

OurView

The world's first trillionaire can't say we are all in this together

THE mantra that we are 'all in this together' is sounding weaker by the day.

It is now well established that people in ethnic minorities are more likely to get the virus and suffer its worst effects, as are the elderly and especially people stuck together in cramped care homes.

But as well as the difference between who actually gets the virus, it is becoming increasingly clear that there is a vast gulf between how people are going to be affected economically.

While those with the most money will lose a little of their wealth (and indeed, some business owners are raking in a fortune from our misfortune), the poorest people stand to lose everything they've got because of the way society is shut down.

Today's front page story about the potential 'eviction crisis' facing Oxford is a prime example.

Although landlords of course still need income for themselves and to pay for building maintenance, if their tenants are not given some help then those landlords may end up with no tenants at all.

It is not as if there is less money around: the exact same amount of money exists now as before this whole lockdown started (give or take a few million), but it is slowly trickling from the hands of the many into the hands of the few.

Supermarkets like Tesco, Sainsbury's and Aldi have had as much business as ever, if not more because smaller competitors have been unable to compete.

The number of people subscribing to TV streaming services like Netflix has soared, and the number of people shopping on Amazon – well, let's say Jeff Bezos won't be struggling to pay the rent this month.

Indeed this week it was reported that Bezos could be on track to become the world's first ever trillionaire, partly thanks to lockdown-driven demand which has sent Amazon stock soaring.

The money is still there: the poor do not need to suffer; the struggling do not need to face eviction.

All these problems could be solved, if those in power wanted to solve them.

OurPolicy

THE *Oxford Mail* is regulated by the Independent Press Standards Organisation and we seek to abide by the Editors' Code which is enforced by IPSO.

The Code is available at editorscode.org.uk/the_code.php Details of IPSO can be found at ipso.co.uk

Complaints and requests for editorial corrections or clarifications should be referred to the Editor Samantha Harman in the first instance, who can be contacted as follows: complaints@oxfordmail.co.uk or by post at Newspaper House, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0EJ. It is our policy to correct mistakes where appropriate.

It is essential that your email is headed "Complaint" in the subject line and contains the following information:

Your name, postal address, email address and telephone number; title of the publication concerned; date of publication; page number or website page address (or a copy of the story); and details of the complaint.

We may ask for more detail, but once the full details have been established, we will try to resolve any complaint brought under the Editors' Code within 28 days. If you are dissatisfied with our answer, you may then refer the matter to IPSO.

For complaints about non-editorial third party comments on website articles you should always use the "report this post" function next to the comment.

The recycled paper content of UK newspapers in 2018 was 69.2%



Feature

Like us at facebook.com/oxfordmail

Follow us @theoxfordmail

Don't fret if you have not written your big lockdown bestseller yet



W RITING can be difficult at the best of times, but writing during a pandemic is particularly challenging.

Despite this, I'm sure by now, we've all encountered overzealous people claiming that lockdown is the perfect time to upskill or write that novel you've always daydreamed about.

As an author, I strongly disagree. I've had four romantic comedies published with HarperCollins, I'm self-publishing a rom com this summer, and I have a thriller out with Bloodhound Books in November, and I definitely don't think pandemic lockdowns are conducive to writing.

The best books I've written have been written during times when I'm not too stressed or worried, since it's difficult to let your imagination wander freely if you're under too much pressure or strain.

Global pandemics, therefore, present far from ideal writing conditions.

And anyway, good writers tend to be curious people, so anyone who is not totally distracted from writing by watching the pandemic unfold probably doesn't have the inquiring mind necessary to produce good fiction.

That being said, as lockdown has gone on and on, and we've all started adjusting to the new normal, writing becomes a possibility again.

Zoe May

Oxford author of romantic fiction novels

I spent the first few weeks of lockdown in a total panic, unable to stop reading news, but then I began working on my latest novel again.

I was tentative at first, wondering if my brain would be able to function under these conditions, but in the end, I found myself being swept up in my imaginary world, and in fact, it provided some much-needed relief.

My writing process during lockdown has been different though.

With the underlying stress and worry, I've not been able to be as productive as usual and haven't quite managed to put in the hours that I was doing before, however, I'm not beating myself up about this.

I think prioritising self-care and well-being is important during these difficult times, so if I feel like watching YouTube videos or trashy shows on Netflix, I haven't been fighting the urge as much as I would have done before.

I've also adopted a writing method I'd never tried before pre-lockdown.

I've started using a dictation app that translates speech to text. I've found this has really helped boost my productivity.

When dictating a chapter, I'm not clicking out of my Word document and going on Twitter and getting distracted, as has been the case for me recently.

It's been a real game-changer for my lockdown productivity.

I've also found talking about goals online to be helpful. Sharing your intentions with your followers or friends and family provides a sense of accountability that can keep you focused.

Catching up with someone on Zoom and being able to confirm that you did in fact do the things you said you were going to do provides a sense of achievement in these isolated times.

Despite these tips, I think it's important not to be too hard on ourselves.

These are strange times and there's a lot to cope with as it is.

If you manage to write during lockdown, then great, but if you don't, don't beat yourself up.

The most important thing is to stay healthy, rather than coming out of lockdown with the next bestseller.

● Her next book, *Flying Solo*, will be released on July 6. For more information on her published works visit her author website at zoemayauthor.co.uk