there, and we're just working to push a sane, reality-based COVID strategy, which is that COVID is real and it's dangerous to a certain segment of the population. Those people should take precautions, but the rest of society should continue to function.

WOODS: Paul Krugman not too long ago – I think it was right after Governor DeSantis said we're going into Phase III reopening, Krugman said this is going to lead to lots of deaths because – and then he proceeded to say some things that were not true about the percent positive rate in Florida, and also that Florida is having an excess of 100 deaths a day. Now, that's certainly untrue, I think based on what you're showing, because when I looked at, for example, October 1st, most of the deaths reported on October 1st were coming from July, August, and a smattering over the course of September. That changes a little bit the picture of what's really happening. And it's amazing that you're doing it and practically nobody else is even aware of this.

Now, your account is not entirely focused on Florida, but even if it were Florida is so politically significant in this whole COVID controversy because of the policies adopted by the governor, first during the Sunbelt spike not really shutting down, and now reopening, well, it matters what's happening in Florida. But you've been doing a lot more than just that. How do you handle the "you're not a doctor so you're not the title to an opinion" objection?

CABRERA: Well, the data is the data, right? I mean, I can tell you, if Krugman's basing his argument on Florida's having 100 deaths a day, that's not true. And people like to push back and say, *Oh, well, they lag*. Yes, they lag, but in general, most of them are coming from the peak. They're still adding to the peak. And what we're finding is, when you look at all the data, you see that things go in predictable patterns. So you can look at the CDC, has a graph of emergency department visits for COVID-like illness. You can see that that graph is plunging steadily in Florida down to almost nothing. Hospitalizations plunging. There's nowhere for additional deaths to come from if the hospitalizations aren't increasing. So to say that things are going to flare out of control is ridiculous.

So I come from it mainly from a data point of view. We know the age-stratified fatality rate. We've known that it was age-stratified from the beginning, we just didn't know how much. But we do now. We also know that there's a significant difference now between older people and older people in nursing homes. Obviously, older people in nursing homes have a much higher risk. I don't have to be a doctor to point out what the data tells us. I don't know if you've seen the roundtable that Governor —

WOODS: Oh, I listened to every syllable of that roundtable.

CABRERA: So I lean heavily on that. Those are people who are doctors, who are public health experts. And their point is that this is not a medical problem. The doctors know what to do when they get a COVID patient. The problem we're having is a public health policy problem. We have taken medical advice and made laws out of it. So we all know that it's recommended that everybody gets 30 minutes a day of exercise. To me, this is like the government saying not only must you exercise 30 minutes a day, but to make sure you do, everybody will be forced to check in at a gym, log their 30 minutes every day. That is the equivalent of what's going on in these emergency orders. We're taking medical advice and making laws out of it.

WOODS: I have so many things I want to say. First of all, let me tell folks who aren't in the weeds as deeply as you and I are what we mean by that roundtable. The governor of Florida had a roundtable discussion with Michael Leavitt, Jay Bhattacharya, and Martin Kulldorff, who has been a guest on my program. The day before he announced the Phase III reopening, I remember at the time watching that roundtable and thinking he's preparing something. He's clearly doing this to be able to say, look, I brought in the experts and they say we should reopen. And little did I know it would be the very next day that he would make that announcement. But it's a tremendous roundtable. I blogged about it, so I'll link to the video of it — every bit of it is worth watching — on our show notes page for today, which is TomWoods.com/1750.

There's an expression that I think maybe ten years ago, maybe even a year ago wouldn't have bothered me, that now just completely sets me off. And that is the phrase: follow the science or listen to the science. *You should listen to the science*. I just tweeted out something along the lines of, "'Listen to the science' has become the rallying cry of the most irrational, anecdote-driven, fact-free devotees of voodoo I have seen in my lifetime." What would it really mean to listen to the science in this situation?

CABRERA: Well, so first, I just want to add that the transcript that I wrote of that roundtable is on RationalGround.com, and if you don't have two hours for the video, you can skim the transcript for the topics that are interesting to you.

WOODS: I will link to that. I saw that you did that. That was heroic. I'll link to that too.

CABRERA: It was quite an effort. I think that those scientists make an excellent point in the roundtable, which is that science is not about consensus. It is not even about truth — put in quotation marks, "truth." Science is a process of discovery, where you form a hypothesis and you test it. And science is not Dr. Fauci telling us what we should do. Science is discussion. And we haven't had that discussion. Instead, any scientist or public health official or academic who says *I'm not sure this is the right path* is immediately shut down, suspended on Twitter, or whatever, and they're told that it's dangerous to dissent from what Dr. Fauci is telling us because it might cause people to be irresponsible and it would kill people. So now, we have

"follow the science," but we have "scientists kill people by dissenting." But science is about dissent. It's about discussion. And it's only in the last few days that we're starting to see dissenting scientists come out of the woodwork. I believe the three that came up with that – I don't have a name handy of –

WOODS: The Great Barrington Declaration.

CABRERA: The Great Barrington Declaration, the three scientists from that I guess were on Laura Ingram last night. And finally, this is starting to come through to the public that there are scientists that disagree with Dr. Fauci and Dr. Birx.

WOODS: Right, and they're not scientists at Podunk Valley Community College.

CABRERA: They're at Harvard, Stanford Oxford, yes.

WOODS: Right. So another thing to bear in mind when we talk about "the science" is that I think people have an almost a weirdly superstitious view of scientists. I mean, I yield to no one in my respect for science and the scientific method, but that also means understanding the limits of science and the scientific method. Science is not intended to make value judgments for you. Science can tell you *if you want to accomplish A, then you have to use B*. But it could also tell you *but if you use B, you're going to have consequences C, D, and E*. But only we as moral individuals can decide whether C, D and E is worth B.

CABRERA: And not only that – absolutely correct – but we haven't been told any of the costs of this. We're just ignoring the costs.

WOODS: That's right. There is no C, D, and E as far as Dr. Fauci's concerned. I haven't heard a word.

CABRERA: No, I mean, occasionally things will trickle through, like oh, 25% of 18- to 24-year-olds have suicidal thoughts in June, or 60% of minority children aren't showing up for remote schooling. Occasionally, these things trickle through, but we're not seeing the true costs. The true costs of this to our society will be felt for years.

WOODS: I had somebody say to me in my private Facebook group today that he was dealing with somebody in California who has fairly predictable views, who was saying, look, every single one of these people who has died has a family and all that sort of thing, and we have to honor that. And of course that's true. That's absolutely true. But the implication was: therefore, we have to support lockdowns and this and that. Now, whether or not lockdowns even work is one thing. But bear in mind that we now know from *The New York Times* that over the next five years, they're saying that there will be an excess, above what was expected, an excess number of tuberculosis deaths in the amount of 1.4 million, not to mention HIV and malaria. And it seems that those people also have families, and those people should also be honored, and yet those people are invisible in this discussion, as you say.

CABRERA: Exactly. The other thing about *all the people that died have families*: of course they do. Every death causes grief to the people around them. But what we're seeing in general, is not some wide swath of people being taken out in the prime of their lives. We're seeing people dying at the average age of death – median age? – whatever. Median or

average age of COVID is the same as the median age of life expectancy in the United States. People are dying at the end of their lives, maybe a few months earlier, maybe not.

What people don't understand, going back to *The New York Times* had an article about up to 90% of the PCR tests might be false positives or might indicate past infections. What we're doing is we're testing everybody in long-term care, which is going to generate some level of false positives. And then if they go into the hospital for any reason, they're a COVID hospitalization. If they die for any reason, they're a COVID death. And so all of these people are not COVID deaths. They're deaths. They might have been pushed along by getting a respiratory infection, but they could have been pushed along by getting colds or a flu or anything else. These people are very frail.

And I put out a thought experiment. If we tested everybody in the United States for the common cold, and then if you went to the hospital for any reason within 30 days of that test, you're a common cold hospitalization. And if you died within 30 days of that test, for any reason, you're a common cold death. We would have a pandemic of common cold deaths.

WOODS: I raised this issue with Professor Kulldorff. I asked him about what are the implications for some of the numbers of the fact that the PCR testing in the US is so ridiculously sensitive. They're not doing this in Europe. Maybe this has something to do with the varying case and death counts. This is a question that needs to be talked about.

But another thing I want to talk about, because you've done so much good work on it, is the issue of masks. Now, you put up some charts showing case counts. And of course, you and I know that "cases," in quotes – by the way, I love the fact that Governor DeSantis puts "cases" in quotation marks. That is beautiful. That is a metric that has to be mercilessly stomped upon at every opportunity. But if that's the game they want to play, let's play it.

And in your charts, you're looking at cases and then showing where the mask mandate went into effect in place after place after place after place. And if you were to say to somebody, if I were to take that marker out so we don't know where the mask mandate went into effect, and you just say to people, Pick for me where in this chart you think the mask mandate went into effect, everybody would be wrong. They would score a zero percent on that. And so it seems to me, without knowing the science behind masks, it seems to me that at the very least, if masks were so effective that they were even more effective than a vaccine, according to the director of the CDC, even if you had halfhearted compliance with a mask mandate, which is the usual way they explain away the data – even if it were only halfhearted, you should expect to see something other than a continued dramatic rise in cases after a mask mandate.

CABRERA: Right, those charts are from Ian Miller, so full credit to him for –

WOODS: Oh, my apologies. Yes, I see that now.

CABRERA: And he's got more. We're going to continue to post them. They show the same thing everywhere. Masks do not make a difference. Now, as you pointed out, there's an unfalsifiable argument on the other side, which is: it would have been worse if we hadn't had masks. The problem is that really most of these places have very high mask compliance. At Rational Ground, we have a tool that correlates – well, it shows graphs by county of a New

York Times poll that showed, if you ran into five people in your area, what's the likelihood, how many of them would be wearing masks. So it takes that data of the percentage of people in a county that wear masks and it correlates it with the cases and/or deaths – there's two different tabs on it – in that county. And what you see is there is no correlation between the percentage of people wearing masks and the spread of COVID in that county.

WOODS: I guess the thing I would want to ask people would be: what would the graph have to look like for you to admit that masks don't seem to do anything? And if there is no such graph that would make you admit that, then why are we having the argument? Then you basically are believing this like a religious belief. There's nothing I could show you that would change my mind. What would that graph have to look like for you to stop and say, *Hmm, maybe this isn't the remedy that I thought it was?* And by the way, as you know, masks are being promoted as, if not the remedy, then pretty darn close to it. I've heard repeatedly: if only the American people would wear masks for four or six weeks or something like that, we could eradicate this thing. If it's that effective, there's no way these graphs should look the way they do.

CABRERA: Correct. The whole thing is – you're right: it's a religion. It's a religion. It's a fervent belief that masks will protect you, and people don't want to let go of it. There's no evidence that that they do anything, but what we're seeing is – The question I asked is not even what were those graphs have to look like, but at what level of positive testing in an area would you be willing to let us stop wearing masks? Nobody can answer that. And in fact, in the northeast, where they are at extremely low levels for cases and deaths because it's already burned out there, they're never going away from masks because the talking point is that if we stopped wearing masks, it would explode again. Now, I think Florida is going to be the state that disproves that.

WOODS: Yes.

CABRERA: But only if Governor DeSantis forbids counties from their mandates, because right now a lot of counties still have mask mandates, and then they put the burden on businesses to enforce them. So what Governor DeSantis did is he took away, he suspended fines and penalties for individuals who violate mask mandates, but counties can still come down on businesses. So he hasn't fully freed Florida yet.

WOODS: Right, but definitely, he took an amazingly courageous step.

CABRERA: It was amazingly courageous. He's the only one really, other than Governor Noem, who has been willing to say we have to protect our elderly and we need to get back to normal life.

WOODS: Now, obviously South Dakota and Florida are quite different and Governor DeSantis is more politically prominent as a result of Florida being more influential and more populous. But nevertheless, I took a trip to South Dakota not too long ago, partly because I'd never been there. It was one of the few states I'd never visited. I thought it would be a nice, fun little vacation, which indeed it was. And plus, frankly, I wanted to reward them in some way for having kept their wits about them. And it was wonderful to go around and see like a sign in the window of a business saying, "Thank you, Governor Noem," basically for being a normal person. And she's also been so politically savvy to make 60-second videos recruiting people to

move to South Dakota or to have your event in South Dakota. That's fantastic to me. I was delighted to see that.

And then of course, we got this thing about the Sturgis motorcycle rally led to 260,000 cases. And then what delighted me about that was *Slate* of all places ran an article saying, *Come on now. This is ridiculous. It did not lead to 260,000 cases. You're all just saying that because you want it to have led to that many cases.* And for *Slate* to have published an article debunking that claim, when *Slate* is not exactly known for defending Trump-loving biker dudes, it seems to me the only rationale, the only justification for running that article from their point of view was that it was the truth.

CABRERA: Yes, I want to give your listeners a framework for taking in news articles right now, because so many of them are just framed to make you afraid. That's the entire purpose of them. And I would encourage everyone to look at every single news headline you see that's designed to make you afraid and ask: does this change what we know about the age-stratified fatality rates for COVID? If it doesn't, then set it aside and go on. All of these say "cases." Cases mean nothing. Cases in young people particularly mean nothing. Cases in Sturgis attendees mean nothing. They led to – I believe there was one death, but it was like he had it before he got there. So I don't even know. That was at most out of however many attendees, maybe one person died, but it's not at all clear that it had anything to do with the rally.

WOODS: Now, let me ask you what you think. I hate to make you predict the future, but this is all so uncertain, I just like to hash things out with people. We were talking about the Northeast, where the numbers are as low as you can have them. The numbers are basically saying reopen, and they're moving at a snail's pace. I guess I want to know – part of what has made this so infuriating is that nobody can give us the end game.

What exactly are you waiting for, other than the ridiculous de Blasio statement, and now Governor Murphy, that we can't do anything until we hit zero, which is literally impossible? Even if the PCR testing weren't super sensitive, just the false positives means you'd never hit actual zero. We haven't hit zero for a lot of things. What would it take? What would have to happen for them to lift all restrictions? Like even Dr. Fauci says that, even if we had a vaccine that was universally taken by everybody, it's not to say that we'd never again have any COVID deaths, but we'd get them down to a manageable number. If I said we could get COVID deaths down to a manageable number, they would call me that somebody who hates human life, and they wouldn't listen me for a minute. Fauci can say that, but what would the numbers be? I mean, he says that there would be some number that they would find acceptable. I don't think anybody wants to say. So what are we supposed to do, just not live?

CABRERA: I obviously don't have an answer to what it would take.

WOODS: [laughing] Right, I know.

CABRERA: There's a clear delineation here. The states that are locking down hard and not letting up are blue states, the states that have blue leadership, at least. The states that are that are opening up Texas, Florida, Georgia, they're red states. So it's clearly a political calculation. There's no metrics behind it. And all I can tell you is that you're going to have to take back your life. There's no other way to put this. You are going to have to insist that life goes back to normal. Not some new normal. Not normal with masks. Normal.

WOODS: Yeah, I wish we could get – well, as you say, Florida is going to be very helpful on this in the same way that Sweden has been helpful. Now, Sweden should have been more helpful, but people's minds are too closed to look at it. But just the other day, *The New York Times*, maybe you saw this, had this headline, something along the lines of "Condemned early for its lax virus response, Sweden seems to have the scourge under control." Well, how about that?

But then, how rare is it to see somebody come along and say, *Hmm, well, I guess this goes to show there was more than one way to skin this cat?* No, no, it's always, oh, well – so first, it was: you can't mention Sweden, because their death rate is very high. That was the first thing that we got. Now, the UK, you couldn't say, *Well, they locked down and their death rate was even higher.* For some reason, we couldn't use that in our defense. But now that Sweden is starting to look better and better, now the response is, *Oh, well, the Swedes voluntarily complied with these things, and of course Americans couldn't be trusted to do that.* So there's never a *maybe this is an alternative approach.* There's always some explanation.

But the fact is, regardless of whether the Swedes voluntarily complied with social distancing policies and stuff, number one, all I have to do is go to Google and look up photos from Stockholm from over the summer. That pretty much is all I need to see. But secondly, the facts are the facts. They never closed their schools. They didn't close businesses, and they never had a mask mandate. How do they account for this? And generally, the answer is either they jump all around trying to change the subject, or they just ignore it.

CABRERA: Right. The fact is that right now the United States has a higher per-capita death rate than Sweden. So you can't point at Sweden and say they were some outlier. And the other point is that New York and New Jersey's per-capita death rates are significantly higher than Sweden, and Florida's is significantly lower than Sweden.

WOODS: And your point about Florida's very well taken. This is why I've said all along that this maybe in all of American history is the most important moment yet for the fact that we have a federal system, because now we can in real time see the working out of different sorts of approaches. And if the various sorts of approaches wind up having more or less the same result, I suppose that could be entirely coincidental. Not likely, though. And I think the average person would think Occam's razor would hold here, that maybe our feeble attempts to stop the spread were just that, and that 100 years from now, people are going to look at us with our masks and our Dr. Fauci saying we all wear goggles and staying hidden in our homes, thinking the virus will go away, they're just going to laugh at us.

CABRERA: I hope.

WOODS: [laughing] Yeah, I know. 100 years from now, presumably life will have returned to normal.

CABRERA: I hope. I hope they laugh at this and say it was the biggest mistake we've ever made as a society.

WOODS: Yeah, I won't be satisfied unless that is the way we look back on it. And yet, I think back to major, major catastrophes like the Great Depression, and here we are almost now coming upon 100 years since the stock market crash of '29, and we still can't decide what did

that. And so I wonder if we're still going to be arguing, *Well, thankfully, finally, masks and social distancing solved the problem*. Or was it that the virus just burned itself out on its own in every society on earth? It really depends on which side puts in more elbow grease to get its framing of the situation out to the world.

CABRERA: Yeah, another good Twitter account to follow is @Hold2LLC, and he has amazing graphs, because I had somebody come on with me the other day that Arizona, the reason they're down to almost nothing is that they are very good about masks or whatever. But the thing is Arizona, Texas, Georgia, Florida, all of their curves are nearly identical, and they have radically different policies.

WOODS: Yes.

CABRERA: The fact is nothing we do makes a difference. Now, we can slow it down by everybody staying in their houses, but that only delays the deaths and the cases. People are still going to get infected when they come back out. This idea that somehow if we successfully just didn't see any other human for two weeks, it would die out. I don't think that's even possible. But it's not the way to look at this sort of thing. We need to look at what minimizes deaths overall. And the answer to that is how do we best protect the elderly? And the answer to that is we build immunity in young people. And so the best policy would have been if we'd never freaked out over this, if we'd never sent college students home, if we let them continue their normal lives, if we built immunity in March and April and May, maybe, however long it took. That's only two or three months that you have to protect the elderly, and we're done.

And that's not saying – I want to be very clear. Herd immunity does not mean nobody ever gets it again. People will get it. It's going to continue to circulate to society. It's just we need to build – every person who's had it and has some immunity to it is now a break on the spread. That's one person that stops transmission from an infected person. The more of those we have, the better the chance of protecting the elderly.

WOODS: So in many cases, what we've seen has been the opposite of what should have been done. You obviously shouldn't be punishing college kids for going to parties. Just ridiculous. Or canceling high school football. I saw there was a huge demonstration in Connecticut. Now, I was not exactly the football-playing type when I was in high school, but I can very much sympathize with these kids, because basically cowardice and selfishness and pseudoscience have combined to prevent them from doing something that gives their lives meaning. And according to Fauci, maybe in the spring of 2022 you can have your lives back. Well, I just refuse to accept that and I don't think kids should have to accept that.

And it reminds me of something that I think came out of the roundtable that you transcribed. Dr. Bhattacharya said something along the lines of – and it may have been some other place. He said something along the lines of: if we were to try to go for zero COVID, and he said, I don't even know if that's feasible, but if we were, we now know that we would obviously destroy our society in the process, and the price is so high, there's no way it could be worth it.

CABRERA: And yet Governor Newsome, Governor Cuomo, they're all going for zero COVID.

WOODS: And apparently their populations are supporting that. They think that's a sensible approach.

CABRERA: So one of the most evil things that has been said throughout this whole entire thing is, "We're all in this together." We are not all in this together, the people who are sitting on the TV, the talking heads that are telling us what we should do, they're still getting their salaries, they're living in nice apartments, they have beautiful home lives, they can get their food delivered. They are not the Joe six-pack who works in a grocery store, who works delivering that food that you get delivered, who is digging a hole in his personal finances that he will never be able to dig out of because you kept him from working.

WOODS: Exactly. And so it seems to me that the correct approach from now on should be, even though young people unfortunately generally don't vote, would be just constantly to remind young people who had their lives taken from them: don't ever forget who did this to you, because they'll do it again. Don't ever forget who did this to you. And frankly, I think there needs to be immediately a documentary on this that shows the collateral damage, that there are other goals in life other than preventing the spread of this one virus. You could do that. You could slow it a little bit here and there. As you say, that's not a long-term solution. But meanwhile, the wreckage you're leaving in 17 other parts of society needs to be chronicled somehow.

CABRERA: And I'm sure we'll see that at some point. One thing that's really depressing is how non-rebellious the college students have been.

WOODS: Yes.

CABRERA: I mean, we're starting to see it, but they've been very compliant with, *Oh, I tested positive. I feel fine, but it's okay. I'm going to go isolate all by myself for 14 days.* And I don't know if your listeners, if you went away to college, if you didn't know a soul when you got there, if you were living in a dorm and you didn't know anybody and you're away from your families for the first time, and then they stick you in an isolation room for 14 days? No, this is bad. This is not ever going to lead to good circumstances. I can't believe how – about half of college students apparently are fully on board with the safety narrative and turning in their fellow students and ratting on them and being Karens and whatever. And the rest are just staying home to stay out of trouble. Where did our rebellion go?

WOODS: Yeah, where did that all go? And then now I just saw a thing, like Pearl Jam is going to hold a town hall for Joe Biden. I think, whatever happened to like the old punk rockers who wanted to bring the establishment down? Now they're all like wearing suits and ties and following Joe Biden around [laughing]. I mean, who's going to rebel against – it astonishes me that anybody could consider themselves rebellious when they're staying in their houses listening to Dr. Fauci.

CABRERA: Well, to be fair, a lot of the Democratic narrative right now is about bringing the system down. So by going along with these things, they do think they're bringing the system down.

WOODS: Well, as I say, thank goodness we at least have this shred of federalism and we'll get to see what happens. Now, if there's a Joe Biden – I haven't really been that interested in

presidential politics for a long time, because it seems so futile, but we know because he's told us, if there's a Joe Biden — and Phil Kerpen is another guy I follow on Twitter. He had this funny tweet, where he said, "Look, don't say you weren't warned. Biden says he'll shut the country down if Fauci says. (Spoiler: Fauci says so.)" So you're basically voting on whether you want your life or not, or whether you're going to follow this voodoo.

CABRERA: That's exactly right. And the Republican Party, just very quickly, needs to be much more outspoken about this, that they are the party of civil liberties, of the freedom of assembly, of the freedom of movement, of freedom of religion, that they are the party of getting our lives back. And I'm not seeing it. I'm seeing most politicians going along with the safety narrative. And it's very, very depressing.

WOODS: Yeah. I mean, you might as well give it a shot. You might not succeed. Maybe there are a lot of people who, after seven or however many months it's been of this, still think this is normal and depriving their kids of normal life is a good thing. And maybe there are a lot of those. But I have a feeling that deep down, even — yeah, we see a lot of the outspoken ones on social media. But I think there are out there some families that are not political, and in their hearts, their hearts are broken. And if somebody reached out to them and said, *You know this is abnormal, and you know there has to be a better way of going about this than locking people in their homes, then you've got to come out support me.* At least try. At least you'll go down fighting, standing for something.

CABRERA: Well, I'm so proud of Governor DeSantis, because I have felt for months that he understood everything that I understand about COVID. I really have. Like you say, he drops things like he puts "cases" in quote marks. He clearly understands what's going on. He's always understood the age segregation of the fatalities. He's understood all of this, but he's been, until a couple weeks ago, reluctant to really make any big moves. And I think a lot of that is because there's polling saying that even republicans support masks, not necessarily masking mandates, but they support masks. And he didn't want to come out against something that he felt like his base believed in. And so I'm very proud that he brought in the scientists and he said, look, there's basis for what I want to do. And he went against the polling and he just said, *Hey, we're going to open up.*

WOODS: And I have to say, another one thing that very much impressed me about that roundtable, apart from the fact that he held it at all, was how informed he came across. Didn't you find that interesting? He's citing this Iceland study off the top of his head, and this would go on the entire roundtable. Very impressive.

CABRERA: It was very impressive. And he hit every point that needed to be hit.

WOODS: Yes, exactly right. After that was over, I wasn't thinking to myself, *I wish he had said A, B or C.*

CABRERA: Exactly.

WOODS: I was completely satisfied. And then the press conference he held the next day when he announced the Phase III, that was an excellent press conference. There was only one tiny slip-up. It was where he cited the statistic about 25% of kids 18 to 24. He thought it was that 25% of them were suffering from depression. It was much worse. It was a 25% of them had

contemplated suicide in the previous 30 days. We'll overlook that. I know that's what he meant to say. But otherwise, fantastic.

And I'm hopeful that it will encourage the right sort of people to move to Florida, and what I mean by that is simply people who won't undo what he's trying to do. And that's exactly what Kristi Noem has tried to say in her videos. She hasn't made a blanket invitation for everybody to come to South Dakota. She said, if you share our values with regard to limited government, then I welcome you to come to South Dakota [laughing]. I totally understand that. I don't want you to come and undo everything I've been trying to do to preserve the well-being of the population here.

We put out a lot of links in our conversation today. I'm going to put them all on the show notes page. This is Episode 1750, so TomWoods.com/1750 will have a lot of the stuff that we talked about. But if there was just one link you want people to remember without going there – because I'll put your personal Twitter, which I follow, and also of your publication and some of the other things we've said – what would that one link be?

CABRERA: Probably RationalGround.com. That's where we're putting out – unfortunately, it's not as much as we could. We're all doing this on the side. We all have real jobs, and so we're doing all we can, but we're trying to get our stuff out there. The college study showing how many cases there are in colleges and how few hospitalizations and how few deaths, that's all up there. The mask charts are up there. The mask tool is up there. Tons of articles with data.

WOODS: All right, so RationalGround.com is where I'll direct people. Well, really I'm glad we had a chance to connect and had an opportunity to have this exchange with you, but also to tell you seriously and sincerely how much I've appreciated the information you've been sharing. It's helped me an awful lot, and I've been trying to broadcast it to additional folks. So thanks again for your time today.

CABRERA: Thank you. I really appreciate it.