

# Coronatiné?: I blame zombie movies

The Corona virus is a real bug, and social distancing absolutely makes sense as a method to slow the spread, buying time for the medical infrastructure to prepare supplies, treatments and tests, and to not be overwhelmed with a surge of patients any greater than absolutely necessary.

But the way complete and total isolation has been embraced, in many cases with disregard to common sense - the way so many people seem to think that any exposure could lead to certain death - the speed with which people have come to understand how to quarantine and embraced it as a survival technique. For all of that I blame zombie movies.

Zombies were still a niche part of pop culture when the movie *Outbreak* soared to germ-borne fame around the time of the ebola scare. Since then, TV phenoms like "The Walking Dead," and top grossing movies like *World War Z*, *28 Days Later* and *Resident Evil* have permeated everyone's awareness.

In zombie movies, if you get bit, you're done. It may take a scene or two, but you always turn. Seeing this play out time after time - seeing the heroes who survive by not getting bitten, at least for a while, and playing the game of "I would totally have survived, because I would have not done that stupid thing, or would have wrapped every inch of myself in duct tape, or whatever" has all prepared us to jump right in to the idea of pandemic protection. Social isolation? Learned it from Will Smith (or Vincent Price, for you older folks). Avoiding strangers? *A Quiet Place* has important lessons. Scavenging for toilet paper? Study the second or third season of "The Walking Dead."

So, if your friends are treating coronatine as if having your healthy, uninfected self come over for a visit should be handled through a clean-wipes-encased door chain, blame George Romero. And if you think that our collective attention to hygiene will save the world, well, thank the collective auteurs of all those bloody, jaw-snapping corpses.