

The lab-leak theory isn't dead

The mother of all Covid conspiracy theories is true

BY [Thomas Fazi](#)



Thomas Fazi is a writer, journalist and translator. His latest book 'Reclaiming the State' is published by Pluto Press.
August 30, 2022

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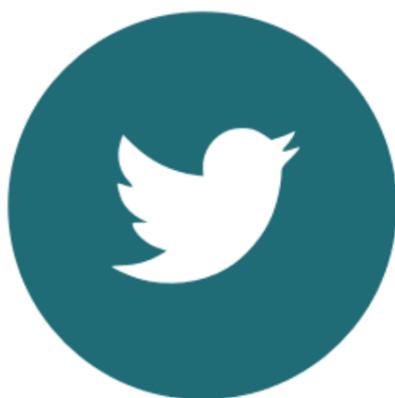
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For more than a year after the onset of the pandemic, talking about the possibility that the virus might have been lab-engineered was taboo. Then, as the evidence continued to mount, it suddenly became acceptable to talk about it in “respectable” circles. Today, however, we appear to have gone full-circle: a determined effort is once again underway to dismiss the lab-leak theory for good – even though no new evidence has emerged to disprove it.

Considering the endless ways in which the pandemic and our response to it have changed the lives of every human being on the planet, it's astonishing to consider how little is actually known about the origins of the virus. Two and half years on, we are still very much in the dark as to when, how and even where SARS-CoV-2 first made its appearance.

This isn't because our efforts to get to the bottom of the mystery have proved fruitless, but rather because those efforts have been systematically thwarted by the world's two most powerful governments: America and China. This is the mother of all Covid conspiracy theories – but it's also true.



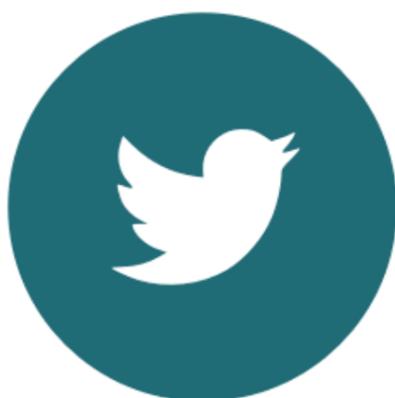
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August 30, 2022

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One of the main “conspiracy theorists” is none other than Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University, president of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and [chair of the Lancet Covid-19 Commission](#). He is not your typical tinfoil-hat-wearing internet crank. Sachs recently co-authored [a paper in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences](#) calling for an independent inquiry into the virus's origins. He believes there is clear proof that the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the primary US public health agency, and many members of the scientific community have been impeding a serious investigation into the origins of Covid-19 in order to cover up evidence that US-funded research in Wuhan may have played a role in the creation of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Many are convinced that the debate is settled, largely because almost immediately a public narrative surrounding the origin of the virus emerged. This held that the virus was zoonotic in nature, meaning that it had jumped from one or more animals (probably, it was argued, bats) to one or more humans, possibly through one or more unidentified animal intermediate hosts, and most likely at the Huanan Seafood Market – even though there was no conclusive evidence of any of this.

Early in the pandemic, an alternative theory emerged, suggesting that the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) – known, of all things, for its research into SARS-related coronaviruses, and only eight miles from the Huanan Seafood Market – might have had something to do with an accidental outbreak. From a purely circumstantial standpoint, and considering the [long history of safety breaches](#) previously recorded at various facilities in China and throughout the world, one could have been justified for considering it, at the very least, a lead worth pursuing.

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[Is Giorgia Meloni an EU puppet?](#)
By [Thomas Fazi](#)



As Sir Jeremy Farrar, director of the Wellcome Trust, Europe's biggest philanthropic research funding body, notes in his bestselling book *Spike*: "It was odd for a spillover event, from animals to humans, to take off in people so immediately and spectacularly in a city with a biolab ... which is home to an almost unrivalled collection of bat viruses" — especially with a new virus that "seemed almost designed to infect human cells". If this were a coincidence, he adds, it would be a "huge" one.

Yet from the beginning the very notion that the virus might have a laboratory-based origin was stifled. The hot denials came not only from the Chinese authorities and [the Wuhan Institute of Virology itself](#), but also from [the WHO](#) and leading Western scientists, institutions and media organisations. For around a year and a half, the "lab-leak" hypothesis was ridiculed and dismissed as [a fringe conspiracy theory](#), and anyone who raised it deemed a crackpot — and even subject to censorship on Twitter and Facebook.

The mood seemed to shift when, beginning in mid-2021, several high-profile Western scientists, intelligence officials and politicians — [including President Joe Biden](#) — started to acknowledge the plausibility of a laboratory accident. Almost overnight, the lab-leak scenario went from being a "crackpot theory" to a credible and legitimate hypothesis. On the same day Biden announced that his administration would be investigating the origins of Covid-19, "including whether it emerged from human contact with an infected animal or from a laboratory accident", [Facebook stated](#) that it would "no longer remove the claim that Covid-19 is man-made or manufactured" from its apps.

More than a year later, there is simply no conclusive evidence of whether the virus is zoonotic or artificial in nature — even though the public narrative continues to be heavily skewed towards the natural origin theory. What we do know, however, is that a massive cover-up was orchestrated from the earliest days of the pandemic by leading members of the scientific establishment and the Chinese authorities.

This incredible story sheds light on several key aspects of the entire pandemic management, something that Toby Green and I go into in detail in our forthcoming [book](#): the stifling of critical opinion, the lack of transparency by public institutions, the deeply unscientific manner in which the "scientific consensus" about many aspects of the pandemic came about, and how some of the leading actors of the pandemic tragedy — the WHO, Anthony Fauci, the NIH, leading scientific journals — were already engaging in the publication of papers which traduced the scientific method from the very first days of the pandemic.

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[Civil disobedience is coming](#)

By Thomas Fazi

Here's a brief recap of what we know about the cover-up — much of which we are aware of thanks to a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. Much of the work on SARS-like CoVs performed in Wuhan was part of [an active and highly collaborative US-China scientific research programme](#) funded by the US government — primarily through the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), directed by Anthony Fauci, which is part of the NIH — and coordinated by the US-based non-governmental organisation EcoHealth Alliance (EHA). The group's research work went beyond the simple analysis of existing coronaviruses, and actually [involved the engineering of "chimeric" bat coronaviruses](#), some of which proved to be potentially more infectious to humans — a highly risky technique known as gain-of-function.

In 2018, EcoHealth and the WIV (in collaboration with other institutions) [sent a grant proposal](#) to the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), which included a plan to insert furin cleavage sites into existing bat coronaviruses — spots in the surface protein of a virus that can boost its entry into human cells. The DARPA proposal was rejected — and yet the presence of a furin cleavage site is precisely what sets SARS-CoV-2 apart from all known SARS-like coronaviruses. Did the researchers carry out the research anyway, possibly using other sources of funding? Nobel Prize-winning virologist David Baltimore [stated](#) that he considered this to be "the smoking gun for the origin of the virus".

In light of all this, it's hardly surprising that in the early days of the pandemic, at the highest levels of the US establishment, the question of whether the virus might have been engineered at the WIV, possibly through research part-funded by the US government, was taken very seriously. As a result of [an FOIA request](#), we know that on February 1, 2020, Anthony Fauci convened a "totally confidential" conference call with at least a dozen high-level experts from around the world, many of whom privately admitted that there was a very high probability that the virus had been artificially engineered and had then "escaped" from the Wuhan lab.

Yet not only did the NIH fail to disclose this to the public or to Congress, but the emails released under the FOIA suggest that it took an early and active role in promoting the "zoonotic hypothesis" and the rejection of the laboratory-associated hypothesis. Indeed, within days of the February 1 call, a group of virologists, including some who were on it and had endorsed the "artificial origin" theory, prepared the first draft of a hugely influential paper on *The proximal origin of SARS-CoV-2* — [subsequently published in Nature](#) — that argued for the exact opposite.

Moreover, the NIH [has resisted the release of important evidence](#), such as the grant proposals and project reports of EHA, and has continued to redact materials released under FoIA, including a remarkable [290-page redaction in a recent release](#). Even more incredibly, at some point after March 2020 a number of early SARS-CoV-2 genomic sequences [were deleted from the NIH's own archive](#) at the request of researchers in Wuhan.

[More from this author](#)

The dangers of monkeypox hysteria

By Thomas Fazi

The strangeness doesn't end here. In February 2020, an influential letter signed by 27 global experts [was published in *The Lancet*](#), strongly condemning "conspiracy theories suggesting that Covid-19 does not have a natural origin". The letter proved crucial, alongside the aforementioned *Nature* paper, in nipping in the bud the lab-leak hypothesis and giving the illusion of scientific consensus. In late 2020, however, emails released following a FoIA request showed that the *Lancet* statement [had been orchestrated](#) by one of the 27 co-authors – none other than Peter Daszak, president of EcoHealth Alliance. [It was also revealed](#) that all but one of the other 26 scientists were linked to the Wuhan lab, their colleagues or funders.

Daszak was first appointed in late 2020 as chair of the task force created by the *Lancet* Covid-19 Commission with the aim of establishing none other than "the origins of Covid-19"; and shortly thereafter as the only US representative to a [WHO fact-finding mission](#) to China tasked with the same goal. Unsurprisingly, both task forces found that the virus was most likely zoonotic (i.e., natural) in origin, and that transmission through a laboratory incident was extremely unlikely.

The WHO report, in particular, [came under heavy criticism](#), leading to the establishment of a specific work group tasked with ascertaining the origins of SARS-CoV-2, the Scientific Advisory Group on the Origins of Novel Pathogens, which published [its first preliminary report](#) in June 2022. The results were inconclusive, largely because "key pieces of data" from China were missing, leading the WHO to recommend in its strongest terms yet that a deeper probe was required into whether a lab accident may be to blame. As we have seen, however, it's not only the Chinese government that is covering up its tracks about its possible involvement in the engineering of SARS-CoV-2 – but the American one as well.

A new campaign is now underway to put the lab-leak theory to rest once and for all. The recent publication of [two new studies](#) providing more evidence that SARS-CoV-2 emerged into humans via the live animal trade at the Huanan Seafood Market has led several outlets to emphatically claim that ["the Covid lab leak theory is dead"](#), once again misleading citizens into thinking that the debate is now *really* settled.

But the studies don't provide any evidence that the virus didn't escape from the Wuhan lab – they simply argue that it's not a plausible scenario, also based on the fact that there's no evidence that the virus was present at the WIV before the pandemic started. But of course absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. [As Sachs notes](#), "this [claim] is only as good as the limited data on which it is based, and verification of this claim is dependent on gaining access to any other unpublished viral sequences that are deposited in relevant US and Chinese databases".

Ultimately, the virus may indeed be conclusively proven to be natural in origin. But in order to do that, as Sachs stresses, a real independent scientific investigation is needed. The public deserves to be shown incontrovertible proof that the Wuhan lab has nothing to do with all this – but that means that the US and Chinese governments have to open up their lab records instead of going out of their way [to prevent a real investigation](#). Amid a time of heightened geopolitical tensions and crumbling faith in political leadership across the West, transparency is needed more than ever. If we can't get this one right, how else can we be expected to place our faith in authorities ever again?

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Mike Michaels 13 days ago

Does anyone still seriously believe it didn't come from the Wuhan lab?

421 REPLY



J Bryant 13 days ago

Reply to [Mike Michaels](#)

Sadly, yes. The msm, social media, and a significant part of the academic literature still push the zoonotic origin theory. The pandemic showed us how powerful that group of organizations is at shaping public opinion and behavior. And, of course, there is still likely to be social media censorship of competing views as well as peer pressure on dissenting academics to stay quiet.

I doubt the key evidence about the origin of the virus will ever be found assuming it still exists. If true, the lab leak hypothesis touches too many people at the very top of politics, government and academia.

177 REPLY



Roger Watson 13 days ago

Reply to [J Bryant](#)

Chan & Ridley's book 'Viral' is clear that no evidence was found for Covid in the wet markets. But that still gets peddled

76 REPLY



Nic Cowper 13 days ago

Reply to [Roger Watson](#)

Here it is: Its a riveting read as well as stunning insights <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Viral-Search-Covid-19-Alina-Chan/dp/0008487499>

23 REPLY



The Ticklicker 6 days ago

Reply to [Nic Cowper](#)

Agree; great book!

0 REPLY



Rick Nah 12 days ago

Reply to [J Bryant](#)

I am hoping someone recorded the very early pandemic Fauci conference call and that it eventually is leaked.

There is much to hide under the guise of "national security". With so many actors involved in the greatest crime of the century, eventually someone will break. And then, will the colluding scientists mysteriously start to have fatal accidents?

 38   REPLY



Liam O'Mahony  12 days ago

 Reply to [J Bryant](#)

You say "key evidence" but I assume you mean conclusive evidence or perhaps "direct evidence". Key evidence does exist albeit "circumstantial". There is a general view (among non legal folk) that circumstantial evidence almost useless and we often hear the phrase "purely circumstantial.." in an attempt to dismiss evidence of this type. This is incorrect! Circumstantial evidence, when strong enough can prove a case to be true in a court of law: even criminal law!

Various forms of "direct" evidence such as

1. Eyewitness account (observers)
2. First hand statements (those involved)
3. Physical evidence (of viral engineering)

..may appear to be far more important but modern reseach shows the 1st to be deeply suspect (our recall even if 100% honest is often flawed): and the 2nd: well we all know how everyone lies these days, even (if not especially, the most revered).

The 3rd of course would be proof positive of Covid-19 being man-made (not zoonotic) but even that would be "circumstantial" as regards the actual leak theory. It would be impossible to determine whether lab staff were the first to be infected and passed it on. Equally, if the "leak" were deliberate (!) what better place to release it than a wet market? But maybe a distant wet market would have been smarter, surely!

In my humble opinion (I have studied epidemiology [and law] at 3rd level but not in any great depth) the circumstantial evidence is strong enough to prove the case on balance of probability but not beyond a reasonable doubt.

I believe there was an effort to engineer a killer virus as a weapon, funded by the US deep state and China to reduce the world's population especially of non-productive, drain-on-resources old and sick folk. The fact it killed non-whites disproportionately (in 'white' countries) is maybe a step too far: I don't think the science is that clever ...yet.

As an aside: in Tanzania the main effort to ward off the disease it seems, was 3 days of prayer! Don't laugh.. Tanzania had one of the lowest death rates anywhere in the world: but of course that is "purely circumstantial"!

 12   REPLY



Nick Etches  12 days ago

 Reply to [J Bryant](#)

Do they push the zoonotic origin theory because they really believe it or because they are being paid directly or their continued funding is dependent upon such behavior?

 8   REPLY



Kayla Marx  9 days ago

 Reply to [Nick Etches](#)

I think that, if an engineered virus was released from the Wuhan lab, the governments of China and the U.S. do not want their involvement known (for obvious reasons, no?), and the international community of virologists fear restrictions on viral research.

 Last edited 9 days ago by [Kayla Marx](#)

 6   REPLY



Maureen Spears  13 days ago

 Reply to [Mike Michaels](#)

No. Right from the beginning I, and friends, believed there was something fishy going on. We all thought it was a result of some type of germ warfare experiments.

 112   REPLY



Rick Nah  12 days ago

 Reply to [Maureen Spears](#)

Fauci wears many hats including Biodefence. That allows him to fund pathogenic development research with no public oversight. He can say that he never funded gain of function research under the public programs but is bound by his own declared secrecy not to reveal any funding or programs under military pathogenic research. It's why Biden's 60 day origins investigation came up with nothing-burgers by the various intelligence agencies. Nothing to see if it is securely classified above Biden's paygrade. (Fauci is paid more than Biden.)

👍 37 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Matt Hindman 13 days ago

Reply to [Mike Michaels](#)

Funny enough, it was the massive barrage of vehement denials and organized censorship that made me go from considering it a reasonable possibility to becoming instantly suspicious that the lab leak was the truth.

Last edited 13 days ago by Matt Hindman

👍 204 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Peter Dawson 13 days ago

Reply to [Matt Hindman](#)

The Barbara Streisand effect!

👍 22 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



CHARLES STANHOPE 13 days ago

Reply to [Mike Michaels](#)

Off course not! As they say in that fountain of natural wisdom, my local Pub, "it's the Chinks wot done it".

👍 23 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Richard Craven 13 days ago

Reply to [CHARLES STANHOPE](#)

Whenever I'm dealing with officialdom, I always deliberately refer to the virus as Wuhan Flu or the Chinese Disease, because it winds them up.

👍 76 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



CHARLES STANHOPE 13 days ago

Reply to [Richard Craven](#)

Exactly no point in "beating around the bush ".

It seems my lapse into the vernacular has enraged the 'Linda Snells' on this forumsplendid!

👍 15 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Richard Craven 13 days ago

Reply to [CHARLES STANHOPE](#)

Haha!

👍 1 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Matt Hindman 12 days ago

Reply to [Richard Craven](#)

I call it the Kung Flu.

👍 20 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



00 12 days ago

Reply to [Richard Craven](#)

Right! Lately the same crowd has come all a-tither over the use of the word "Monkeypox" ("Ewww, racist"!).

👍 11 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Andrew Martin 12 days ago

Reply to [00](#)

Which they were working on in the same Wuhan Lab

👍 7 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY

**Liam O'Mahony** 12 days ago| [Reply to Richard Craven](#)

You do well: apart altogether from Covid you must wind up official-dumb at every possible opportunity! It is our duty to so do!

👍 2 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY

**Carl Valentine** 12 days ago| [Reply to CHARLES STANHOPE](#)

What a pompous bigot you are Charles go away please.

👍 -24 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY

**CHARLES STANHOPE** 12 days ago| [Reply to Carl Valentine](#)

Haha! One of the Linda Snells 'breaks cover'! Tally ho!

👍 7 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY

**Shaun Bubs** 12 days ago| [Reply to CHARLES STANHOPE](#)

Lynda... Please.

👍 0 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY

**CHARLES STANHOPE** 12 days ago| [Reply to Shaun Bubs](#)

Really?

My sincere apologies for my slovenly research!

👍 0 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY

**Liam O'Mahony** 12 days ago| [Reply to CHARLES STANHOPE](#)

Try Cicero: qui bono? If such a weapon were being developed then of course a vaccine would be needed so the elite would survive! But it seems one was available for two years AFTER the villains released it ...or was it?

👍 0 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY

**Andrew McDonald** 13 days ago| [Reply to Mike Michaels](#)

Yes. As the article points out, until there is a serious and open, independent investigation, there's no real way to decide which of the two theories is true. It would be foolish to abandon either hypothesis at this stage.

👍 36 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY

**Roger Ledodger** 13 days ago| [Reply to Andrew McDonald](#)

The Furan Cleavage site, that Wuhan had a lab dealing in these very viruses, that the US funded Gain of Functionality in these labs and the failure to identify the 'zoonotic' cause are so many 'coincidences' built on top of the leaked and redacted emails that to believe the Zoonotic option is still open is quite frankly, beyond belief. The very reaction of the world to this virus suggests to me that the many Governments knew it got out of a Wuhan lab, BUT they were not sure exactly what it was that had escaped. They feared it was a bio-weapon. Sherlock would opt to the Lab leak 😊

👍 57 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY

**Andrew Martin** 12 days ago| [Reply to Roger Ledodger](#)

Probably was a Bio Weapon. Why did President Xi shut down internal travel in China but allowed foreign travel to continue? After the initial cover up of Sars COV in 2003 which was blamed on poor communications the Chinese spent £Millions on improving internal communications to reduce Bureaucracy and....??

👍 14 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY

**Andrew Martin** 12 days ago| [Reply to Roger Ledodger](#)

That's interesting my reply has been removed. Why?

0 REPLY



jane baker 12 days ago

Reply to [Roger Ledodger](#)

For at least the first year I was willing to think that it escaped by accident. I just didn't want to think even worse.

But now I'm convinced it was deliberately unleashed on the world to change society. But not for the better unless you're one of THEM.

No I don't know who THEY are but I know it's not me.

12 REPLY



Liam O'Mahony 12 days ago

Reply to [jane baker](#)

Ask the question ala Cicero: qui bono? Who gains? Have a look at the (inner) Davos crowd first: then look to the billionaires.. and the Masons.. when you find a billionaire Mason who is in the inner Davos circle you got your prime suspect.

Wouldn't it be something is crazy David Icke turned out to be right agter all???

8 REPLY



Liam O'Mahony 12 days ago

Reply to [Roger Ledodger](#)

..on balance of probability zoonotic is definitely out: beyond a reasonable doubt?

Probably that too: maybe, barely?

3 REPLY



jane baker 12 days ago

Reply to [Andrew McDonald](#)

A serious,open and independent investigation would be an excellent idea so its not going to happen in our lifetimes.

12 REPLY



Liam O'Mahony 12 days ago

Reply to [Andrew McDonald](#)

As stated above.. there is literally no way to determine with certainty if it was an (accidental) lab leak. You may prove it was being researched: you may prove lab staff were infected but that will be circumstantial evidence at the end of the day.. very strong and damning evidence, especially when you add in all the other highly suspicious facts, not least cover ups, but not beyond a reasonable doubt.

Now if it was a deliberate leak that is quite different: there maybe be paperwork and someone might give direct evidence but don't hold your breath on either of those.

I believe the evidence, albeit circumstantial is nevertheless strong enough to prove, on balance of probabilities that it was a lab leak and it may well have been deliberate..

7 REPLY



Aldo Maccione 13 days ago

Reply to [Mike Michaels](#)

Trump said it was most likely a lab leak, ergo, for most people, it isn't.

Trump Derangement Syndrome is a strange and powerful disease, that spares only a few (at least within the MSM)

95 REPLY



jane baker 12 days ago

Reply to [Aldo Maccione](#)

I wasn't FOR Trump and he was often ungracious,that film footage of him blocking off our Queen and her trying to peek round him. To the Tower! But it annoyed and still annoys me when EVERYTHING he says HAS to be wrong even if its right. At least Mr Trump is definitely alive unlike that animated corpse they chose. Also he was President of the USA for 4 years and he never bombed anyone. Biden was in a week and he was shooting up an Afghan wedding.

20 REPLY

**Steve Brady** 12 days ago| [Reply to jane baker](#)

"Also he was President of the USA for 4 years and he never bombed anyone."

Qasem Soleimani is still unavailable for comment

[Last edited 12 days ago by Steve Brady](#)

9 [REPLY](#)

**Mike Michaels** 12 days ago| [Reply to Steve Brady](#)

Good.

7 [REPLY](#)

**Liam O'Mahony** 12 days ago| [Reply to Mike Michaels](#)

Yes the good ol' US justice system: send a drone to kill some guy you don't like: skip the trial. Incarcerate prisoners of war (captured in their own homeland fgs) without a trial in Guantanamo. Ah yes, good old US justice! Demand extradition of Assange to the US (which never, ever extradites it's citizens) so that he can be tried for the high crime of exposing war crimes and heinous US acts around the world. Ah yes, the good old USA which illegally invades sovereign nations at the drop of a hat and condemns Putin for doing exactly the same!

4 [REPLY](#)

**Liam O'Mahony** 12 days ago| [Reply to jane baker](#)

Yes: give him credit and do ask his opinion on major issues, for sure! But fgs don't elect him President again! Put him back on TV and let him be the outspoken face of good ol' commonsense (and the GOP).. especially now Tucker Carlson has grown a brain we need a replacement nut job to replace him.

-2 [REPLY](#)

**Liam O'Mahony** 12 days ago| [Reply to Aldo Maccione](#)

..ah, you forget: "Out of the mouths of babes and suckling Trumps".

You also forget "even a stopped clock tell the correct time twice every 24 hours".

Many's the lunatic who spoke the truth once or twice in a while!

Trump also foretold that Germany would be screwed by Russia on the supply of gas! Don't dismiss the mad entirely!

7 [REPLY](#)

**John K** 13 days ago| [Reply to Mike Michaels](#)

it's not a question of belief, it's a question of evidence.

I have yet to see any convincing evidence either way.

As the author says, what we need is an independent enquiry with access to all the facts. which we won't get.

21 [REPLY](#)

**Johnathan Galt** 13 days ago| [Reply to John K](#)

Sorry, it's not even a question. The virus contains a novel patented gene sequence.

Democrats funded the bio weapon for over 20 years, many of those years illegally. Fauci is on video extolling the effort. Then TDS hit and the were all chanting, "I wish something like an epidemic would hit (to hurt Trump). SHEZAM!!! Just a few weeks later, the first cases were noted in China.

In 5,000 years of recorded human history, there is little to no evidence that there has ever been such a thing as "a political coincidence."

45 [REPLY](#)

**Liam O'Mahony** 12 days ago| [Reply to Johnathan Galt](#)

Inspector Colombo disliked coincidence. So too Cicero: the latter's question: qui bono may be relevant here?

👍 1 🗨️ REPLY



Roger Ledodger 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [John K](#)

When the authorities are covering it up, then one has to ask how any evidence can get out? There are far too many 'coincidences' and cases of 'interested parties' pushing their party line.

Quite frankly science is damaged by this and the Climate Change attitude on labelling anyone who disagrees as 'a denier'. The fact is the scientists in my family, including a virologist no longer have faith in the scientific establishment. As Prof James Lovelock was reported as saying in an article on why he alone seemed to have 'recanted' of his alarmist Climate belief.

"As "an independent and a loner," he said he did not mind saying "All right, I made a mistake." He claimed a university or government scientist might fear an admission of a mistake would lead to the loss of funding."

Science is a methodology, Scientists are human. When in doubt, follow the money, and I bet there are fortunes and careers galore at stake IF it is ever admitted it did get out of a Wuhan lab. 😊

👍 50 🗨️ REPLY



CHARLES STANHOPE 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Roger Ledodger](#)

Professor James Ephraim Lovelock, CH, CBE, FRS.

26th July 1919 – 26th July 2022. R.I.P.

👍 13 🗨️ REPLY



Peter Johnson 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Roger Ledodger](#)

I think Covid has hurt the scientific establishment more than they fully realize. The coming energy disaster in Europe is going to erode a lot more confidence in global warming alarmism as the costs of listening to activist scientists comes home to roost. Trying to suppress the truth is like holding a cork underwater – it just wants to come up. I hope they and their MSM enablers start to realize that you can only sell lie after lie for so long.

📄 Last edited 12 days ago by [Gunner Myrtle](#)

👍 21 🗨️ REPLY



Liam O'Mahony 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Peter Johnson](#)

Climate change is true: that is indisputable. But yes, the extent to which it is man-made (and therefore reversible) is still open for discussion. Personally I believe man-made CC is true but I'm heavily influenced by my lifelong adherence to the Precautionary Principle. Without that I might ignore the issue entirely as I don't know which experts are lying to me on what specific issues.

👍 -1 🗨️ REPLY



jane baker 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Roger Ledodger](#)

The trouble is, as I see it, (no one cares what I think!), but the concerns of the early green movement were real and they did a good job of warning and reining in the more bad aspects of development and use of new techniques, etc but I'm not sure exactly when probably in the 1990s sometime the Green movement got co-opted by The Elite. I'm using that term as shorthand for the people who saw that ostensible green concern would be a great cover to further their own agenda. I imagine that Dr Lovelock sees that his genuine work is getting "Nazi-fied" so he wants to disassociate from it.

👍 8 🗨️ REPLY



Liam O'Mahony 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [jane baker](#)

I care: I believe you hit the nail on the head! You can apply the same to any 'movement': religion, politics, manufacturing etc.

The lab-leak theory isn't dead - UnHerd

Early, devoted adherents are soon ousted by those who infiltrate every good movement! They are like a virus that invade a healthy body and use it for their own evil ends!

👍 4 🗨️ REPLY



Dougie Undersub 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Roger Ledodger](#)

Indeed. There's no more unscientific statement than "the science is settled" and it's a disgrace that so many prominent scientists seem happy to say it.

👍 10 🗨️ REPLY



Liam O'Mahony 11 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Dougie Undersub](#)

True: Nothing is ever settled scientifically speaking! If we only gave credence to known facts there would, quite literally, be no innovation. Indeed, according to Einstein, 'scientific' inspiration is a very non-scientific pursuit (I paraphrase).. science is then used as a methodology to prove or falsify the inspiration..

👍 1 🗨️ REPLY



Liam O'Mahony 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Roger Ledodger](#)

Sadly, all too true. Does anyone remember when eminent scientists and other professionals valued their integrity more than income? When truth was a more or less fixed issue based on known facts.

Now we have seriously flawed (you call that human? ..omg!) professionals everywhere who make up the own truth (just as idiots do) and are only concerned with money and power.

Soon terms like integrity and honesty will be listed in the OED as "archaic terms, now little used..". And the word "Truth" will be defined as "assertion made to suit (usually financial) circumstances".

Of course there were always liars and cheats among the professional classes but in the past they were always shamed and often ended up in jail: at a minimum their days as consultants were over. Nowadays the guilty put it on their CVs as it proves their usefulness to the oligarchs!

Hey! Anyone remember when journalists told the whole truth and investigated top level wrongdoing? Ah, happy days!

👍 7 🗨️ REPLY



Andrew Stoll 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [John K](#)

In the absence of evidence, we should rely on common sense and the known circumstantial facts and to all reasonable people that points in one direction only.

👍 19 🗨️ REPLY



Nigel Clarke 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [John K](#)

<https://australiaoneparty.com/truth-about-covid-coming-out-now/>

Here's some evidence 😊

👍 3 🗨️ REPLY



Andrew Martin 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Nigel Clarke](#)

Wow... that was some interview. And about the vaccines being a Bio Weapon too inside your body. Quite frightening. But Dr Fleming knows his stuff. At least I now understand how the other variants of the virus happened.

👍 5 🗨️ REPLY



Liam O'Mahony 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [John K](#)

You discount circumstantial evidence. That is wrong headed in any legal system worth its salt. Strong circumstantial evidence is of a higher value than suspect direct evidence eg eyewitness account, first hand evidence statements, documentary evidence... all of which

can be easily falsified and indeed have been proved time and time again to be false.

👍 1 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



albert lucientes 9 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [John K](#)

Have a look: <https://peterdaszak.com/>

👍 1 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



rodney foy 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Mike Michaels](#)

Yes 😊

<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abp8715>

👍 0 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



John Sullivan 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Mike Michaels](#)

It came from the lab.

It was obvious in early 2020 and its obvious now.

👍 46 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Johnathan Galt 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [John Sullivan](#)

And it was almost certainly released intentionally. Accidents don't just happen at convenient political moments.

👍 18 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Liam O'Mahony 11 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Johnathan Galt](#)

If it was released intentionally you'd expect them to be smart enough not to release it on their own doorstep so to speak, surely?

In my experience when it's a choice between conspiracy or idiocy the latter usually wins out. However, what does happen a lot is when mistakes are made the wicked elites consider whether it's a disaster or possibly an opportunity? "tis an ill wind" and all that!

👍 2 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Liam O'Mahony 11 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Liam O'Mahony](#)

You may remember the Chinese early on accused the US of bringing it in during a weapons display or some such! That was immediately after the US pointed the finger at China.. but then both began to sing from the same hymn sheet!

👍 2 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Alan Thorpe 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Mike Michaels](#)

... and via the USA.

👍 6 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Johann Strauss 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Mike Michaels](#)

Indeed. In virtually all cases the simplest explanation is the correct one.

if you find the wife murdered at home without evidence of a break-in, the prime suspect that the police look into is the husband. And 9 times out of 10 that's the correct answer.

If you find a new and harmful virus in the vicinity of a biolab, whether that be the Wuhan Institute of Virology or Fort Detrick or Portland Down, those establishment are the most likely and obvious source unless definitively proved otherwise.

And as for finding conclusive proof, 2 and half years out, that the Wuhan lab was the source of SARS-CoV2, good luck. You can bet that all the relevant samples have been destroyed and nobody, other than the CPP, will have access to any samples, data, etc....

But, unless very clear and incontrovertible evidence is found for a zoonotic source, that presumably would be found, and if found by the Chinese will be made publicly known. The fact that they haven't found any evidence for a zoonotic source of transmission from the original bat

to humans via some intermediary, indicates without the shadow of a doubt, or in legal terms beyond any reasonable doubt, that the origin was a lab leak.

👍 39 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



Elaine Giedrys-Leeper 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Mike Michaels](#)

Counter arguments – which is why we all subscribe to UnHerd surely ?

1. All recent “viruses of human concern” have been zoonotic spillovers – H1N1 influenza A (1918), Hepatitis C, HIV, Ebola, Zika, MERS, SARS and less publicised / remembered from the past : HeV, NiV, arenaviruses in S America and Africa, Lassa fever, Hantavirus, and Marburg virus.
2. Greater than half of all human infectious diseases are zoonotic, a majority of which originated through the cross-species transmission of RNA viruses from wildlife to humans and, at present, we know of more than 224 RNA viruses that cause human disease with 88% of these being zoonotic in nature
3. There are good technical reasons why SARS CoV 2 (including the furin cleavage site) can not have been engineered, detailed here in plain English (about half way down the piece) : <https://leelabvirus.host/covid19/origins-part3>
4. SARS CoV 2 is a particularly promiscuous virus – it can thrive in all sorts of animals, so it has a huge evolutionary playground to evolve in.
5. There are bats in Laos carrying coronaviruses with RBDs that bind to ACE2 : <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-871965/v1> (2021).
6. The 2 lineages spotted in and around Wuhan in late 2019 / early 2020 – common ancestor unknown and must have originated earlier somewhere and not necessarily in Wuhan.
7. Northern China was ripe for a wet market spillover event in 2019/20. There was an African Swine Fever epidemic in Chinese pigs in 2018/19 and ~150 million animals had to be culled. This resulted in a shortage of animal protein and the slack was taken up by the wild animal trade – captured in China, Laos and remote bits of Vietnam, kept and bred in farms and transported north via the belt and road transport system.

And a general observation – nature is the best bio terrorist. It's far more creative than humans are and with enough space to play it is capable of anything we can or more importantly can't imagine.

👍 16 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



hayden eastwood 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Elaine Giedrys-Leeper](#)

Thank you for this perspective Elaine, intriguing read.

👍 4 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



CHARLES STANHOPE 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Elaine Giedrys-Leeper](#)

Thank you for that robust riposte, it's good to hear the other side.

You haven't written for some time so I feared that Dulwich had been silenced, thus I am very pleased it hasn't !

👍 3 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



Elaine Giedrys-Leeper 11 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [CHARLES STANHOPE](#)

Thanks Charles.

Departed Dulwich many moons ago.

Currently admiring many and various wet markets in SE Asia

👍 1 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



CHARLES STANHOPE 11 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Elaine Giedrys-Leeper](#)

We met eons ago at ADG's.

Watch out for the bats!

🔗 Last edited 11 days ago by [stanhopecharles344](#)

👍 0 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



Johann Strauss 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Elaine Giedrys-Leeper](#)

Sorry but you're talking out the back of your head Elaine. Your evidence supporting zoonotic spread is not just poor and ill-informed, but is absolutely beside the point. The ONLY way to prove zoonotic spread is to find the intermediate host. Despite two and half years of trying, none has been found.

As for the furin cleavage site: As a dentist do you have any clue at all as to what can be done now by genetic engineering without any effort in essentially any molecular biology lab. Introducing the furin cleavage site artificially is so trivial these days that claiming that such a site (with very unusual codon usage) could not be engineered shows that you are really clueless. Indeed, one could simply send off the DNA sequence to a company such as Invitrogen and order the appropriate codon changes and insertions for literally a few hundred dollars. This is completely routine these days and we do this all the time – it's not worth the effort introducing mutations/modification/insertions/deletions in one's lab as it's so cheap to order. A little knowledge on your part is very dangerous. To put this in perspective, synthesizing the entire genetic code for SARS-CoV2, if one wanted to, would not be particularly hard these days, and indeed entire viruses have been synthesized.

But what you fail to realize and unfortunately appear to be in complete denial of, is that even if this were a natural virus that directly infected a human from a bat or for that matter from cell culture to a human, the lab leak hypothesis is still by far the simplest explanation. (And personally I wouldn't even attribute anything nefarious to the leak). The Wuhan lab had thousands of bat corona viruses. Their safety measures were to put it mildly lax and certainly not as strictly controlled and regulated as in the US or UK. Lab leaks happen from even the best and highest security facilities with BSL4 labs including USAMRIID at Fort Detrick.

And lastly, the simplest explanation is almost invariably the correct one. You might want to read the work of William of Occam dating from the 14th century, now referred to as Occam's razor. If Occam could figure this out in the 14th century, and it's something that guides the pursuit of science even today, you should be able to figure this out in the 21st century.

👍 13 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



CHARLES STANHOPE 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Johann Strauss](#)

Unfortunately the validity of your argument is somewhat negated by your deliberate rudeness.

You can do better than this, as you have shown in the past.

👍 3 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Johann Strauss 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [CHARLES STANHOPE](#)

While I apologize for some of the rudeness, what is especially infuriating about Elaine and others who are like-minded, is that they are in complete denial of the obvious, and then go on to present straw man arguments that are completely irrelevant.

The simple fact of the matter is that the most likely explanation is that this was an inadvertent lab leak. Somebody in the lab either got bitten by a bat (and they had 1000s of bats in the lab, all harboring exotic corona viruses) or were directly infected by a virus in cell culture. Moreover, they were passaging the viruses in humanized chicken cells I believe, which again will generate many variants adapted specifically to a human host. And finally, there is no question that they were conducting gain-of-function research on Corona viruses, and that some of the funding for this was coming indirectly from the NIH via EcoHealth, despite Fauci's denials on this matter (largely by trying to change definitions of what exactly constitutes gain-of-function research).

It is important to remember that even in the most tightly controlled BSL4 facilities such as Fort Detrick and Portland Down, lab leaks of this type occur. The difference is that they are contained whereas the leak from the WIV was not.

👍 7 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



CHARLES STANHOPE 11 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Johann Strauss](#)

Apology accepted and thank you so much for such an erudite explanation as to the cause of this Corona nightmare.

One doesn't have to apply Ockham's razor to sense that you are, sadly, very close to the terrible truth.

👍 4 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Elaine Giedrys-Leeper 11 days ago

Reply to [Johann Strauss](#)

Thanks Johann.

I am fully aware of what is available in terms of cut and paste codons – in fact looking back at my archive this seemed to be well publicised back in 2020. So why are there 2 serines at either end of the postulated insert that can be phosphorylated at the drop of a hat thus efficiently switching off furin's ability to cleave the site? Sounds like piss poor engineering to me : <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7547067/>

Also fully aware of Occam and his razor and the robust discussion you had with Rasmus Fogh about how it should be applied, again, way back in 2020/21.

The problem this time around is that there is a shortage of good hard evidence for both scenarios – Fauci, the NIH, Peter Daszak, the Chinese + others have all been economical with the truth; there hasn't been enough sampling of either bat or possible intermediate animal populations to see just how high and wide the coronavirus genome landscape actually is.

So ... we are just left with beliefs. You believe that the simplest explanation is a lab leak +/- some nefarious engineering on the side. I believe, for now, that the simplest explanation is a zoonotic spillover mainly because it has happened so often in the past. Beliefs are by definition subject to many and various cognitive biases, most of which are unconscious and therefore don't really get us anywhere.

I certainly don't discount a lab leak out of hand – accidents happen everywhere, it just doesn't seem that plausible an explanation to me right now particularly given the 2 lineage observation from very early on. Just as an add on to this – Wuhan has good virus surveillance capabilities (because of the scientific infrastructure in place there) other cities in N China don't. The originator virus could have got a grip anywhere and simply not been spotted.

It took over a decade to figure out the origin of Sars.

Have a nice day.

2 REPLY



Johann Strauss 11 days ago

Reply to [Elaine Giedrys-Leeper](#)

While I see where you are coming from, I do think that you simply don't want to come to the realization that the simplest explanation is in all likelihood the correct one.

Here's the thing, it really doesn't matter whether the original Wuhan virus had been subject to actual genetic engineering, whether it had just been perpetuated in bats in cages, or whether it had been passaged through humanized chicken cells. It is quite clear that the WIV had a huge collection (1000s) of nasty bat corona viruses, as well as many actual live bats harboring corona viruses. An incident of a bat biting a lab worker is not exactly a remote possibility. Rather it is very likely.

Added to that, no matter what the virus surveillance in Wuhan was, Chinese labs tend to be very cavalier when it comes to safety. Indeed, the experiments on corona viruses at the WIV were being done in BSL2 labs. In the US these would have been carried out in BSL4 labs.

Finally, there is no question that gain-of-function research, in part funded by the NIAID/NIH, was being carried out in the WIV, and the reason that NIAID/NIH were involved is that they weren't allowed to fund such research in the US (as per an executive order during the Obama administration). So NIAID/NIH found a way around this. But the truth is that gain-of-function research, whether or not this was responsible for SARS-CoV2, is truly playing with fire. And we know for a fact from an op-ed, I believe in the Wall Street Journal, some years prior that Drs. Fauci (NIAID), Collins (NIH Director) and Nabel (Director of the Vaccine Research Centre at the NIH) were advocating strongly for gain-of-function research and are on record both in this op-ed and in other places as saying that the risk was worth it, even if it led to a global pandemic.

I might also add, that one of the staff scientists in our department was in Wuhan for the Chinese New Year in 2020 and got back to the US only a couple of days before travel from China was cut off. Now of course this is hearsay (and not solid evidence), but from his telling (and he is Chinese, originally from Wuhan and visiting his family) everybody in Wuhan knew from the get go that this was a leak from the WIV. So clearly the people in Wuhan could put 2+2 together. I might also add that if Bethesda were the epicenter of some weird viral infection (especially of the hemorrhagic fever variety), the immediate suspect would be the Biodefence Building at the NIH sitting right on Rockville Pike, within less than a mile from downtown Bethesda. Not only

The lab-leak theory isn't dead - UnHerd

that there would be a 99.99% certainty that this was the source. And I think you would agree in this instance that the likelihood of zoonotic spread in the wild in the confines of Maryland would also be close to zero.

 Last edited 11 days ago by Johann Strauss

 7   REPLY



Liam O'Mahony  11 days ago

 Reply to [Johann Strauss](#)

..and a valuable rebuttal follows: the plot thicketh methinks?

 0   REPLY



rodney foy  11 days ago

 Reply to [Elaine Giedrys-Leeper](#)

I think this Science research article supports this

<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abp8715>

 0   REPLY



Liam O'Mahony  11 days ago

 Reply to [Elaine Giedrys-Leeper](#)

You seem very well informed and I thank you for your extremely valuable contribution.

I have 2 questions however (using your numbering)...

3. I thought the facts suggested that the 'enhanced' spike protein is (almost) never found in Zoonotic viruses? Furthermore wasn't the writer suggesting there was clear evidence of engineering in the form of "add ons" never seen in natural viruses? This may be the same point...

4. Surely the virus does not thrive in other animals (excluding bats and it's claimed that virus is different) apart from a few well documented exception? Am I wrong?

I would very much welcome your further input on these two points.

Btw you're a real spoilsport: we were having such a nice time with our conspiracy 'til you came along: I jest, of course!

 1   REPLY



Elaine Giedrys-Leeper  10 days ago

 Reply to [Liam O'Mahony](#)

Engineered bits of Sars Cov 2. The bone of contention is the Furin cleavage site(s) in this virus. This type of site in this particular position on the virus is not unusual and is seen in other lineages of coronaviruses but only only one virus (Sars Cov 2) in the sarbecoronavirus lineage displays this site in this particular position. In addition the order of the amino acids making up this site on the original wild type Sars Cov 2 was also unusual. The order of the amino acids in this site have of course changed as the Sars Cov 2 virus has adapted to human hosts and become more efficient at infecting / transmitting.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanmic/article/PIIS2666-5247\(21\)00174-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanmic/article/PIIS2666-5247(21)00174-9/fulltext)

Thriving in other animals. A couple of nice review articles, one quite recent here :

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-022-30698-6>

"As of 17th March 2022, a total of 1282 high quality SARS-CoV-2 genomes associated with natural or experimental infection of 25 animal species have been deposited on GISAID" ... "This reinforces previous suggestions of SARS-CoV-2 as a 'generalist' virus. This 'generalist' property may stem, in part, from the use of ACE2 as the primary host receptor for viral entry since the sequence and structure of ACE2 is fairly conserved across a broad range of mammals."

and

SARS-CoV-2 natural infection in animals: a systematic review of studies and case reports and series

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8428274/#CIT0003>

The most well publicised animal scare was with farmed mink in the Netherlands and Denmark in 2020.

Enjoy.

End of thread for me. Travelling now.

**Darrell Boone** 6 days ago Reply to [Elaine Giedrys-Leeper](#)

I didn't get past Elaine's point #1 before finding a glaring mistake. Her claim that "all" human viral outbreaks have resulted from "zoonotic spillovers" is refuted by the 1977 reemergence of the 1977 H1N1 flu strain – which killed 700,000, and clearly came from a lab leak or more likely from a faulty vaccination trial (eg, use of inadequately "attenuated" live virus) – see: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4542197/> .

According to this publication, that latter option for origin of the 1977-78 flu pandemic – faulty vaccination trial – apparently was admitted to long afterwards by the "former director of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences".

Elaine's point #3 is entirely false, as SARS-CoV-2 absolutely could be manufactured artificially (aka "engineered"), and done so without leaving a trace of human manipulation (ie, via Dr. Ralph Baric's "no-see-'um" bioengineering methodology).

Her point #4 is also fallacious, since there are only a relatively few other animal species which have been documented to be susceptible to infection by the virus responsible for Covid-19, and fewer than 10 species have documented evidence – all experimental – of being able to spread the virus to other members of their species while in captivity. So far only one species of free-living wildlife has been proven to sustain an outbreak of Covid-19 – White-tailed Deer in the US and Canada. The evidence so far shows that no other species is as susceptible to infection by the SARS2 coronavirus AND as capable of transmitting the virus to members of its own species or to other species as are Humans.

In my opinion, the outbreak of Covid-19 in deer was triggered and sustained by their contact with live SARS2 virus found in cold water of sewage treatment ponds/lagoons AND via overflows or leaks of human sewage from "combined sewer systems" of older urban areas (which allow stormwater runoff from streets to be fed into the same lines designed to convey untreated human sewage to treatment plants). Live SARS-CoV-2 can survive in untreated wastewater for up to 2 weeks if kept cold (40-degree F). It has been documented to survive experimentally in river water, and it may likely survive if virus-laden wastewater was discharged into shaded low spots where water could pool along drainage courses (which typically are where gravity-fed sewer lines are placed).

1 REPLY

**Peter Johnson** 12 days ago Reply to [Mike Michaels](#)

And does anyone seriously believe anything politicians, the mainstream media, or scientists tell us about Covid? They have been corrupt from the outset pushing the noble lie. The tinfoil hat crowd have been right on this topic consistently – I just hope they aren't right about what they think these vaccines will do to us in the years to come.

9 REPLY

**jane baker** 12 days ago Reply to [Peter Johnson](#)

They are intending for a lot of us to die this winter, from the cold, so at least that's one thing a lot of us won't have to worry about as we won't be here!

4 REPLY

**Liam O'Mahony** 11 days ago Reply to [Peter Johnson](#)

Uh oh.. the vaccine: OMG! Nah.. no real evidence of this at all, at all as we Irish say! On the other hand.... no, stop it!

1 REPLY

**RP** 12 days ago Reply to [Mike Michaels](#)

They do because they're married to the alarm of climate change. That's the reason the virus jumped from animals to humans, they tell me.

1 REPLY

**j morgan** 13 days ago

Having lived through the last few years it's hard not to conclude that possibility of "faith in authorities" and the pretence of democratic accountability are all but gone. Raw power is the name of the game now, "because I said so".

👍 104 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



Vivek Rajkhowa 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [j morgan](#)

Always has been, democracy is a sham.

👍 21 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



AC Harper 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Vivek Rajkhowa](#)

...although previous Elites have protected their power and wealth in a more competent manner. The internet has rendered 'faith in the authorities' much more difficult despite social and other media being complicit.

👍 32 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



jane baker 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Vivek Rajkhowa](#)

My late Dad was saying that 60 years ago, and he was right. But at least then a lot of our politicians were honest, honourable, and educated in a useful way. I know Boris knows Latin but he's still a bozo. Until quite recently we the public had the right to read their manifesto, though really political journalists did that for us. Then in theory we could decide if we liked it or not and vote on it. In theory. But now they've dropped all pretence even of that. I'm hearing Boris say, and Liz say, I can't tell you what the plan is yet, but on X date I'll do the BIG REVEAL and you'll find out how much money I'm going to bung you YOU LUCKY PEOPLE.

📄 Last edited 12 days ago by jane baker

👍 3 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



Liam O'Mahony 11 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [j morgan](#)

Check out Neil Oliver: he'll scare the bej...sus out of you! You could also goto David Icke but that might be a step too far!

👍 2 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



Paul O 13 days ago

Those pesky conspiracy theorists can't possibly right.

Next you'll be trying to tell us that:

- the 2020 election really was won by a senile old man in the biggest landslide victory in US history.
- there really have been adverse reactions to the experimental jabs
- Hunter Biden really was paid \$83,000 a month by Burisma, the Ukrainian power company.
- The FBI covered up (during in an election) the existence of a laptop that contained compromising information.

The likelihood of these crazy conspiracy theories being true is about the same as Covid actually coming from a Wuhan biolab leak. It would never happen. Our 'leaders' wouldn't lie to us.

👍 96 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



Lindsay S 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Paul O](#)

Covid! Once conspiracies went from theory to fact in about 60 years, now it take as little as 6 months! Did anyone walk away from this whole debacle with their integrity intact?

👍 21 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



Johnathan Galt 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Lindsay S](#)

The real question is whether any of them had any to begin with, or if it was always a hoax and the masks just slipped.

👍 15 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



Peter Johnson 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Johnathan Galt](#)

I always wonder what things I truly believe that are just bullshit fed to me by MSM on behalf of the government.

👍 3 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



andrew harman 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Paul O](#)

Nobody – except maybe you – has said it was the biggest landslide in US history. It wasn't. It was the biggest turnout, meaning that Biden had the biggest vote ever and Trump the second biggest. That is not the definition of a landslide.

👍 12 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Johnathan Galt 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [andrew harman](#)

20 million dead, underage, senile, out of State, ineligible, illegal and purely fictitious voters did not result in a legitimate election.

Cheating isn't winning.

👍 18 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



andrew harman 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Johnathan Galt](#)

Never been any evidence for this. I have no liking for either the Democrats or Republicans (a plague on both their houses) and both are guilty of misdeeds. In fact the Republicans have been responsible for some pretty egregious stuff in terms of gerrymandering and voter suppression. It is only the archaic constitution that really keeps them in the game in terms of the Senate and presidential elections.

It would be impossible to fabricate votes on the scale you suggest however. Moreover, even Republican election officials could find no evidence for voter fraud. Ones that were itemised were quickly discredited.

I say that as somebody (albeit in the UK) who has been disgusted by the conduct of Democratic politicians in response to the pandemic and their utter hypocrisy, such as Newsom.

Crying foul when you lose is something I would more instinctively associate with the left. Leave it.

👍 7 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Roger Ledodger 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [andrew harman](#)

In the UK whenever there is voting fraud, you can bet it will involve postal voting and minorities. How did that look in the US?

👍 22 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



michael harris 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [andrew harman](#)

On election night i watched CNN. Their long term stats guy – who I know from all elections past since Bush/Gore – was doing Florida and Ohio county by county. He had all the past county stats for comparison. In Florida it looked at first as if the Dems were improving versus 2016 – this was in the central Florida suburbs. I thought Trump was defeated. But when results came in from the heavy population Dade and Broward counties Trump made up ground and then some. He won Florida by a whisker more than in 2016. Ohio looked to be going the same way. I went to bed with Trump ahead in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan.

I got up the next morning to hear of the enormous Democrat surge in those 3 states that delivered Biden to the White House.

What was it about those 3 states that made their results so different from heavily scrutinised Florida and Ohio whose results they had shared in 2016?

The simplest explanation is that it was here in these states that the Democrat party concentrated its money and organisation. Not like 2016 when they took these states for granted. After all they only needed to reverse a few tens of thousands of votes there to upend the 2016 outcome. If Hillary and her fools hadn't been so proudly dumb they would never have lost 2016 in the first place.

But the next question is this. What WAS the nature of the Democrat party's efforts in these states? Given that their sudden plurality was in urban areas – which simultaneously in Florida and Ohio swung slightly TO Trump. Given that the plurality was overwhelmingly in the postal and early voting. And that they boastfully predicted that plurality before election day (how would they know?). Given that – as per Patrick Basham a few days later – bellweather counties across the USA went for Trump...

I do think that the Democrat party stole that election. And that it will be half a century at least until the truth stumbles half blinded from its cell.

 Last edited 12 days ago by michael harris

 23   REPLY 



andrew harman  12 days ago 

 Reply to [michael harris](#)

Sorry just don't buy it. All assumption and supposition. The first part of your post was correct. I think the Democrats were simply more organised, concentrated resources and got their vote out.

 -4   REPLY 



michael harris  12 days ago 

 Reply to [andrew harman](#)

Andrew, you have to at least wonder what 'getting your vote out' consists of in an election where a very large percentage of votes are either pre-election day or postal.

For years Democrat politicians in the US have been on successive voter registration drives. Always 'successful'. But the results of these drives have, over time, been diminishing. Like all long-term sales campaigns.

Why there have been diminishing returns from the early days when large numbers of minorities had been effectively disenfranchised is not clear. Perhaps the pool of unregistered came to include many non voters – lots of these in all countries. Perhaps a few 'ghosts' were registered. Political operatives – they used to be called ward heelers in the old days – are not so different from other salesmen; they have been known to bend a few results to impress their bosses.

In any event an election where early voting and remote voting were heavily encouraged (covid) offered a one off opportunity to political operatives on the ground. You could register a new voter and have them vote on the same visit. You might look over their shoulder as they filled in the complex form (many postal votes were only for the presidential race ignoring the reams of down-ballot choices). You might ensure that their vote WAS posted. Family members who were absent from the house might be signed for. By hook or by crook the vote quota for your street/precinct/county had to be met.

Yes, Andrew, all of this is speculative and you don't have to buy it. But, after all, vote rigging and gerrymandering are as American as apple pie (and endemic in many other nations). This explanation of the 2020 result is grounded in human nature: It is at least worth consideration and as sensible as the official narrative.

 9   REPLY 



Johann Strauss  12 days ago 

 Reply to [michael harris](#)

Absolutely agree, and it's something that should be thoroughly, transparently and honestly investigated. It is obviously too late to change the outcome. Indeed, many of the cases brought to court were turned down without investigation simply because the courts would have been unable to operate fast enough to meet the Jan 6 deadline.

 6   REPLY 



michael harris  9 days ago 

 Reply to [Johann Strauss](#)

Also, Johann, because this was the hottest possible potato dragging the courts across the line of the 'separation of powers' and threatening the whole constitutional settlement of the USA. This, I expect, was the argument used by Chief Justice Roberts against

Justices Alito and Thomas who were prepared to hear the matter. And no lower court would presume to open up the matter if the Supremes were not on board.

 2   REPLY



Steve Brady  12 days ago

 Reply to [andrew harman](#)

The Democrats were helped immeasurably by a press which actively suppressed any negative information about Biden working in concert with a bureaucracy that is hostile to Trump along with a complicit social media industrial complex.

Being "more organized" really didn't have much to do with it.

 7   REPLY



Paul O  12 days ago

 Reply to [andrew harman](#)

It is not assumption and supposition Andrew. It is hard fact. The numbers don't lie. Statistical analysis doesn't lie. The odds on what happened actually happening are millions to one. This is statistical fact not supposition. Luckily for the politicians and MSM most people don't understand statistics.

 4   REPLY



Johann Strauss  12 days ago

 Reply to [michael harris](#)

Totally agree. Your analysis is spot on.

 5   REPLY



John Pade  9 days ago

 Reply to [michael harris](#)

Their strategy was \$400 million of Mark Zuckerberg's money. But Trump was in trouble when they called VA early. It didn't go to Clinton until midnight in 2016.

 1   REPLY



Johann Strauss  12 days ago

 Reply to [andrew harman](#)

Actually what you say is not really accurate. I've no idea whether the election result was legitimate or not and whether the degree of skullduggery was sufficient to alter the result, but ultimately the election boiled down to a total of only ca. 30,000 votes in 3 states. There is no question there was monkey business going on as was evident in the very early hours (3 am) of the morning following election day in those 3 key states. There is also no question that a good deal of illegal vote harvesting was going on, and has been proven in court in the context of the Zuck bucks in Wisconsin (one of the 3 states). There was also the little issue of the Hunter Biden laptop that was suppressed not just by the media but by the FBI (and as publically stated only last week by Zuckerberg himself in relation to Facebook/Meta) and claimed to be Russian information when in fact it was completely legitimate; and polling has shown (if one can trust it) that had the information regarding Hunter Biden not been completely suppressed and censored, a sufficient number would have voted the other way and swung the election to Trump. And then finally there was the little issue of many states changing their election procedures and rules and in so doing violating their state's constitution (e.g. in Pennsylvania).

Now once again, I don't know whether any of this was sufficient to swing the election but it certainly casts a large shadow over it. And when a significant proportion of the population believe that the election was not above board one has a problem.

 3   REPLY



Paul O  12 days ago

 Reply to [andrew harman](#)

The MSM is saying nothing about the fraud that has gone on, but the reason it hasn't gone away is the reason the Wuhan lab leak theory wouldn't go away. They can ban and censor anyone who goes against the narrative (which they did) but there are far too many people who know too much. That's why the truth is coming out about Wuhan, about adverse reactions, the vaccine, etc. Fewer and fewer people are willing

to blindly believe the MSM and politician's lies. The same is true with many other things that you believe to be true Andrew including the US election, Ukraine and that Bill Gates and Fauci are good guys.

👍 5 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Roger Ledodger 12 days ago

Reply to [andrew harman](#)

so edit out the word ' landslide' replace with 'turnout' – what else has he got wrong?

👍 6 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



andrew harman 12 days ago

Reply to [Roger Ledodger](#)

Almost everything. Voter fraud on the scale required to produce that result would have been nowhere near possible.

American conservatives / Trump supporters etc etc have got to move on/ No point in fighting past battles. The Democrats are there for the taking and Republicans / conservatives /MAGA sorts are so adept at shooting themselves in the foot.

Trump made it clear he would never accept the result unless he won. Like the man-child he really is. Those who detest wokery, the misappropriation of power during the pandemic and the whole technocracy need to find a better standard bearer and not simply shriek "orange man bad" or TDS, it makes them as puerile as he is.

Stop making it easy for the left. You are tilting at windmills

📄 Last edited 12 days ago by [andrew harman](#)

👍 3 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



michael harris 12 days ago

Reply to [andrew harman](#)

The scale of fraud needed -if there was fraud – to ensure the Michigan/Pennsylvania/Wisconsin/Arizona results was not very large.

👍 6 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Johann Strauss 12 days ago

Reply to [michael harris](#)

Exactly the point that Andrew fails to understand or appreciate. What should also be pointed out is that the issue is not one of bad or biased counting, but rather how the votes were come by. A lot of what went on was completely illegal. What Zuckerberg funded in Wisconsin was shown to be illegal recently in court. Changing election procedures in violation of the constitution of various states is also illegal.

👍 4 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Mordecai Jones 12 days ago

Reply to [Roger Ledodger](#)

We mailed millions and millions of ballots to "voters" who did not ask for them, did not want them, did not have any plans for legitimate use of them – lots of them in cities heavily dominated by corrupt political machines. Of course those votes were for sale to the first bidder. And after the envelopes have been thrown away, there is – as another prominent Democrat always liked to say – not a shred of evidence that you will ever be able to find.

👍 3 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Paul O 12 days ago

Reply to [andrew harman](#)

Clearly you've not seen the analysis by INDEPENDENT mathematicians that do a deep dive into the data for each state. Even someone with basic statistical analysis skills can figure out the blindingly obvious. With all due respect, only those who still believe the MSM think Biden won it fair and square. Just like with Wuhan, it is getting harder and harder to repress the truth.

👍 3 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



hayden eastwood 13 days ago

To me the most serious repercussion of Covid is that it has cast doubt on the whole scientific establishment. Now more than ever people are wary of science and with good reason.

The trouble with this is that it opens the door to an anti enlightenment future. We are already seeing this on both sides of the political isle as entrenched tribal beliefs override scientific evidence and reason.

When I was last in Australia I recall a sign by the beach: "energetic crystal healing: \$200", which seemed to capture this perfectly- postmodern, post enlightenment, spoiled and rich.

I wondered whether anyone would have predicted in the early 1900s that educated middleclass people of the 2000s would be less scientifically minded than they were.

👍 67 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



AC Harper 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [hayden eastwood](#)

See the Wikipedia article on Lysenkoism – the word now used for any deliberate distortion of scientific facts or theories for purposes that are deemed politically, religiously or socially desirable. Perhaps Fauci-ism will be this century's version?

👍 40 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



jane baker 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [AC Harper](#)

As Science is the new religion and scientists are its priests one of its functions is to control people. I'm speaking of religion, not Faith.

👍 2 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



Edward Olmos 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [hayden eastwood](#)

Is that much different than the witch doctors, exorcists, and faith healers of old? Perhaps the brief dominance of reason may have just been an anomaly and humanity is happy to go back to magical thinking.

Of course the fact that most people don't understand the difference between the Scientific Method and "The Science!" doesn't help...

👍 33 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



jane baker 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Edward Olmos](#)

Its my belief that logic, reason and thinking for oneself is actually very onerous and most people, and I include myself, find it simpler and easier to go back to "the old ways".

Yes, the 20th C was an anomaly and we ARE being taken back to the more primitive atavistic way human society has been for most of its millenia of existence. Which actually a lot of people (as I observe around me) really like.

👍 1 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



jim peden 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [hayden eastwood](#)

I agree – it's about time the scientific establishment, as an essentially publicly funded group, faced some serious questions. Science itself is a fine thing and has been our crowning glory but the practice of Science has become more about attracting Grant Funding than about genuine seeking-after-the-truth.

The renaissance and its offspring the enlightenment brought us out of the Dark Ages – a thousand years of lives that were 'nasty, brutish and short'. I for one don't want to go back but I'm afraid that our current culture is leading us there again.

👍 15 🗨️ ↪️ REPLY



Mordecai Jones 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [hayden eastwood](#)

If you are interested in science, have a look at the first 5 or 10 papers about clinical trials for hydroxychloroquine (there may have been a good one somewhere, I haven't looked at all of them). If you want to replicate the work of another scientist, you do what they did, and see what you get. Instead, they did something different, then said the original work was defective. Then look for papers about HBO, hyperbaric oxygen for Covid. I found one clinical trial, in Buenos Aires, with good, encouraging results:

<https://emj.bmj.com/content/emjmed/early/2021/12/12/emjmed-2021-211253.full.pdf>

There have been at least 3 attempts to do that in the USA: one could not be completed because of lack of cooperation from the hospitals; one has been completed but apparently has not been

published yet (only about a year); and I can't find any information about results from the one at NYU. We have a bias against doing anything, and our million dead friends and neighbors must not be very important.

👍 1 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



jane baker 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [hayden eastwood](#)

Just a small observation but pre-millennium nature and wildlife shows on TV were objective. Actually the change might have come earlier than I think maybe it was by the 1990s. But then in tv shows about critturs, they all had names. Lord Attenborough would say "Nancy the lioness with her two cubs Kerry and Shane had a bit of a spat with Molly the lioness with the twisted paw and the leader of the pack, shaggy old Randolph had to intervene" and I'd think but I thought we weren't supposed to anthropomorphise animals and maybe Nancy isn't her name, maybe its something else but as we don't speak lion well never know.

👍 1 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Andrew Horsman 13 days ago

George Orwell's essay, "Looking Back on the Spanish War" was written 80 years ago this month. It remains as highly relevant as ever. Parts II and IV, on truth, lies, and propaganda are particularly worth reading in the context of this article. Lest we forget.

For example ...

"Recently I drew up a table of atrocities during the period between 1918 and the present; there was never a year when atrocities were not occurring somewhere or other, and there was hardly a single case when the Left and the Right believed in the same stories simultaneously. And stranger yet, at any moment the situation can suddenly reverse itself and yesterday's proved-to-the-hilt atrocity story can become a ridiculous lie, merely because the political landscape has changed."

And

"This kind of thing is frightening to me, because it often gives me the feeling that the very concept of objective truth is fading out of the world. After all, the chances are that those lies, or at any rate similar lies, will pass into history. How will the history of the Spanish war be written? If Franco remains in power his nominees will write the history books, and (to stick to my chosen point) that Russian army which never existed will become historical fact, and schoolchildren will learn about it generations hence. But suppose Fascism is finally defeated and some kind of democratic government restored in Spain in the fairly near future; even then, how is the history of the war to be written? What kind of records will Franco have left behind him? Suppose even that the records kept on the Government side are recoverable – even so, how is a true history of the war to be written? For, as I have pointed out already, the Government also dealt extensively in lies. From the anti-Fascist angle one could write a broadly truthful history of the war, but it would be a partisan history, unreliable on every minor point. Yet, after all, some kind of history will be written, and after those who actually remember the war are dead, it will be universally accepted. So for all practical purposes the lie will have become truth."

<https://www.orwellfoundation.com/the-orwell-foundation/orwell/essays-and-other-works/looking-back-on-the-spanish-war/>

👍 60 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



CHARLES STANHOPE 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Andrew Horsman](#)

Floreat Etona!

👍 2 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Johnathan Galt 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Andrew Horsman](#)

"The object of power is power."

👍 6 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Richard Craven 13 days ago

The Lab Leak theory isn't a conspiracy theory. It posits an accidental leak of the virus, not an intentional release by malign operators.

👍 43 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY



Thomas Fazi 13 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Richard Craven](#)

The conspiracy refers to the concerted effort to hinder any investigation into the lab-leak hypothesis – not to the actual research work in Wuhan.

👍 36 🗨️ ↩️ REPLY

**Edward Olmos** 13 days ago| [Reply to Richard Craven](#)

A “conspiracy theory” is often just any questioning of the authorities’ official narrative. They don’t like to admit it but so many have turned out true – e.g. Gulf of Tonkin, WMDs in Iraq, the CIA funded the Dalai Lama, etc.

👍 26 🗨️ ➔ REPLY

**CHARLES STANHOPE** 12 days ago| [Reply to Edward Olmos](#)

The ‘sinking’ of USS Maine, Pearl Harbour, the Cuban Missile (Jupiter) Crisis and on and on.

👍 4 🗨️ ➔ REPLY

**Steve Murray** 13 days ago| [Reply to Richard Craven](#)

But since the efforts to discredit the Lab Leak theory have been so extensive, doesn’t that suggest ‘intentional release’ is at least plausible? I’m not suggesting that’s what happened, but until the Lab Leak theory is properly investigated both options remain on the table. I doubt we’ll ever have a definitive answer, unless a ‘smoking gun’ emerges.

👍 7 🗨️ ➔ REPLY

**Roger Ledodger** 12 days ago| [Reply to Steve Murray](#)

Shakespeare – Prince Hamlet’s mother, Gertrude, in Act 3, Scene 2 of Hamlet

‘The lady doth protest too much, methinks.’



👍 4 🗨️ ➔ REPLY

**Johann Strauss** 12 days ago| [Reply to Steve Murray](#)

While anything is possible, I suspect that anything other than an accidental leak is highly unlikely. I suspect the most likely thing was that there was a failure of protocol and one of the lab workers was infected, and then spread it outside.

👍 9 🗨️ ➔ REPLY

**CHARLES STANHOPE** 12 days ago| [Reply to Johann Strauss](#)

The mostly likely scenario by far, and all the the more excruciatingly embarrassing for China as she struggles to join the world of the elite, otherwise known as ‘us’.

👍 1 🗨️ ➔ REPLY

**Chris Hillcoat** 13 days ago

I don’t believe the conspiracy theory that Covid-19 came from a market, when China’s only virus research institute was literally next door and had been doing research on exactly these kind of viruses.

👍 43 🗨️ ➔ REPLY

**Howard Gleave** 13 days ago

Anyone who can muster the mental stamina to read the forensic “Viral”, co-authored by Matt Ridley and Alina Chan, will be in little doubt that Sars-Cov-2 was manufactured at the WIV and escaped because of sloppy security procedures. The Huanan wet food market is a red herring and was exonerated from complicity by independent Chinese health inspectors pursuing lines of inquiry unrelated to Covid19. Daszak’s duplicity in getting up the letter attempting to dismiss the lab leak theory and pretend there was a scientific consensus, is revealing.

👍 41 🗨️ ➔ REPLY

**Wayne Gault** 13 days ago

A good article.

I’m well-educated, mature and sensible but the older I get, the closer I become to what others refer to as ‘tin-foil-hat wearing’. I’m a former soldier with various degrees including biochemistry, time under my belt designing human viral vectors for cancer research purposes and former head of risk management in the NHS including concern about bio-safety.

I’m aware of three things:

- Accidents happen in labs. Things go wrong. Things escape. Look at foot and mouth disease in the UK as an example.
- Anthony Fauci and the US' National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases fascination with 'gain of function' research driven by massive increased US biodefence spending following 9/11.
- Society increasingly witnesses a lack of transparency, governance and accountability as governments around the world hone their skills to fool and mislead their citizens.

Was the pandemic man-made? How will we ever know? It could have been zoonotic for sure but my growing mistrust of governments; recognition of human fallibility and the sheer stupidity of gain-of-function work tells me it's not just tinfoil-hat wearers that believe in conspiracies.

 39   REPLY



Steven Carr  13 days ago

Not only were claims the virus came from the Wuhan lab censored, but claims that the virus came from China were denounced as 'racist'.

 34   REPLY



Jim R  13 days ago

As long as we keep arguing about whether or not it actually happened we fundamentally miss the most important point: if it even can happen, then gain of function research is simply too dangerous to the species to continue. Study what exists – yes of course – but no more research that strives to create the very thing its supposedly trying to stop. The real purpose of the cover up is to ensure we never ask that question – and it has worked brilliantly. Where is the global treaty banning gain of function research?

 32   REPLY



Simon Tavanyar  12 days ago

 Reply to [Jim R](#)

Exactly! Top comment.

 6   REPLY



Nicholas Coulson  13 days ago

It's a shame that the author omits to mention DRASTIC, the remarkable group of independent researchers who did most of the heavy lifting in opening up debate on the lab-leak hypothesis, keeping it open and unearthing and publishing evidence. Or Matt Ridley, Alina Chan and Sharri Markson who've written books on it. But hey, if you've got a book to sell I suppose you have to be the one who got there first, right?

 31   REPLY



Karl Juhnke  13 days ago

If there is nothing to hide, what are they hiding.

 26   REPLY



Steve Brady  12 days ago

 Reply to [Karl Juhnke](#)

Exactly. Their behavior is indicative of "consciousness of guilt".

 4   REPLY



Vivek Rajkhowa  13 days ago

The USA and China responsible for a cover up? I'm not surprised. They are the two biggest threats to the world, so of course they'd work together to cover up their mess.

 21   REPLY



Mark McKee  13 days ago

The origins of COVID has the same approach to bamboozling the public with disinformation that comes with the idea that 'climate change' has its science settled. Not even Newton's theory of gravity was settled, and yet if you question anything you get treated as a hateful conspiracy theorist. It will be very unlikely the real truth will come out until all the hands at the tiller have left office.

 20   REPLY



Eric Parker  13 days ago

Yes why no mention of Matt Ridley and Alina Chan's book? They indicate that genetic sequences were hidden in plain sight by the Wuhan scientists who thought that no one would notice or be able to make sense of them. Hence no actual 'cover up' or suppression of evidence, more a form of deniable negligence.

The first reaction of the Wuhan research director on hearing of the viral infections, described in the book, is also telling.

 19   REPLY



Laura Pritchard  13 days ago

I find anything written about this subject credible but it often seems to omit the Elephant in the Room. Even evidence that proves a purely accidental release (let alone a deliberate one) opens up a significant number of people and institutions to an almost unimaginable degree of liability. If there is no amnesty put in place, I can only imagine that the players involved will continue to do ANYthing required to obscure the facts (if they do actually exist). Why offer amnesty, you might ask. Because the most important thing NOW is to learn from what happened and try to stop it happening again. Or at least mitigate as much as possible.

 19   REPLY



Rick Nah  12 days ago

 Reply to [Laura Pritchard](#)

@Laura Pritchard

Only the lab-leak hypothesis requires amnesty. It is an admission of mass murder of millions of the world's population since even a lab leak accident means they were doing something they knew they shouldn't have been doing, making a highly transmissible to humans and virulent pathogen. No one redacts their research if it was being done innocently and with ignorance to the consequences. These researchers and Fauci, helped define the strict rigorous rules, but proceeded knowing full well how dangerous this work was.

 6   REPLY



John Pade  13 days ago

If there is evidence for the lab leak theory, it will be destroyed to the last atom if it ever looks like it might get out. If it hasn't already.

However, does the evolution of the virus itself offer information of its origin? The original and Delta versions were virulent. After Delta, they calmed down. Omicron, for all its contagiousness, was mild. Current versions might be called tame.

It is almost as if whatever existed in the original and Delta versions conferred a disadvantage that was selected against in the evolution of more recent variants. In other words, there was something about the early versions that disadvantaged them in the struggle for life in the non-artificial environment (e.g., a laboratory) while later versions had it selected out of them. And what was selected out of them appears to be virulence.

That would indicate the virulence characteristic wouldn't occur naturally but was the result of human intervention.

 17   REPLY



Roger Ledodger  12 days ago

 Reply to [John Pade](#)

That is an interesting argument, and curiously similar to one put forward by one of my offspring, a Virologist. Who said the very things that were being pushed to make us lock down would be unfavourable Darwinian characteristics as killing off a host quickly isn't the best way of ensuring an abundance of new viral particles. Though they also pointed out that the Diamond Princess was a convenient Petri dish to suggest it wasn't the new black death. They were thus inclined to believe, as I posted earlier, that Governments believed this was a potential bio-weapon that had escaped a lab, BUT once they'd reacted so extremely they couldn't back down even once evidence was available it was a killer of the old and sick, because more questions would then be asked of why they had reacted so initially.

 8   REPLY



Philip Perkins  13 days ago

To add fuel to the fire, the NIH has terminated part of its funding of EcoHealth Alliance because they had failed to hand over lab notebooks and other records from the Wuhan Institute that relate to modified bat viruses, despite multiple requests.

One can only speculate on what they are hiding.

https://thebulletin.org/2022/08/nih-to-terminate-ecohealth-alliance-grant-after-its-wuhan-partners-refuse-to-deliver-information-on-coronavirus-studies/?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email

 14   REPLY

-  **Allison Barrows** 13 days ago
- I think it's safe to say that if governments and their media dismiss something as a conspiracy theory, you can make book that it isn't a theory.
-  12   REPLY
-  **Linda Hutchinson** 12 days ago
-  Reply to [Allison Barrows](#)
- So, if they deny it then it is a conspiracy theory, and if they admit it then it is a conspiracy theory. When is a conspiracy theory just that – a conspiracy theory? When they ignore it?
-  -1   REPLY
-  **Allison Barrows** 12 days ago
-  Reply to [Linda Hutchinson](#)
- Remove the term theory. Conspiracies abound.
-  1   REPLY
-  **Linda Hutchinson** 13 days ago
- This is a very balanced article, which doesn't discount the possibility that it was natural in origin, but offers a lot of damning circumstantial evidence that it was man-made. For me the presence of the furin cleavage site was always problematical; I was aware of the US involvement in COVID research at Wuhan, however I was unaware of all the different fingers in the Wuhan pie, and how they have steered the conversation. A very useful article that gives me a lot to think about.
-  11   REPLY
-  **Michael Coleman** 12 days ago
-  Reply to [Linda Hutchinson](#)
- Agreed. All we will likely have is circumstantial evidence until the next regime change in China and possibly not even then. The preponderance of evidence is for the lab leak.
-  5   REPLY
-  **Fredrich Nicecar** 13 days ago
- 'In February 2020, an influential letter signed by 27 global experts [was published in The Lancet](#)' I believe that one of the signatories was Sir Jeremy Farrar yet you quote him as being sceptical about the wet market theory. Did he have a 'road to Damascus' moment?
-  10   REPLY
-  **Ted Brewster** 12 days ago
- We know Fauci lied
- A reporter at a White House press briefing asked Fauci what the prospects are of the virus being manmade and possibly coming from a lab in China.
- "There was a study recently that we can make available to you, where a group of highly qualified evolutionary virologists looked at the sequences [of the novel coronavirus] and the sequences in bats as they evolve. And the mutations that it took to get to the point where it is now is totally consistent with a jump of a species from an animal to a human."
- <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/timeline-of-what-dr-fauci-has-said-about-the-wuhan-lab-and-covids-origins/ar-AAKn3P3>
- Of course there is no identified animal population, and they looked at 80,000 so far, and no trail of mutations**
-  10   REPLY
-  **Rick Nah** 12 days ago
-  Reply to [Ted Brewster](#)
- @Ted Brewster Did Fauci ever make that study available?
-  2   REPLY
-  **peter donnelly** 13 days ago
- Like so much about this virus, we were supposed to believe everything the experts told. However, methinks they protested too much and failed to observe Occam's razor rule e.g. when faced with competing theories or explanations, the simpler one, is to be preferred until proven otherwise. As you say faith in

political leadership is crumbling across the West, so a bit of honesty and transparency is needed more than ever.

 9   REPLY



Alan Groff  13 days ago

When will of Totalitarian regimes aligns with the religion of Western Elites the truth is buried. The Holodomor killed more Ukrainians than the Holocaust killed jews, but intellectuals were complicit with Lenin so the truth was buried. The lab leak stains Western science as much as Chinese politics.

 8   REPLY



Peta Seel  12 days ago

"If we can't get this one right, how else can we be expected to place our faith in authorities ever again?"

After the last two and a half years I have no faith left in "authorities" anyway.

 7   REPLY



Ken Batchelor  12 days ago

 Reply to [Peta Seel](#)

Occam's Razor. The Lab leak explains everything from the origins of the virus to the lockdowns. Governments "over reacted" by locking everything down because they were terrified by what they might (and have) let escape. The Chinese have been the only country continuing with zero tolerance because they know what they let out. Another angle is if they were sure it didn't escape from the lab then that lab should have become the world centre for research into COVID. How fortunate to have a pandemic start on the doorstep of a lab equipped to investigate it. The reasons it didn't are obvious if you think about it.

 5   REPLY



William Reynolds  12 days ago

It's difficult to believe that the US govt is content to remain in ignorance of the origins of a virus that has killed a million Americans. If it had satisfied itself that the virus was zoonotic, it would have published the evidence for that conclusion. Therefore

 7   REPLY



Paul Rodolf  12 days ago

Size me up for my tin foil hat because here goes my take.

Who has benefitted the most from the global pandemic? It was clearly intentional. Now the real question is was it done unilaterally by the Chinese or in collaboration with those in the West that wished to see Trump gone?

 7   REPLY



Dominic A  13 days ago

To my mind, it is a worse dereliction of duty if it came from the wet market – it has been very well known for decades that live wild animal markets are disease jumping grounds – so much so that they are banned in almost all developed countries. There is no reason for them aside from human greed. Virus labs at least have legitimate cause – trying to predict the evolution of viruses and plan for their control – which is why they are not banned in most developed countries. I could more easily forgive a lapse in containment protocols (no one has accused the Wuhan clinic of sloppiness) than the on-going failure to impose basic hygiene, bio-hazard controls over many years in a major city, in a country with the resources to know about and control this.

 6   REPLY



Rick Nah  12 days ago

 Reply to [Dominic A](#)

@Dominic A

Predicting the evolution of virus and planning for their control is far different than deliberately making a deadly virus. My understanding is that no other coronavirus has this insert.

 2   REPLY



Dominic A  12 days ago

 Reply to [Rick Nah](#)

Depends – whether you are making a deadlier virus to use as a weapon (very unlikely with covid); or as a way of fast-forwarding evolution, and then creating treatments for that, should it ever evolve naturally. Obviously the latter is controversial, but not crazy or immoral

necessarily.

 0   REPLY
**Dave Tagge** 12 days ago
 Reply to [Dominic A](#)

I'll state a strong view that using gain-of-function for the latter purpose is indeed "crazy". Or, to be more precise, that it fails any reasonable balance of risks vs. rewards.

I think it's fair to say that the risk side is fairly obvious given the history of accidental leaks of infectious pathogens from laboratories.

And just what are the potential rewards in terms of developing treatments? The most that could be learned about a treatment is that it appears to work against a specific engineered pathogen in cell samples or in lab animals that have been deliberately infected. But the whole nature of pharmaceutical development is that many drugs work in these proxies (cell samples and/or animals) but then fail in human trials due to lack of efficacy, dangerous side effects, or both.

And even if the developed treatments did end up proving useful against a pathogen that jumps to humans in the future – a pathogen that might or might not have meaningful differences compared to the "best guess(es)" engineered in GOF research – there'd still need to be a manufacturing ramp-up to produce the millions (possibly hundreds of millions) of treatment courses needed in the event of a serious pandemic.

The "creating treatment" idea does not, in my opinion, have great benefits once one thinks through the realities of a that any such treatments (1) won't have been tested in humans and (2) would still need to be produced at scale.

 2   REPLY
**Javier Quinones** 13 days ago

Faith in authorities is suicidal...

 6   REPLY
**John O** 13 days ago

Excellent and useful recap.

 5   REPLY
**Chuck Pezeshki** 12 days ago

Another enormous problem in understanding where COVID came from is that US journalists simply can't read Chinese, and so cannot plumb from anything other than contradictory US media streams. The PRA has been talking about this stuff for a while — yet you'd never know it, as the best articles (and there have been some good ones) focus solely on US media.

<https://empathy.guru/2022/03/15/the-memetics-of-bioweapons-and-why-they-matter/>

 5   REPLY
**Howard Blackwell** 12 days ago

The evidence is sufficiently clear that covid was designed at the Wuhan bioweapons lab. There are just too many genome sequences that are not natural, including the one that makes it more infectious to humans.

The remaining questions are: Were US government employees merely incompetent and duped by the Chinese government into diverting funds and technology to malicious use* or were they actively in on it? Was the release of the engineered virus an accident due to sloppy safety protocols or an intentional attack on the West?***

*Ex: China insisted Boeing build airliners in China as a condition of them buying them. The contract, approved by US and PRC, clearly stated that the supplied production equipment would only be used for the intended purpose and not be used for military aircraft production. As soon as the Americans left, the Chinese moved the equipment to the military production lines.

**PRC has been collecting DNA samples of different races from around the world in order to develop bioweapons that have disproportionate effects on some races compared to Chinese. Covid may or may not be one of those experiments. Given the variability in death rates by race, it is not out of the question that it is.

 4   REPLY
**Chuck Pezeshki** 12 days ago

Re: COVID origins — you really don't need a conspiracy theory. You just need a working understanding of how these agencies function.

As well as the realization you're going to have to fill in the blanks just a little regarding things like CIA participation. They're not going to respond to an e-mail FOIA request.

<https://empathy.guru/2022/03/15/the-memetics-of-bioweapons-and-why-they-matter/>

👍 4 🗨️ REPLY



Vaughn C 12 days ago

Jon Stewart's appearance on Steven Colbert is good enough for me. "OOh, there's an outbreak of chocolatey goodness near Hershey PA. Perhaps a cosmic ray ran into a cocoa bean...or it's the F**king chocolate factory."

👍 4 🗨️ REPLY



Maureen Finucane 12 days ago

Just when you thought scientists and investigative journalists had enquiring minds, they actively colluded to push the CCP narrative. All because Trump said he thought it came from the Lab.

👍 4 🗨️ REPLY



Julian Pellatt 12 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Maureen Finucane](#)

To howls of media vilification Trump reaffirmed his description of Cpv19 as 'The China Virus'. In one TV interview a typically biased reporter aggressively asked him why he called it by this name. "Because it comes from China!" was Trump's instant response!

American money is massively invested in China, not least in laboratories undertaking research into viruses – the one in Wuhan being a case in point. Therefore, with such huge vested USA interests in the Chinese economy, including the funding of virus research, it seems to me to be self-evident that the multi-billionaires of USA would not wish to imperil their Chinese investments by pointing a finger at a Chinese institution, so blamed bats and the live meat market nearby instead. And surely they used their mighty influence to ensure that so-called independent, objective publications like *The Lancet* sang the same tune!

👍 3 🗨️ REPLY



Maureen Finucane 11 days ago

🗨️ Reply to [Julian Pellatt](#)

Indeed and it's also taken the UN a very long time to point out the human rights scandal going on with the treatment of China's Muslim minority. They are usually very quick off the mark with Israel.

👍 1 🗨️ REPLY



Bob Null 9 days ago

It wasn't the insistence that Covid came from the wet markets but rather the insistence that anyone who would dare believe otherwise was a fringe crackpot that made me skeptical of all things Covid. I have spent the past 2+ years trying to determine what is accurate regarding Covid information and it is exhausting. The primary thing I have learned is that the harder the "experts" try to debunk something, the more likely it is that it is true.

👍 4 🗨️ REPLY



Mareike Besch 13 days ago

An independent scientific investigation is needed to secure a functioning society. The truth is needed for healing and going forward as a society that will possibly face more and more disasters in the future. It won't make for compensation, but it will bring a truthful starting point from where we can go on.

👍 3 🗨️ REPLY



Anton van der Merwe 12 days ago

We know that the closest related viruses come from bats living in south-west China and neighbouring parts of Laos. The question is how did the virus get into Wuhan, which is very far away.

The two competing theories.

(1) It was transported by scientists and then released by accident. We know that scientists brought numerous samples of viruses from one particular abandoned mine to Wuhan, one of which is arguably the closest match to SARS-CoV-2 [there are other close matches from nearby parts of Laos]. This mine was being investigated intensively by several groups from Wuhan as it was the site of an outbreak of respiratory infections in men working in the mine. Wuhan scientists tried to conceal this fact when they published the SARS-CoV-2 sequence and its closest match, but were forced to admit it in a correction when it was revealed

by astute investigators from outside China. China has prohibited access to the viral samples brought from the mine, prohibited access to the mine and removed a previously public database that listed the samples brought from this cave. Why have they obstructed all attempts to investigate this?

(2) The second hypothesis is that it was transported by traders in wild animals. However, there is no evidence that any susceptible animals were transported from this region of China all the way to Wuhan. Furthermore, no animal reservoir of related animals has been identified, despite extensive searches. Finally, they have been unable to identify a virus in samples from the market that could be the origin of the pandemic. Indeed they have found, as reported in recent SCIENCE articles, that there were AT LEAST TWO different viruses present in the market. Instead of interpreting this as powerful evidence that the virus was not transmitted from an animal to humans in the market, they have suggested that there were two independent animal to human transmission events.

This is implausible.

Successful first-time zoonotic transmission of an organism to humans followed by successful onward transmission is fortunately rare, which why it is always so newsworthy. They are suggesting that this happened twice in the same place, within a month. Possible, but unlikely.

It is much more likely that there was a single transmission event and that the viruses spread amongst humans and mutated before being introduced into the market at least twice, possible by traders or customer. In other words, this new evidence strongly suggests that the market was a site of spread, but not the site of original transmission.

It remains possible that this single transmission event could have been from an intermediate host to humans somewhere else in Wuhan.

Another plausible explanation is accidental transmission directly to humans during handling of samples brought from South East China by scientists – in other words a lab leak. Whether or not the virus was engineered in any way before leaking is a separate issue. It is possible but there is currently no conclusive evidence in the viral sequence that this is what happened.

 Last edited 12 days ago by Anton van der Merwe

 3   REPLY



Patrick Moore  11 days ago

I repost exactly a comment that I posted over two years ago:

For Wuhan Institute of Virology let's read Wuhan 'Institute for Biological Warfare' and we might get some more MSM interest in scrutinising the work done there.

The glibly named Gain of Function Research is little different from research to develop biological weapons. This relationship contributed to the US banning funding for such research in the 1990s and research being carried by US and Chinese virologists at the University of North Carolina being moved to Wuhan no doubt to the glee of the CCP. The US ban was lifted in 2017 when the SARs virus started to appear from the East and Gain of Function research was welcomed back to fight that virus. At least Covid has woken up the West to the Chinese ongoing development of a Biological Warfare Capability.

 3   REPLY



Gavin Thomas  9 days ago

The same is true of AGW. There is scant, if any, real scientific evidence that humans are causing the climate to change but the hypothesis is now heavily engrained in Western Governments and the media to such an extent that evidence is being created and data cherry picked to suit the narrative. Anyone challenging it is derided.

Yet, Cop26 attracted over 700 private jet flights.

If the conference had been about proven threats to the ecosystem such as habitat loss, deforestation and pollution – how many private jets would show up?

None I reckon, because there's no profit in tackling these real issues and more money to be made out of manufacturing fear and tilting at windmills.

 3   REPLY



Andrew Nugee  12 days ago

Nothing much here that is new I imagine to those of us who read Unherd and/or Daily Sceptic. And having also read Matt Ridley and Alina Chan's excellent book Viral, I lean strongly towards Lab Leak – and all the more so over time as we continue not to find the animal(s) concerned, despite overwhelming incentive for Team Zoonotic to do so.

But a question has arisen again recently. How does the lab leak theory square with the suggestion that Covid was circulating 'widely' before Jan 2020, eg in the US in November 2019. See this article published today: <https://dailysceptic.org/2022/08/29/the-compelling-evidence-covid-19-was-spreading-across-the-u-s-in-2019-that-officials-are-ignoring/>

If Covid was in the US in 2019, had it escaped from Wuhan and made its way there? Could it have escaped from a US lab? No-one is suggesting zoonotic transfer in the US I think. Why did the infection rate only take off months later? And in Wuhan? The Americans concerned had no connection with Wuhan. Surely it could not have escaped twice? That really would require the mother of all conspiracies. It's all quite puzzling ...

Any thoughts gratefully received.

 2   REPLY



Rick Nah 12 days ago

 Reply to [Andrew Nugee](#)

"...surely it could not of escaped twice?"

Has the appearance of ancestral variant Omicron during the expansion of variant Delta ever been properly proven? Hypothesis is that it remained captured in an unknown reservoir in Africa and then suddenly made its jump back into humans mid to late 2021 and most importantly, evolved directly from ancestral to be far less virulent but far more transmissible. What are the chances of that?

No reason why the successful work in Wuhan wasn't being replicated or transported elsewhere to other biolabs and escaped via infection. It's a very small community of such researchers and in the best interests of good science, share their work.

 1   REPLY



michael harris 11 days ago

 Reply to [Rick Nah](#)

Sometime in autumn 2021 I read a piece by (I'm pretty sure) Ambrose Evans Pritchard hoping for an evolution of covid that would be more infectious but pretty harmless. That might, for example, readily lodge in the upper respiratory tract (nose and throat) but not spread to the lower RT (lungs).

Lo and behold! Within a month Omicron was first reported from South Africa, fitting this description like a glove.

Was it engineered? What have the labs in Wuhan and Chapel Hill been doing since covid went public? Did Evans Pritchard have an inside track?

 -1   REPLY



Elaine Giedrys-Leeper 12 days ago

 Reply to [Andrew Nugee](#)

Good evidence that Sars Cov 2 was circulating in northern Italy in the autumn of 2019 (from sewage samples) : <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7428442/>

Not a big surprise given that most of the garment factories in Prato are now owned and run by Chinese companies employing Chinese immigrant workers.

A good pal of mine in the rag trade visited some of these factories in October 2019. 2 days after returning to Boston she lost taste and smell and went down with what she describes as "the worst flu of my life". Sensibly, she locked herself in her bedroom for a week until she felt better (she has 3 kids and a husband who travels internationally).

In order for an infection "to take off" you need a minimum number of susceptible individuals all infected more or less at the same time, shedding enough virions efficiently and meeting enough susceptible people for the infection to transmit.

In terms of animal origins – it took 10 years to work out the SARS chain of transmission and that was with China co-operating.

 4   REPLY



LCarey Rowland 12 days ago

Thanks, Thomas. for this report. I have memories from 2020 that include reports in the US, here, from Chris Martenson, on his Peak Prosperity platform... reports from various sources that were spottily identifying different observers who were, at that time, picking up bits and pieces of information about what had happened in Wuhan.

At that time, there was a Newsweek article that provided some indicative facts and speculations about a possible lab leak.

Also, confusing the issue at that time was donald trump's nomen, the "Chinese virus." His phrase, while actually truthful, represented an inappropriate politicization of the problem. I, for instance, had ignored the plausible connection to Wuhan, simply because of my disdain for trump's habit of trivializing everything for his poltital advantage.

Even so, as time goes by and we see occasional updates on this very important issue, I appreciate any credible information, such as you have here. Keep up the good work.

One humorous anecdote. Our son was working in China, for McKinsey, in 2008. My wife and I accompanied our two daughters there to visit him.

While traveling in China, we happened to be in the Shanghai airport, waiting in some line. We noticed a video monitor mounted in a visible location. In the cartoon video, one cartoon character was saying to another, in English . . . Swine flu is from America, or something like that.

Ha ha! What a hoot! What goes around comes around.

Also, at that time, I was doing research for my novel about genetic engineering and buried treasure in New Orleans, USA, now available on Amazon: *Glass Chimera*.

Thanks, Thomas for this informative update.

 2   REPLY



Graff von Frankenheim  12 days ago

“how else can we be expected to place our faith in authorities ever again?” This sentence is naive beyond belief. All faith in whatever form of authority has gone, disappeared forever, except among the permanently brain damaged. No restoration is possible, Civil society is no more. Only brute force is left, by law or by might. Welcome to the rebirth of Western totalitarianism..

 2   REPLY



Vaughn C  12 days ago

Anyone that looks objectively at the circumstances, if the scenario would have been a bank robbery or a murder, would conclude confidently what happened. The CCP took over the lab through the People's Liberation Army soon after the initial outbreak and put the PLA's top commander of biological warfare in charge. This is disputed nowhere. The House Foreign Affairs minority committee had some interesting findings way back in Sept 2020. We cannot let this go. — <https://gop-foreignaffairs.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Final-Minority-Report-on-the-Origins-of-the-COVID-19-Global-Pandemic-Including-the-Roles-of-the-CCP-and-WHO-9.20.20-Coverpage.pdf>

 2   REPLY



Brian Laidd  12 days ago

Quite some time ago I saw an interview with two people who were expert virologists specialising in viruses in bats. They went into great detail explaining the difference in characteristics that separate viruses in the wild and lab engineered viruses. Viruses in the wild are slow to mutate whereas lab produced viruses are deliberately given specific attributes that allow them to mutate quickly so that such changes can be studied. Covid mutates very rapidly especially in people with damaged immune systems such as those suffering from cancer. In Russia a man on chemotherapy for cancer caught Covid and over a period of months the virus was observed to mutate over thirty times. The expert opinion of the virologists was that the Covid virus bears all the characteristics of a lab engineered virus. If they had to hazard a guess, their opinion was that they were 90% certain the virus was lab engineered

 2   REPLY



Mordecai Jones  12 days ago

We all know the old saying, follow the money. How much money would our enemies make if they could do enough damage to the USA, to enable them to gain power in Ukraine, Taiwan, Venezuela, Bolivia; then maybe Saudi Arabia and so forth. Who is better off because of the pandemic, and did they have the ability to start it?

 2   REPLY



jane baker  12 days ago

Ive never placed my faith in any authorities. I was brought up not to. So I don't really feel let down. This is definitely a created virus and I've said so right from the start. I've even heard that it may have been CREATED in a bio lab in THE UKRAINE and taken to China to be released there for political advantage reasons. The US has got 13 (13!!!) bio labs in the Ukraine. Putin has bombed 9 of them but I don't know if that's put them out of business.

 2   REPLY



John Pade  8 days ago

It looks like most here feel this story should be moved from Opinion to Analysis or some other article category. I feel the same way. But our opinions aren't worth the bits they're written with and it's unlikely they ever will be. First, we might be wrong. Second, our opinions aren't enough to carry the dead weight of an unaroused public across the finish line. A (your favorite adjectives) investigation of Covid's origin in not on the either the Democrats' or Republicans' short-list.

But, I hope that the responsibility for genetic research moves from the control of biologists to the control of engineers. It is after all genetic **engineering**. Even an average engineering student is far more fastidious than the most fussy biologist.

Finally, for now, the wagon circling that was coincident with Covid's outbreak: I've never seen anything like it. It's not even a conspiracy because conspiracies require conscious thought, planning, organization. What happened with Covid was a reflex, like ducking when a rock is flying at you. Since then, the trenches have been dug and the barbed wire has been strung. It will take a very determined assault and acceptance of very high casualties (or an unforeseen development) to penetrate it.

 2   REPLY



00  12 days ago

"Ultimately, the virus may indeed be conclusively proven to be natural in origin."

The above can never be ruled out—at this point in time, anything is possible. Unless and until the Chinese and US authorities come clean and make all records available for examination, it will be impossible to arrive at anything conclusive. And as the author writes, this will only deepen public distrust for authority.

Applying Occam's Razor would seem to suggest that this was a product of a "gain of function" experiment which somehow went awry, but who knows for sure? And that's the problem.

 1   REPLY



Kayla Marx  12 days ago

I'm glad that some writers, like the author and science writer Matt Ridley, are keeping the lab-leak theory alive. The fact remains that the two most powerful countries on Earth currently, the United States and China, along with powerful members of the global scientific community seem united in wanting this theory to go away. China won't budge. But a few U.S. Republican senators are up in arms about this. If Republicans win the House and Senate in October, there will be an investigation, and we'll see where it goes. If not, probably not.

 1   REPLY



Maureen Finucane  11 days ago

 Reply to [Kayla Marx](#)

It will go nowhere. Everyone too scared to upset Xi. Only our Queen let it be known that she was very displeased with the last State visit as the Chinese delegation were "very rude." Her words at her garden party.

 1   REPLY



michael harris  12 days ago

Thomas,

Thanks to 'Unherd' who recommended it I read Nicholas Wade's long piece on covid 2 years ago while it was only available on 'Medium' which is a non 'authoritative' site. Very soon after I read Wade's article the 'Bulletin of Atomic Scientists' republished it; a stinging rebuke to the 'Lancet' and others who had conspired to suppress it.

It was after this action by the 'Bulletin' that US politicians for a while half admitted the lab leak theory. Now there seems to be a backtracking.

But it is too late. No one with a working brain can see this backtracking as anything but a desperate avoidance of responsibility. And to the extent that the truth gets buried so democracy itself will die in a ditch or be overtaken by violence.

 1   REPLY



Andrew Stoll  12 days ago

Humans have been in contact with bats carrying corona viruses since long before our forebears came down from the trees!

There is proof of that from East & South Asia where some populations have immunity to bat corona viruses.

Strange that none of these ever spread around the world before!

 1   REPLY



Melissa Forshee  11 days ago

There are a few problems with the non-lab origin theory yet to be fully explained.

1 The closest related source covs are bats from well over a thousand miles away and these include tens of thousands of samples from animals all over China before and tens of thousands after the viral outbreak and from humans located in the areas that contain the source bats. Along with that, the nucleotide difference in

CV19 compared to the known possible sources suggests an 8 – 12 year recombination time frame and yet none of the genome samples suggesting further recombination have been discovered.

2 The furin cleavage site. How'd it get there? The early emails that were attempted to be covered up the Fauci group had a problem with it too. It's not from bats. CV19 is a betacoronavirus from bats but none in the same family have the fcs, and as a matter of fact, none have the viral energy to obtain one. There are several implications with that beyond this comment section, but one important issue is that for the known possible CV19 sources there would have to be a 2nd – yet undiscovered – bat cov that would allow the bat betacoronavirus to be able to obtain the fcs and then a 3rd virus (undiscovered) that is the actual source of the fcs would need to combine with the new bcov virus to form an even newer bcov (also undiscovered) that is able to jump from bats to humans with a never before evolved furin cleavage site with binding receptors specific to the human pulmonary system prior to ever having contact with humans. That or ECO Health did just that exactly as they said they would.

3 Where is the single human source? It is known that there are two lineages discovered in Wuhan during the beginning of the outbreak which share a single, undiscovered ancestor. It takes a few months for the virus to recombine in humans. The 2 lineages have nothing in common in relation to the first early sources ever having any contact with each other in Wuhan. Since the 2 lineages were first 'discovered' in Dec 2019 that then places the initial source as early as August or September and fits with testimonies of people with unknown pneumonia in that same time frame. Sept 2019 was also the time WIV began scrubbing their coronavirus databases. That's probably always going to be an unanswered coincidence.

👍 1 🗨️ ➔ REPLY



Andrew Harman ⌚ 12 days ago

Not got the time to deal with every comment on the 2020 election so will make a general one. None of those asserting fraud or intimating it have actually come up with a shred of evidence. Not one. It is just that: assertion. All they are saying is oh it is blindingly obvious, stands to reason, this cannot have been the correct outcome. They cite phantom "independent analysis" but do not produce it, rail against the MSM (I have little time for them myself as it happens, especially after covid) and brandish statistical "proof" without actually having anything concrete.

They also totally overlook the things Republicans have done – gerrymandering, voter suppression etc etc. Not that the Democrats are squeaky clean, far from it and I repeat I have no love for them.

As I have said, it is only the creaking US constitution keeping the Republicans alive in Senate and presidential terms. You all would do better to stop fighting past battles. Who knows, maybe there was something going on in 2020 but it is highly unlikely Classic case of the wish being the father of the thought.

As for the actual subject of this article, I do think a lab leak is more likely than not, but I have no proof and will not state it as if it is fact.

👍 0 🗨️ ➔ REPLY



Alan Thorpe ⌚ 9 days ago

What a strange article. The subtitle is "The mother of all Covid conspiracy theories is true" and then it concludes "Ultimately, the virus may indeed be conclusively proven to be natural in origin."

👍 0 🗨️ ➔ REPLY



Nicky Samengo-Turner ⌚ 9 days ago

Well, well... And there was I wrongly thinking that it was just God's sense of humour, in a bored moment testing out how mindlessly compliant and subservient, lemming cum sheep like his entire flock of internet addicted demi literate, naive populus had become?

👍 0 🗨️ ➔ REPLY



John Blackman ⌚ 7 days ago

the last line of this article got me " how else can we be expected to place our faith in authorities ever again ? " my question is when did we ever have faith in authorities in the first place !? govts. education facilities and media world wide have been telling people what to think not how to think for well over 100 years . we now have a vast proportion of the population as dumb as a box of rocks .

👍 0 🗨️ ➔ REPLY



The Ticklicker ⌚ 6 days ago

Agree strongly that the Lab Leak Theory of Covid-19's origin is "not dead"; However, intensive and far-reaching media coverage of 2 published papers in a recent issue of the journal Science has portrayed this eminently plausible – if not probable – Covid Origin Theory as "now debunked".

The Zoonotic Spillover Theory of Covid-19's Origin had considerable "life" breathed back into it with these papers' tandem publication. Their authors argue the papers present compelling – if not overwhelming – evidence that the Origin of Covid-19 occurred within that infamous Huanan Seafood Market (HSM) in downtown Wuhan, China.

The paper by Worobey et al. (2022) (<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abp8715>) especially is now heralded far & wide by MSM and boosters/shills for zoonotic spillover as being the slam-dunk, proof-positive that HSM and its wildlife trade of live mammal was the “epicenter” of this pandemic’s origin. Worobey et al. assert that several mammal species were “present in HSM” just prior to the Wuhan outbreak, and that likely one or more were the intermediary “hosts” for conveying this pandemic’s causative virus into the human population.

But, see if you can find a cited source for the claimed observations in the Worobey et al. paper’s Table 1 & Table S5 of 10 mammal species being “present” in the infamous Huanan Seafood Market (HSM) in Wuhan, China during both October & November of 2019. Worobey et al. also claim that one or more of these 10 mammal species at this market likely had individual animals who were infected with the virus (subsequently named SARS-CoV-2), which then “jumped” into the human population at the Huanan Market in Wuhan – perhaps directly causing that City’s 1st case in early December 2019 of the viral outbreak later becoming known as the Covid-19 pandemic.

Given the global significance of this paper’s claims, does anyone else find it curious that such important data – the presence in HSM of 10 mammal species immediately prior to the Wuhan viral outbreak, which this paper’s authors strongly implicate as sparking-off this horrible pandemic – did not have an attributed source to indicate who made these key wildlife observations and how they were made???

Also note that, of these 10 mammal species which Worobey et al. indicate were “Present in HSM”, ONLY 2 species have any demonstrable evidence of having sustained an actual infection by the virus responsible for this pandemic (ie, SARS-CoV-2) – namely Red Fox and the Raccoon-dog. And ONLY the Raccoon-dog has ANY documented evidence of being capable of transmitting this virus to other members of its species (and that evidence is merely experimental & involved captive Raccoon-dogs that were closely confined).

Further consider that the theory of Covid-19’s origin espoused by Worobey’s paper hinges on their speculation that two separate “zoonotic spillovers” had to have occurred within HSM. And yet the only study of wildlife trade involving HSM was published in Nature (Xiao et al. 2021), and ran for 31 full months before concluding at the end of November 2019. Xiao et al.’s paper repeatedly indicates that the Raccoon-dogs sold in Wuhan’s HSM and 3 other “wet markets” were “all wild caught” and “sourced from the wild”.

Plus, the average number of Raccoon-dogs sold per month – within all 4 of Wuhan’s “wet markets” combined – was just 38 (according to Table 1 of Xiao et al. 2021). Since HSM has but 7 of the total of 17 vendors who sold live wildlife in Wuhan’s 4 markets, HSM’s “pro rata” share of the monthly average of 38 Raccoon-dog would be 15.6 – an overall prorated average of 1 Raccoon-dog present in HSM every 2 days.

Does Worobey’s speculative theory of HSM being the “epicenter of Covid’s origin” seem plausible – given that:

- 1) only 2 of 10 mammal species that were present there during the 2 months prior to initial outbreak of this pandemic have actual documented evidence of infection by the SARS2 virus – Red Fox & Raccoon-dog;
- 2) of these 10 species ONLY the Raccoon-dog has demonstrated capability to transmit this virus to other animals;
- 3) the prorated average number of Raccoon-dogs sold each month in HSM was equivalent to 1 being present every 2 days;
- 4) there would be an exceedingly low likelihood that 2 separate incidents of SARS-CoV-2 transmission to humans within HSM came from 2 separately trapped “wild-caught” Raccoon-dogs, both infected with SARS-CoV-2 (captured on different days at perhaps 2 different locales) – AND there would not be any trace of this virus occurring afterwards in wild population of Raccoon-dog, NOR any evidence of its transmission to humans at other 3 Wuhan wet-markets (whose vendors likely obtain Raccoon-dog from same suppliers who provided this species to vendors in HSM), NOR any evidence of SARS-CoV-2 infections found in any China’s 1000+ of “fur farms” or in any other of China’s many thousands of wet markets or in its 700 other large, major cities of over 100,000 population;
- 5) the Wuhan Institute of Virology houses the world’s largest collection of bat coronaviruses, and documented evidence exists of Gain of Function and other exploratory research involving bat coronaviruses being underway within several biolabs in Wuhan before the Covid-19 outbreak – all this highly risky work occurred in labs having unacceptably low bio-safety ratings of 3 and even 2;
- 6) the Wuhan branch of China’s Center for Disease Control (CCDC) completed the move of its offices and lab to a location within a block of HSM on Dec. 2, 2019. This agency employed Jun-Hua Tian, whom this Washington Post article described as an ardent “bat adventurer – noting Tian had traveled far and wide throughout China to collect bats and their viruses (while doing so in an unsafe manner) – see: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/coronavirus-bats-china-wuhan/2021/06/02/772ef984-beb2-11eb-922a-c40c9774bc48_story.html ?

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David Fredsall ⌚ 5 days ago



Where c19 came from is a strawman, a sideshow argument. It's just a shiny object to distract from the primary purpose of the c19 hoax, which was the wide spread acceptance by the Muppets in the West of the c19 "vaccines." Unfortunately far too many rolled up their sleeves and fell for it.

Nothing happens without individuals and organizations working together. In this case it's the usual suspects, the Globalist Marxists, WEF criminals and like minded Central Bankers and Globalist skunks.

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John Ramsden ⌚ 12 days ago

I assumed it came from the lab, via the nearby wet market where "used" bats, having been experimented on and their bodies discarded, were being sold by an enterprising lab worker or scientist to make a bit of money on the side.

👍 -1 🗨️ ➡️ REPLY

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