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## Holding Science Hostage

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*Most risk judgments rest on little, if any, personal investigation; they depend largely, if not wholly, on trust placed in the judgments of selected others. -Timus Kuran, Stanford Law Review, 2007*

I am fortunate enough to have begun my scientific career before the internet. Before Facebook and chat rooms we had pubs, coffee shops and professional symposia. Before Wikipedia and CNN, we had to rely on getting our misinformation from our neighbor whose brother-in-law allegedly worked at a

government laboratory ...somewhere, or our best friend who knew someone who knew someone.

So, I have seen firsthand how the General Public (GP) has responded to advents in science, and how the very notion of "science" has evolved in the Western Northern Hemisphere over just the last several decades to reach its current state of distortion.

So, what is "science"? Quite contrary to the belief of the GP, and regardless of whether we like to accept it or not, "science" as we know it today is a product of the Catholic Church. <sup>2</sup> The very foundation of "Science *qua* Science" springs from the human dedication to the philosophical position that God <sup>3</sup> made the universe according to certain unchanging principles and rules, and that those rules are discernible to Man. <sup>4 5</sup>

As we have seen proven through history, without this philosophical underpinning, "science" could not have developed as it did. <sup>6</sup> For example, Islam, which was haphazardly cobbled together from bits and pieces of Catholic teachings by Mohammad in the Seventh Century, teaches that their god has no rules and therefore, there are no rules by which the universe is fixed, and therefore, no rules can be discovered. Very often the "scientific advances" attributed to Muslims are recent attempts at revisionist history. <sup>7</sup> In Islam, the Universe is as ephemeral as god's imagination and will. <sup>8</sup> Although it is difficult to pinpoint when "science" (as we now know it) began, the Roman Catholic Church's "Condemnation of 1277" (rejecting some of Aristotle's scientific arguments, without necessarily rejecting the Thomistic interpretation of Aristotle's metaphysical arguments) certainly was a major turning point <sup>9</sup> and facilitated the work by Oresme, Buridan, the Oxford Calculators, and the Parisian Doctors.

Contrary to the beliefs of the GP, we do not have an actual, commonly accepted, definition of "science." Indeed, according to some thinkers,<sup>127</sup> it may be impossible to formulate a definition since during the last 300 years, "science" has morphed from an Aristotelian formula for finding the "truth," to a metaphysical war between two world views – one atheistic and one theistic, and

is now characterized more by an animus against Aristotelian Scholasticism rather than an actual contribution to knowledge.<sup>128</sup> As a result, any definition now that attempts to draw a fine line between "science" and "pseudo-science" is typically designed to be used as a club to beat the opponent into the ground, rather than provide a meaningful demarcation. <sup>129</sup>

In fact, we would not even need a definitive demarcation of science except for the pervasive attempts of Positivists to exclude all supernatural considerations *especially when the scientific evidence points to that conclusion*;<sup>130</sup> (i.e. facts don't matter, agendas matter).

Case in point – in *McClean v. Arkansas Board of Education* (1981), Professor Michael Ruse won the day for the secular Positivists who were trying to block teaching "creationism" as a scientific theory. He successfully defined "science" in such a manner that it excluded "creationism." – (not a bad thing at all, if you ask me); but it went unnoticed at the time that the definition used by the courts, if applied equally, also excluded the theory of Darwinian Evolution (equally not a bad thing at all, if you ask me). Then in 1993, during a presentation at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Prof. Ruse did an about-face, when he withdrew his definition and admitted that both Evolution and Creationism "*...depends upon certain unproveable metaphysical assumptions.*" and the Theory of Evolution has really become a secular religion.

So, with all this in mind, for the moment, I'll define science thusly: <sup>10</sup>

"Science is the creative formulation of reasonable paradigms that have an high probability of explaining realities and are not falsified by the same methods."

Clearly, my definition presupposes that "reasonable" and "realities" can be defined which in turn raises the philosophical issue of axiomata and metaphysics; <sup>11</sup> a topic for another discussion. However, safe to say that at one time in history, it would have been quite *reasonable* to conclude that heavier objects fall faster than lighter objects, and I suppose that a stone-age thinker would find it *reasonable* to conclude that a caterpillar and a butterfly were

distinctly different creatures.

Insofar as science is a creative human process, it is necessarily intertwined with presuppositions whose foundations are ideological in character. That is, science is necessarily teleological <sup>12</sup> and a derivative of the many facets of Man's conscience. Of those ideological characters, "*Perhaps most important is the corruption of science that occurs when, for reasons of political expediency and self interest, responsible institutions and scientists attempt to create a consensus by ignoring divergent evidence.*" <sup>13</sup>

Throughout history, the scientific method has produced paradigms that are incompatible with today's paradigms. Therefore, if we accept objective history, we must accept the uncomfortable position that the legitimate scientific method has produced profoundly false paradigms throughout the course of history. Since paradigms change with time, and those paradigms are frequently contrary to each other, we must conclude that, contrary to common belief, "science" is not a truth engine.

Thus, when people use truisms such as "Follow the science" or "Science is real" as a substitute for "truth," the truism is usually used by those who understand "science" the least and are the quickest to attack people who are actually relying on *real* science but don't hold to a particular fashionable political position disguised as science.

## What are "facts"?

Epistemologically, we have different kinds of "facts." <sup>14</sup> We have 1) Objective facts, 2) Scientific facts, and 3) Para-facts.

### Objective Facts

Objective facts are those realities that exist regardless of our knowledge, recognition or formulations. For example, gravity is an objective fact. Gravity exists and the manifestations of gravity are a reality regardless of whether one is discussing Newtonian physics, relativistic physics, Aristotelian attractions or if one is a Neanderthal pondering rocks that fall.

Not all objective facts are "scientific facts" (see below). For example, when X-rays were first discovered, they were not a scientific fact and Lord Kelvin declared them an hoax. That is, although the existence of X-rays is an objective fact, it took some time before X-rays also became a "scientific fact." The great astronomer Brahe rejected the objective factual aspects of Copernican's model <sup>15</sup> in favor of the scientific facts at the time. Initially, the objective facts of Pasteur's germ theory was rejected as anti-science nonsense by just about everyone at the time. Sir John William Lubbock rejected Waterston's objective facts modeled in the Ideal Gas Law as " *...nothing but nonsense*" and refused to allow Waterston's paper to be published by the Royal Society which only dealt in scientific facts. The rejection of objective facts by scientists isn't surprising since scientists are notorious for rejecting objective facts <sup>16</sup> and such rejections of objective facts remain on display to this very day (see for example the rejection by [Darwinists](#) <sup>17</sup> of the sudden appearance of Bauplänes in the Maotianshan and Burgess Konservat Lagerstätten).

## Scientific Facts

Scientific facts are those statements held to be true by a large portion (sometimes a simple majority) of scientists of that particular community working with a particular paradigm. Contrary to popular belief, scientific facts may or may not be true, and may or may not be objective facts.

Gravity is a scientific fact. But phlogiston was also a very well established scientific fact as was Ptolemaic geocentrism - those both happen to be objectively incorrect, but they were scientific facts. In fact, at one time, phlogiston was an unassailable, unquestionable, scientific fact, and failure to adopt the paradigm of phlogiston was to cease to be a scientist worthy of consideration; only idiots, fools and "science deniers" would reject phlogiston. To his dying day, Joseph Priestly, the man often credited with discovering oxygen, rejected the theory of "oxygen." <sup>18</sup> According to the GP of today, those people who reject scientific facts are "science deniers." To whom, then, are we to apply the appellation of "science denier" - Antoine Lavoisier, or Joseph Priestly? How about Lord Kelvin - "science denier"? Throughout history great

pillars of science have rejected and denied scientific facts and those who have propounded objective realities have been identified as "science deniers."

Alvin Weinberg<sup>15</sup> dealt with "scientific-facts" from the perspective of asking the question in a scientific manner without being able to answer the question from a scientific perspective. He opined the relationship between scientific knowledge and decisions on social questions. He stated that many of the issues which arise in the course of the interaction between science or technology and society - hang on the answers to questions which can be asked of science and yet which cannot be answered by science. Weinberg proposed the term *trans-scientific* for those questions since, though they are, epistemologically speaking, questions of fact and can be stated in the language of science, they are unanswerable by science - that is, they transcend science. And so far as public policy involves *trans-science* rather than scientific issues, the role of the scientist contributing to the promulgation of such policy must be different from his role when the issues can be unambiguously answered by science.

## Para-facts

According to the epidemiologist, Geoffrey Kabat,<sup>19</sup> para-knowledge is those propositions that are given currency and presented in such a way as to be beyond questioning, but which may be neither objective facts or scientific facts. Indeed, para-facts may be objectively false assertions, but whose widespread existence is passionately held and propagated by the sheer repetition of the misinformation. Para-facts are couched within the context of "*Well, everybody knows ...*" However, just because "everybody knows it," doesn't make it true, it just makes it fashionable to repeat, even if it is abjectly false.

Examples of para-facts not only are myriad throughout history, they are rampant in today's society and include: "*Everybody knows that Napoleon Bonaparte was a really short dude.*" In fact, [Napoleon Bonaparte](#) was slightly taller than average height for a European male of the 1800s.<sup>20</sup> Possibly as a result of the stresses caused by the Little Ice Age, starting in *circa* 1300 AD, the stature of European males began to decline and over the course of the next 400 years, the average height of the adult European male was approximately 2.5

inches less than that of Europeans prior to the onset of the Little Ice Age. <sup>21</sup> Napoleon, at 5'6," was about a quarter of an inch taller than the average European at the time.

*"Everyone knows that Marie Antoinette said, 'Let them eat cake ' and as Paris starved, the noble patriots stormed the Bastille freeing thousands of oppressed political prisoners ."*

Nope - [that never happened](#). There weren't thousands of oppressed people imprisoned in the Bastille. There weren't even hundreds... in fact there weren't even dozens. The objective fact is that there wasn't a single oppressed peasant or political prisoner in the Bastille when it was stormed. Para-facts notwithstanding, there were only seven (7) people being held in the Bastille and none of them were political prisoners or oppressed peasants. The Bastille held one member of the aristocracy who was being held on incest charges, four people convicted of forgery, and two madmen, (one, an Irishman who thought he was God, and the other was re-captured and re-incarcerated by the very murders who initially released him). <sup>22</sup>

The spark of the French Revolution remains a mystery - by contemporary standards, Paris was doing fairly well; there was no widespread starvation, the economy was about the same as elsewhere, and life was, according to the standards at the time, pretty good. During the night of terror, there was mass murder by an insane mob that slaughtered innocents and in the blood frenzy there were even reports of human cannibalism.

By all accounts, Marie Antoinette <sup>23</sup> was a wonderfully benevolent and loved monarch - charitable and concerned about the French, she built hospitals and schools. So, from whence comes the distorted myth of Marie Antoinette, the French Revolution and the Bastille? Popular media, and fiction - most notably the fictitious writings of François-Marie Arouet, Victor Hugo, Charles Dickens and the stereotype of Lewis Carroll's Queen of Hearts. By the way, the great scientist Antoine Lavoisier, "Father of Modern Chemistry," was Catholic and was therefore one of those who lost his head in The Reign of Terror that was, and symbolized, The French Revolution.

A multitude of other para-facts could be listed such as the false belief that [Galileo invented the telescope](#) (he didn't), and that " [face masks](#) " reduce the spread of the "COVID-19 virus" (although a multitude of "scientific" papers have falsely claimed to show a benefit, upon review, [24](#) [25](#) [26](#) [27](#) [28](#) [29](#) [30](#) [31](#) [32](#) [33](#) [34](#) [35](#) [36](#) [37](#) [38](#) there is no scientific evidence to support the use of "face masks" in the control of today's COVID-19 virus.

The GP believes the myth that [Darwin invented the theory of evolution](#) (he didn't) and life on Earth was the result of spontaneous generation in Darwin's " [warm little pond](#) " (thus far, all the objective evidence indicates Darwin's five pillars of faith are false).

The GP holds the para-fact that the SARS-CoV-2 virus (the "COVID-19 virus") has killed 688,000 people in the US [39](#) (wrong - based on data from the US Centers for Disease Control, [40](#) using causal criteria [41](#) the actual infection mortality for the SARS-CoV-2 virus is currently between 27,500 and 41,200 deaths which is about the same, or a little less than, the deaths expected from the common, ordinary, seasonable flu). The misclassification of infection mortality is also reflected in other countries - for example Italy, in May of 2020, was reporting that only 12% of the total reported COVID-19 deaths were actually due to the virus, [42](#) and 88% of the COVID-19 deaths were intentionally misclassified; [43](#) making the actual death toll from COVID-19 lower than the seasonal flu. In the US, when we look at the " [crude mortality rate](#) " for 2020, we see that the CMR is not statistically different from 2018 and 2019. [44](#)

And finally, *Everybody knows The Dark Ages were a time of depravity and stagnation.* False: The "Dark Ages" never existed - the term and the myth was a polemical invention that has persisted to this day. The Fifth to the Tenth Centuries saw continuous and important advances in society, technology, philosophy and intellectual advancement and civil rights. Considering the sea of myths in which the current society swims, and particularly in light of the COVID-19 debacle, it is very likely that our descendants will accurately look upon this period in time as "The Dark Ages" and they, like Kuran, [45](#) will legitimately want to know how millions of people fell for the *exact same*

*delusion.*

## Science as a Political Animal

How could science be anything else but a political animal? After all, if science does not represent objective truth, but is a creative process by Man, how could it avoid being political?

*Here at the interface of science and policy, scientists may be playing a political role as well as a scientific one, and the two roles may be hard to separate. - Geoffrey Kabat*

Politics has always played a major role in scientific development. Look at the history of the Roman Catholic Priest, Nicolaus Copernicus, and the politically vulnerable state he was in at the presentation of his 1543 formulations in "*De Revolutionibus*." His caution was evident in the language of his preface to Pope Paul III: "*Statim me explodendum cum tali opinione clamitant.*" <sup>46</sup> Here Copernicus fears that if he introduces his model, he will be ridiculed - not by The Church who supported him, but by the scientists of his day who (reasonably) believed the Earth was fixed and the Sun orbited the Earth - after all, geocentrism was an established scientific fact and one needed only to gaze into the sky to understand how reasonable the claim was.

The pressure on Father Copernicus was enormous; but not for religious reasons, as commonly portrayed, but for political reasons. At that time, in the early 1500's, there were no Christian "denominations" - there was only one Christian religion...Catholic. If one was a "Christian" one was part of the catholic church. <sup>47</sup> But then, suddenly, Pope Paul III was dealing with the political ramifications of a newly emerging social movement from people protesting The Church - and those protestors <sup>48</sup> had a newly invented religion called "Protestantism." One of the hallmark novelties of this newly invented religion included an absolutely strict literal and personal interpretation of the selective Catholic library known as "The Bible." According to the newly invented religion, if The Bible mentions "a fixed Earth" then by God (literally) the Earth *must* be fixed, and therefore, everything *must* necessarily move around it and not vice versa.

This approach of literal interpretation was entirely antithetical to the Catholic understanding of its own 1,500 year old bibliothèque wherein the Bible was viewed in a variety of modes, but almost always in an anagogical /allegorical manner. Scripture could not subordinate objective reality; where scripture appeared to be contrary to reality, then either our understanding of reality must be wrong, or *our interpretation of scripture must be wrong*. <sup>49</sup>

But the new Protestant idea of a literal interpretation gave rise to Protestant accusations that "Catholics don't believe in the bible;" an allegation which is true if by that one means that Catholics don't believe in a wooden, literal, interpretation of Holy Scripture.

When Copernicus came up with his model, (which wasn't actually new, <sup>50</sup> ) it wasn't much better than the Ptolemaic model but it did require a paradigmatic shift and Pope Paul III was very worried that these new "Protesters" would use the new model by the Catholic Priest Copernicus as further proof of how The Church opposed "The Bible" - After all, the Protestant would argue, the bible says the Earth is fixed but this anti-science Catholic Priest Copernicus is saying the Earth moves around the sun, ergo, Catholics don't believe in the bible and they are science-deniers.

This was a sociopolitical problem, not a scientific problem and not even a religious problem, and it required a sociopolitical solution.

The situation wasn't much better 300 years later when a chap named Darwin decided to plagiarize a predecessor's ideas <sup>51</sup> and [propose a very weak challenge](#) to the prevailing scientific paradigm of Typology which, contrary to para-knowledge, is NOT a religious based system but a scientific system. <sup>52</sup>

Like Copernicus, Darwin didn't come up with anything new - after all Empedocles came up with the idea of evolution some 2,200 years earlier. Para-knowledge notwithstanding, there is no shortage of legitimate respected scientists today (many of whom are avowed atheists) who completely reject Darwinism on scientific, not religious, grounds. <sup>53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63</sup>

The Typological model of life on Earth was (and indeed remains) a valid

scientific model; that is, just like Darwinism, Typology remains a scientific fact. So, since evolution wasn't new, and, according to Darwin himself, had no actual objective facts to back it up, why was it so popular? Answer - politics. The ghost of the Enlightenment was afoot. As even the atheist Richard Dawkins points out, Charles Darwin did not actually contribute any great advancement to science, but rather, Darwin became famous because in the zeitgeist of the mid 19th Century "*Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.*"<sup>64</sup> "Fulfilled," that is, provided the atheist is willing to be intellectually dishonest and reject objective facts (such as the Cambrian Explosion, the Hubble constant, evolutionary stasis and a contingent universe).

## Politics Driving Science

A detractor may say, "*Politics may have played a role in science in the olden days, but today we are more sophisticated and we are past that kind of nonsense. Right?*" Yet much of "science" in the public realm involves risk assessments and risk management. The GP thinks that in such cases, the "science" is free from politics. However as former Director of the US EPA, William D Ruckelshaus, points out: <sup>116</sup>

*Risk assessment is something of an intellectual orphan. Scientists are uncomfortable with it when the method must use scientific information in a way that is outside the normal constraints of science. They are encroaching on political judgments and they know it.*

Although the exact date of the transition is nebulous, from about the 1960s forward, the very definition of "science" began to change as "environmentalism" began to occupy the political spectrum initially held by classical Marxism. <sup>121</sup> This is clearly revealed when one considers that Che Guevara was one of only two speakers who was given a standing ovation at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva, 1964.

It is probably fitting to note that even the term "ecology" was coined<sup>122</sup> by the scientific fraud, Ernst Haeckel, best known for his fraudulent embryonic drawings (that still appear in today's college textbooks). It is from this

springboard of fraud that tolerance of foundationless alarmist hyperbole began to emerge as a substitute for science as exemplified by the language found in the 1972 UN report on the conference on the environment<sup>123</sup> in Stockholm, where the authors advocate using alarmist language to intentionally frighten the bejeezuz out of the public, who otherwise was not taking them seriously just because they didn't have any facts to back up their concerns.

Suddenly, in the 1970's the concepts of Popperian falsification gave way to "the precautionary principle" which effectively holds that scientific fraud is acceptable (no, *admirable*) provided that you couch the fraud in the interests of the public good. This was the excuse explicitly used by the NASA Scientist, James Hansen, (the "Father of Global Warming") when he admitted that he had lied about the severity of Global Warming.

Essentially from that point forward, "science" went through a paradigm shift from "that which cannot be falsified" to "that which can merely find a consensus of some kind of affirmation." The problem here of course is that virtually *any* theory regardless of its validity can find *some* affirmation *somewhere* (just ask six blind men and an elephant). However, the theory that an elephant is like a tree-trunk ceases to be a valid theory when faced with a single falsification (just like "Climate Change" ended when fraudsters like Phil Jones and his bunch were faced to admit they had tried to cover-up the Medieval Warming Period with Michael Mann's laughable "Hockey Stick" with the help of Julia Slingo, Vicky Pope and others). Climate Change remains a valid theory *only so long as you refuse to allow objective data into the equation.*

Thus, in my life-time, I have seen "science" move from a philosophical position of seeking "truth" based on empirical evidence to "that narrative that is necessary for the public good, regardless of the evidence."

As other examples, one need only to look at Love Canal, Three Mile Island, the Long Island Breast Cancer Epidemic, carcinogenic EMFs, COVID-19 Non Pharmaceutical Interventions, or the [radon issue](#) and the Montclair, New Jersey fiasco, to see the dark hand of politics in science and risk assessment.

Similarly, although the GP usually has no actual knowledge of the objective facts surrounding the "[Galileo Affair](#)," they are usually very quick to reference it as an example of how authoritative religion kills science. And yet, they are very blind to the fact that today's religion of secularism is similarly an authoritative regime that similarly wields the very same kind of political and ideological harassment and hostility towards scientists. Consider the 2004 case of biologist Richard von Sternberg at the Smithsonian who holds two PhDs (Molecular Evolution and Systems Science/Theoretical Biology). The despicable treatment of Dr. Sternberg at the hands of the Smithsonian Institute because of his tenable, reasonable scientific positions is reflected in the US House Of Representatives Committee On Government Reform report titled "*Intolerance And The Politicization Of Science At The Smithsonian*" which found:

*"There is substantial, credible evidence of efforts to abuse and harass Dr. Sternberg, including punitively targeting him for investigation in order to supply a pretext for dismissing him, and applying to him regulations and restrictions not imposed on other researchers."* <sup>65</sup>

Silencing scientists for their scientific views is not new; witness what recently happened to Dr. David L. Lewis within the EPA. <sup>118</sup> Or, consider the 1990 case of case of Forrest Mims. He was asked to write a series of columns for *Scientific American* who promised Mims that if his articles were successful he would be hired on as a permanent writer. His articles were very successful. However, once SA learned he challenged Darwinism, they refused to hire him. <sup>65a</sup>

Researchers James E Enstrom and Geoffrey C Kabat, published a scientific article in the British Medical Journal that validly challenged the poor science of the anti-tobacco political militants; <sup>65b</sup> the result was a political firestorm from those who did not want valid science interfering with their "social justice" agenda, demonstrating that silencing scientists who tell the truth is not only pervasive in Western Culture, it is working. We are seeing a return of [Lysenkoism](#).

*In place of what were once jousts in obscurity over arcane matters,*

*many scientific disputes now overflow into different public arenas and involve uncivil efforts to silence researchers for political, ideological, social or even economic reasons. Accusations of junk science, cherry picking and stacked committees have become strikingly commonplace.*

[65c](#)

Let's also look at "National Institutes of Health Revitalization Act of 1993" [66](#) and specifically Section 1911 titled *Potential Environmental And Other Risks Contributing To Incidence Of Breast Cancer* .

As a result of hype and outright lies from the media, public fear was whipped into a frenzy over an epidemic that never existed. According to the wildfire rumors, scientific studies were showing that the incidence of breast cancer around Long Island, New York, was vastly greater than anywhere else in the US. "Why?" wondered the worried Long Island families, " *why was the incident rate so incredibly high? After all, the scientific studies can't be wrong.* " (Hint: there were no scientific studies).

As the rumors of this scientific para-fact spun out of control so grew the momentum of the public cry for action. Whipped into a (30 million dollar) frenzy, Section 1911 was passed and directed two sections of National Institutes of Health to carry out research to discover the cause of the epidemic that was threatening public health. But an epidemic that never actually existed. Buoyed up by public anxiety and the recent successes of the AIDS activists, the Long Island activists knowingly engaged in fear mongering, lies and playing off the of para-facts that snow-balled until it was out of control; and a social movement which set in motion regulations that ultimately redirected precious financial resources from worthy research projects and funneled those resources into a myth, a ghost, an health crisis that existed initially in the imaginations of a few, but ultimately grew - like a virus - into the minds of the majority, until it became a scientific fact.

As the political momentum grew, so grew the lofty expectations of the public that "Science" was on their side and a scientific study would solve the mystery. The scientific study fell flat. Since no scientific studies had ever actually shown

the incident rate for breast cancer in the area was any higher than expected, the mandated study could have done nothing else but find no cause for an epidemic that never existed any way. Politics - it was an health crisis based entirely on politics and fear; it was an epidemic of [fear and ignorance](#).

When the Long Island house of cards collapsed, Dr. Deborah Winn, head of the extramural epidemiology program at the National Cancer Institute, said:

"I don't think it is reflective of any reality. I don't know where it comes from. It's myths." <sup>67</sup>

To her credit, NYT journalist Gina Kolata reported: <sup>68</sup>

For years, it has been widely thought that rates of breast cancer on Long Island are unusually high. But, contrary to popular belief, they are not. The rates on Long Island are not much different from those of the rest of the country -- and a number of areas in the Northeast and elsewhere have higher rates.

But the perception of an epidemic has persisted like a suburban legend. Figures that scientists say have no basis in fact, like a breast cancer rate that is 30 percent higher than the national average, have been bandied about at public meetings, and repeated by breast cancer patients, politicians and newspapers, including The New York Times.

Where was "science" in all this? Where were the *scientists*? Many scientists were swept up in the political fever of public monies and the glory of a publishing potential based on a combination of informational and reputational motives; they endorsed the perception of an epidemic partly by believing in the beliefs of others and partly by distorting their own public responses in the interest of maintaining social acceptance, and partly by remaining silent on the actual science.

These episodes are truly cases of mass-delusion, and as the incomparable JAM Meerloo explained in great detail,<sup>120</sup> mass-hypnosis is not intrinsically different from individual hypnosis, and the easiest to hypnotize are often the group who

see themselves as more educated and more sophisticated. Thus, it can be easier to get a group of scientists to go along with a well orchestrated scam than, say, a group of farmers.

As seen today with scientists who suddenly change their "scientific" public opinions regarding COVID-19, the motivation is simply to earn social approval and avoid public disapproval. Just like then, in the desire to maintain their reputational objectives, many notable scientists today are speaking and acting as if they share, or at least do not reject, the popular belief systems surrounding the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the outright lies surrounding the issue of "[positive tests](#)," "cases" and manifestational versus causal differential diagnoses.

Like the scientists of the Long Island Breast Cancer Epidemic, today's public advocates for facemasks and "social distancing" desire to be seen by the public as White Knights in shining armor rushing to the rescue mounted on the great stallions of science! Instead - just like the scientists associated with the Long Island Breast Cancer Epidemic they will limp across the finish line like the Ingenious Gentleman of La Mancha with his illusionary Mambrino's helmet, sitting on an old nag named "Shame" with egg on its face and just quietly fall over dead.

After the smoke had cleared regarding the Long Island breast cancer incident, and the public were disillusioned and angry, Dr. Michael B. Bracken, professor of epidemiology and public health at Yale University, stated the study should never have been started in the first place:

*It is an example of politicians jumping on the bandwagon and responding to the fears of their local population without really thinking through what is going on in science ,"* he said. Such a study, he added, "*is not so much science as a political response."* <sup>69</sup>

During these growing waves of panic, honest technical experts who are aware that the public is being given bad information often remain silent. Such scientists are justifiably terrified of being crucified in the public square or being fired or losing grant money as they are branded as "[conspiracy theorists](#)" for

simply standing by the actual science and objective facts.

## Reputations at Stake

Any expert in the Long Island incident who dared to point out that the reported 30% increase in risk was false would have been excoriated in the public square. Such an expert would have been called a "science denier." If the expert explained that he was a medical doctor and understood the statistics, the GP would argue that he isn't an epidemiologist and therefore isn't competent to challenge the "scientific facts." If the expert was an epidemiologist, the GP would excoriate him because he wasn't a medical doctor; if the expert was a mathematician the GP would excoriate him because he is neither a medical doctor nor an epidemiologist. If the expert was a medical doctor Board Certified in oncology and held a PhD in epidemiology and another PhD in biostatistics, the GP would excoriate him for being a sexist misogynist in the pockets of the drug companies who does not care about Mrs. Joan Q. Public and is only trying to kill women. <sup>70</sup>

Therefore, then, as now, the experts who actually know what's going on, mostly remain silent and allow the train wreck to happen. Later, they can point out they never actually *endorsed* the public wave of the COVID-19 misinformation - they just remained silent.

But silence won't help because public trust will again have been violated. In 2006, the US Institutes of Medicine Board on Health Sciences Policy convened a committee to study the feasibility of using [facemasks](#) during the outbreak of an airborne respiratory virus. The committee understood how politicians and opportunistic scientists may be swept away with the urge to use a pandemic to manipulate people and how politicians may take the GP down the path of tyranny using junk science to support their agenda. The Committee prophetically cautioned: <sup>71</sup>

*Any public health effort aimed at extending the usefulness of existing devices must be delivered with clarity and truthfulness. The public is likely to forgive lack of knowledge but will not be willing to trust public*

*health officials in the next instance if they have in any way been misinformed or misled.*

Once a wave of misinformation has taken hold of the GP, there is a strong incentive for other experts to jump onto the bandwagon instead of getting rolled over by it. In these cases, usually only studies that are confirmatory of the popular misinformation are published and evidence to the contrary is diminished, hidden or openly ridiculed, in manner now termed "vindictive protectiveness." <sup>125</sup>

The GP, again exhibiting their ignorance of the realities of the scientific community, scramble to use the term "peer-reviewed" and demand their detractors cite their positions in "peer-reviewed articles." This also is part of the misinformation matrix because during such high profile events as the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, scientists can generate enormous amounts of [junk-science](#) which is published as peer-reviewed papers (which often must then be retracted). <sup>72 73</sup>

Yet, in a scientist's effort to be seen sitting at the lunch tables with the Cool Kids who are driving the bandwagon and make sure they are sought to give interviews on the evening news, unfortunately, these scientists begin pushing the hottest junk-science agenda.

The "hotter" a scientific topic is, (with greater numbers of scientific teams), and the greater the political or financial interest, the less likely published studies are to be true. <sup>74</sup> "Campbell's Law," tells us that incentivized researchers increase the number of papers published by modifying their methods to produce the largest possible number of peer-reviewed papers rather than produce more rigorous investigations <sup>75</sup> ... in other words, the old chestnut - "publish or perish" is alive and well.

[The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision-making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it is intended to monitor.](#) <sup>76</sup>

It has long been known that about 75% of people will follow the crowd and accept falsehoods *even when they know it is a falsehood*.<sup>119</sup> Cookie-cutter scientists are no different and want to be part of the crowd. When they find their scientific positions at odds with the popular herd mentality, they simply change their scientific opinions and join the crowd. This is particularly so with observational fields such as epidemiology.

Epidemiology is so beautiful and provides such an important perspective on human life and death, but an incredible amount of rubbish is published..." <sup>77</sup> (Sir Richard Peto, Professor of Medical Statistics and Epidemiology University of Oxford, England.)

The problem with junk-science appearing as peer-reviewed "scientific papers" is growing and has alarmed many epidemiologists and biostatisticians. <sup>78</sup> , <sup>79</sup> , <sup>80</sup> In spite of some researchers believing epidemiology is in a state of crisis due to the lack of standardized reporting protocols and the huge amount of conflicting information being published, I don't see epidemiology in crisis. Rather, I step back and remember that what we now call "epidemiology" is actually in a state of relative infancy. <sup>81</sup> Whereas I'm not opposed to the standardizing concepts of the CONSORT or STROBE, I also think it's too early to box-in the observational insights which can lead to what Kuhn calls the "tacit knowledge" of science - that certain *je ne sais quoi* possessed by some science practitioners that cannot be captured or even taught.

Nevertheless, the driving desire to be "on the inside circle" has been on display in spades during the COVID-19 pandemic. On Thursday, February 27, 2020, the Director of the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Dr. Robert Redfield, told Congress "*There is no role for these [face] masks in the community.*" A couple weeks later, he jumped on the bandwagon and was espousing the benefit of community facemasks. What changed? Certainly not the science.

On Friday, February 28, 2020, Dr. Michael Ryan, the executive director of the health emergency program at the World Health Organization stated, "*There are limits to how a mask can protect you from being infected,*" he added "*The most important thing everyone can do is wash your hands, keep your hands away*

*from your face and observe very precise hygiene ."* A couple weeks later, he jumped on the bandwagon and was espousing the benefit of community facemasks. What changed? Certainly not the science.

On Friday, February 29, 2020, the US Surgeon General, Dr. Jerome Adams said (his emphasis): "*Seriously people- STOP BUYING MASKS! They are NOT effective in preventing general public from catching #Coronavirus, ...*" Dr. Adams went on to say "*The best way to protect yourself and your community is with everyday preventive actions, like staying home when you are sick and washing hands with soap and water, to help slow the spread of respiratory illness.*" A couple of weeks later, he jumped on the bandwagon and was espousing the benefit of community facemasks. What changed? Certainly not the science.

Dr. Anthony Fauci is on record and on video adamantly, emphatically and categorically stating that facemasks do NOT work, and people should NOT be wearing them. He then became the driver of the bandwagon claiming all people should all be wearing face masks (maybe even THREE facemasks) and facemasks should be mandated by the government. What changed? Certainly not the science. The anti-science facemask bandwagon grew bigger and faster, and anyone who espoused actual science got rolled over.

Just like in past mass-delusional episodes, dissenting scientific opinions were silenced; scientific opinions such as those of Dr. Jeffrey Klausner, Professor of Medicine and Public Health at University of California, Los Angeles "*I don't think there's any evidence that wearing a surgical mask has any benefit to protect someone in general from exposure, or from being infected,...*" <sup>82</sup> Dr. Klausner went on to say that wearing masks is kind of a psychological tool to be used to keep awareness at an elevated level, but offering no actual protection to people or the community. "*So it may be kind of an awareness tool, but in terms of its direct benefits, there's no data .*" Dr. Klausner added.

Similarly, suppressed was the scientific opinion of Dr. William Schaffner of the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, who told CNN that buying masks is a "*psychological thing*" rather than a viable defense. "*The coronavirus is*

*coming, and we feel rather helpless," he said. " By getting masks and wearing them, we move the locus of control somewhat to ourselves ."*

This is how the anti-science pot gets stirred and served out to the GP who then becomes confused and can't follow the science because they don't know the science and they don't even know what constitutes science so they just shout "follow the science!" when what they really mean is "[follow the crowd](#)."

*... not wholly unlike a pack of hounds, which, in the long-run, perhaps catches its game, but where, nevertheless, when at fault, each individual goes his own way, by scent, not by sight, some running back and some forward; where the louder-voiced bring many to follow them, nearly as often in a wrong path as in a right one; where the entire pack even has been known to move off bodily on a false scent. <sup>83</sup>*

Although very [very frequently](#) in this "cut-and-paste" internet world, members of the GP will cite "studies" and "papers," they almost never actually read those articles, frequently lack the technical expertise to understand the articles but almost always assume the study says something that the study does not say - often the study says exactly the opposite of what the GP thinks the study says.

When faced with conflicting scientific information coming from various directions, the GP doesn't rush out and critically read those papers that are referenced by "authoritative" sources, and neither does the GP look at the source data or evaluate the studies they reference; instead, they rely almost exclusively on what their neighbor or hairdresser believes and the perceived credentials and reputation of the guy on TV. After all, *everybody knows that he MUST know what he's talking about, he's an M.D. and he's wearing a white coat and he's on TV* .

I have personally experienced this attitude in my career in 1994 when the CDC published the flagship paper <sup>84</sup> that launched America into the dizzy (but false) health scare of "toxic black mold." The paper was bad science and we all knew it <sup>85</sup> but the bandwagon rolled down the hill crushing every dissenter in its path in spite of a complete lack of scientific evidence. <sup>86</sup> Many colleagues around me

insisted that we jump on that lucrative bandwagon and ride it to the bank. Importantly, I now witness that those are now many of the same Industrial Hygienists that insist on advocating facemasks. During the beginning of the "toxic black mold" scam, I resisted the bandwagon and held fast to the science. I got banned from the chat group maintained by the American Industrial Hygiene Association for my position. I pleaded with a senior colleague (who also had a PhD) to please, just critically read the actual source papers and see for yourself. My colleague responded "I don't have to read the papers, the CDC said it, I believe it, and it ends there." A reputation was at stake. As we now know, the original scientific paper on "toxic black mold" was retracted, <sup>87</sup> and a scam was exposed, but the public fear remains because " *Everyone knows that toxic black mold in your house will make you sick.* "

This contemporary public health problem has frequently been discussed in the media and cyberspace without the benefit of scientific peer review. As a result, there has been distortion and exaggeration of the facts, and promotion of a brand of "toxic terror" among the population; ie, "babies dying of black mould exposure" is much more dramatic and fear-evoking than "babies dying of unknown causes." Dr. Emil J. Bardana, Jr., M.D. of the Oregon Health Sciences University in Portland, OR <sup>88</sup>

Thomas Kuhn reports <sup>89</sup> that Lord Rayleigh ran into the observe side of this reputation-versus-objective-facts coin when he tried to publish his findings on some of the paradoxes of electromagnetism. He submitted a paper to the British Association but he accidentally left his name off the paper. The reviewer dismissed the paper as the work of a "paradoxeur"... his reputation was at stake. Later, the reviewer learned that Lord Rayleigh (who had a bigger reputation than the reviewer) was the author and the paper was accepted with "profuse apologies." Why didn't the reviewer just judge the paper on its own merits? Because the reviewer was less concerned about the technical merit of the paper than being seen to sit with the Cool Kids; <sup>90</sup> i.e., a reputation was at stake.

Why was there such an embarrassing squabble between committee members who authored the [NIEHS report on EMFs](#) <sup>91</sup> resulting in an abandonment of

science in the final conclusions? Answer: reputations were at stake.

To say "science is a political animal" is an understatement. Science is a blood sport. High-profile science especially so - witness the visceral hatred that existed between Jonas Salk and Albert Sabin during the development of the polio vaccine. <sup>92</sup> Winning devotees over to one's pet "scientific fact," favors the bold, the charming and the theatrical (witness Anthony Fauci).

Few scientists have the courage to stand up for objective facts when they are being pummeled in the public square by "scientific facts;" and few scientists have the courage of Siméon-Denis Poisson who recanted his objection to Fresnel's theory of light when he observed for himself the Fresnel Effect. Objective facts seldom make a difference in the mind of a scientist who has publically declared a particular scientific paradigm or position. Objective facts never make a difference in the mind of a frightened member of the GP who has been terrified into performing some nonsensical counter-measure in a quest to bring a sense of controllability to a perceived threat.

Indeed, scientific opponents may bring an arsenal of scientific facts into the debate to support their positions. Witness Joseph Proust (Law of Definite Proportions) and Claude-Louis Berthollet (Doctrine of Variable Proportions) who both brought an arsenal of objective facts to the debate; as did the phlogiston versus oxygen debaters, as does the present camps between Intelligent Designers and Darwinists (admittedly, the Darwinists are losing most of their scientific facts as more objective facts come to light).



## Availability Cascades

But politics doesn't operate in a vacuum. Politics requires people - either lots of them, or a few powerful influencers, and "influencers" are more important than numbers; just try shouting "FIRE!" in a crowded theater if you want a quick demonstration.

As humans, we all make mental shortcuts. This is generally a good thing, since if we had to think about every aspect of decision making (such as crossing a busy road) we would all hit "analysis paralysis" and we would be unable to make decisions. Enter the world of "availability heuristics" <sup>93</sup> which are pervasive mental shortcuts wherein the perceived probability of a particular outcome is increased with the ease to which the outcome can be brought to mind. <sup>94</sup>

The problem is that most times, the ease with which a packet of information can be brought to mind does not actually equate with the significance of that information in the context of the recollection or the probability (risk) of the outcome being realized. The net result is that availability heuristics can very often bring about a decision bias that is not appropriate and results in gross error.

When there is a distinct population into which a real hazard is articulated, or even a false rumor is spread, there is a multiplicity of availability heuristics from each of the members of the population which feed off each other resulting in a synergistic multiplicity - and that is known as an "availability cascade." Like a row of dominoes branching off in different directions and getting larger in size with each domino, eventually the falling dominoes are large, and falling in all directions. All it took to get the availability cascade in motion was the right conditions.

I mentioned the non-existent Long Island Breast Cancer Epidemic in which activists and the GP were all undoubtedly aware of the Love Canal "Disaster." This would have been immediately available information. How do we know Love Canal would have been known as a "disaster"? Well, it was hyped and hyped *ad nauseam* in the news at the time, there was a growing social movement of "environmentalism," even fiction books were rife with chemical

mutants, and movie directors Michael Herz and Lloyd Kaufman even made a documentary about it in 1984 called "The Toxic Avenger" and *everybody knows what happened to Melvin when he fell into a vat of toxic waste* . Furthermore, with the resultant advent of Superfund, and the Environmentalist movement, the GP was becoming more and more anxious about "environmental hazards."

### Available Information

There are several elements that typically must be present for an availability cascade to occur. There must be a prevailing "background" consciousness of the thing. Perhaps it's an event, or an illness. This could be a real-life event, such as an highly publicized terrorist attack, natural catastrophe, or it could be a popular movement such as the "Environmental Movement" that raises the awareness level of a concept.

What is needed is something that is plausible, and translatable to the lives of a large majority of the population. A series of airplane crashes for example gives air travelers the jitters, since they can readily relate to a plane going down with all lives on board. Cancer causing chemicals in air pollution strikes a bell with everyone since 1) we all breath air, 2) we cannot control our exposures 3) air pollution is mostly invisible, 4) air pollution chemicals are exotic (most people won't be able to visualize the carcinogenic bay-region area of benzo- $\alpha$ -pyrene, and the threats caused by exotic invisible threats are usually over-estimated by those unfamiliar with the entity).

Raising the level of awareness is easier when it's also fun and part of one's entertainment. Does the reader see a common thread in the following list of very popular movies:

**The Andromeda Strain (1969)**

**The Stand (1994)**

**12 Monkeys (1995)**

**Outbreak (1995)**

**Virus (1995)**

**28 Days Later (2002)**

I am Legend (2007)

28 Weeks Later (2007)

Zombieland (2009)

The Crazies (2010)

Contagion (2011)

World War Z (2013)

Viral (2016)

One can think of dozens of movies involving viruses. Additionally, we all get the flu or a cold and we have all heard of AIDS, and most of us know of someone who has had measles or a norovirus infection, rotavirus infection. But the overwhelming vast majority of those who get sick from these viruses have no idea what a virus is - to the GP, viruses are mysterious small and invisible exotic things, and therefore, capable of generating vastly overrated fear.

*... to a large extent, when one examines the public's response to a high-profile health scare, one is dealing with the dissemination of poor information and appeals to fear. (It sometimes seems that the intensity of the fear is inversely proportional to the actual magnitude of the threat. <sup>95</sup>*

Furthermore, prior to COVID-19, the notion "viruses" was profoundly present in our culture - computer "viruses," and videos that go "viral" all help to keep the idea of "virus" high in the social conscious.

So the availability of information is that "Viruses are bad for people." But in fact, that conclusion is a para-fact. The overwhelming vast majority of viruses on the planet Earth are NOT bad for people. But the para-fact overrides the objective fact because " *Everybody knows that if you get exposed to viruses, you get sick - Hell, you might even turn into a zombie!* "

### Systematic Errors

A common error in availability cascades is known as *availability errors*.

*Under certain circumstances, however, they [availability cascades] generate persistent social availability errors - widespread mistaken beliefs grounded in interactions between the availability heuristic and the extant social mechanisms at play.* <sup>26</sup>

In addition to availability errors which push decision making further from evidence-based decisions, there are *information cascade* errors and *reputational cascade* errors.

Informational cascades are more common when the issue at hand is complex or exotic, and the population believes (correctly or incorrectly) they are incapable of making an informed decision. Therefore, in the light of the perceived lack of personal information, members of that population base their beliefs on the beliefs of those around them.

In many cases, an individual falsely believes they lack the intellectual wherewithal to make an informed decision about a subject. They have initially made an accurate or prudent decision based on their personal intellectual process, but that assessment is counter to the herd-mentality around them. They begin to question themselves (which is a good thing), but they begin to wonder what is so obvious to everyone else, that doesn't seem obvious to them. Eventually caving into the peer pressure and social shaming around them, they openly adopt the prevailing, but wrong, decision and add to the availability cascade that will either ultimately topple others in the population, or who become more and more isolated and silent since they don't want to appear uneducated.

Members of the population who are confident in their knowledge (oftentimes individuals with legitimate specialized training in the subject matter in question) are more resistant to informational cascade error, however, they are also less likely to openly express their opinions <sup>27</sup> (or their legitimate evidence-based knowledge) since that will make them the center of social ridicule and they are often assigned a variety of epithets concomitant with the subject matter ("science denier," "racist," "privileged," "conspiracy theorist," "Lefty," "Righty," etc.). This silencing of a legitimate evidence-based opinion results in

the prevailing, but irrational, herd opinion gaining strength. The excoriation of the legitimate expert also serves as a warning to others with legitimate training in the area to keep their mouths shut.

*"Under the right conditions, however, many or most of the society's members, potentially even all, will end up with essentially identical beliefs, which may well be fanciful." <sup>98</sup>*

### Reputational Cascade Error

This leads us to another type of error, the reputational cascade error. In this case, the individual is simply more concerned about how they are seen by their peers and less concerned with what is true or false. For this individual, they will not care to look into the actual facts but will wait until the most prominent herd-mentalities form and then decide which group to join depending on which group contains the largest number of people of whom they wish to curry favor.

These two types of errors are not mutually exclusive and an individual may exhibit both. Either way, there is a synergism that exists between them and when in full swing, this is the hallmark of an availability cascade.

*Most risk judgments rest on little, if any, personal investigation; they depend largely, if not wholly, on trust placed in the judgments of selected others. <sup>99</sup>*

### Preference Falsification

Although not an error *per se*, preference falsifications are the result of a lack of personal integrity where an individual, wishing to be seen in a favorable light, will sacrifice their actual knowledge or understanding and publically pretend they hold an opinion that is in-line with the prevailing opinion (or at least they will not oppose it). This is what we see with regulatory agencies such as Colorado's Tri-County Health Department (whose staff is on record committing perjury), the Colorado Department of Health and Environment, and various school boards across the nation.

### Informational Falsification

When the above person openly voices and acts on the preference falsification, that person now engages in *informational falsification* which further propagates the cascade through the population.

Scientists can contribute to the manufacturing of a nonexistent health hazard, helping to grossly exaggerate a legitimate health hazard [100](#) or quietly stand by knowing that the information is false, but lacking the interest or courage to stand up.

### *Fence Jumping - the New Olympic Sport*

Very often, the scientist will find themselves first in one camp, then in the other, and as the winds of public opinion change, they may be forced to try to return to their original, evidence-based opinion, (ironically damaging the very reputation they initially adopted the falsification to protect), only to find the winds of public opinion have again changed and now they are sent scrambling to get back into the camp they just left.

In the COVID-19 pandemic, this sort of behavior has not only become the norm, it is so frequent, it appears to be obligatory. Consider the curious case of Michael Klompas, M.D., M.P.H., Charles A. Morris, M.D., M.P.H., Julia Sinclair, M.B.A., Madelyn Pearson, D.N.P., R.N., and Erica S. Shenoy, M.D., Ph.D.

These FIVE professionals published an ELEVEN paragraph paper (you do the math). Wherein they exemplified the fence-jumping seen in a large amount of "scientific papers" concerning COVID-19.

Let's start with the objective fact that we (i.e. the "Scientific Community") have known, scientifically, for over 100 years that community facemasks are not only worthless in preventing the transmission of disease, it actually increases the risk of disease transmission. There are a multitude of studies that have shown this fact over the years, but let's look at the quote [101](#) from William Clarence Braisted, Surgeon General of the US Navy, 1919 in response to the community facemask craze during the Spanish Flu:

*"No evidence was presented which would justify compelling persons at large to wear masks during an epidemic. The mask is designed only to afford protection against a direct spray from the mouth of the carrier of pathogenic microorganisms ... Masks of improper design, made of wide-mesh gauze, which rest against the mouth and nose, become wet with saliva, soiled with the fingers, and are changed infrequently, may lead to infection rather than prevent it, especially when worn by persons who have not even a rudimentary knowledge of the modes of transmission of the causative agents of communicable diseases."*

Doctors Klompas, Morris and their colleagues would have (or should have) known this fact as reflected in their 2020 paper in the New England Journal of Medicine. <sup>102</sup> This is evidenced by the fact that they stated:

*We know that wearing a mask outside health care facilities offers little, if any, protection from infection.*

Fair enough - that's an honest categorical statement that reflects the overwhelming vast body of scientific knowledge. And the authors admit:

*Focusing on universal masking alone may, paradoxically, lead to more transmission of Covid-19 if it diverts attention from implementing more fundamental infection control measures.*

But then fence-sitting quickly begins to creep into the second paragraph:

*In many cases, the desire for widespread masking is a reflexive reaction to anxiety over the pandemic.*

This is a subjective deflection of the objective fact that ALL desire for widespread masking is a reflexive reaction to anxiety over the pandemic.

But the authors go on to affirm the foundational position:

*The extent of marginal benefit of universal masking over and above these foundational measures is debatable.*

But now, let's start to straddle up to the fence and hedge our bet in case the

winds of public opinion change...

*There may be additional benefits to broad masking policies that extend beyond their technical contribution to reducing pathogen transmission.*

Now let's get squarely on top of the fence and muddy the waters a little bit and introduce another useless, but fashionable practice...

*Masks are visible reminders of an otherwise invisible yet widely prevalent pathogen and may remind people of the importance of social distancing and other infection-control measures.*

Next the authors prepare a soft landing in case they have to jump, and for good luck let's start to introduce talismans and instill a sense of emotional sensitivity

...

*It is also clear that masks serve symbolic roles. Masks are not only tools, they are also talismans that may help increase health care workers' perceived sense of safety, well-being, and trust in their hospitals.*

Get ready to cushion the fall...

*Expanded masking protocols' greatest contribution may be to reduce the transmission of anxiety, over and above whatever role they may play in reducing transmission of Covid-19.*

Annnnnndddd.... JUMP!

*This article was published on April 1, 2020, at NEJM.org. In a letter to the editor on June 3, 2020, the authors of this article state "We strongly support the calls of public health agencies for all people to wear masks when circumstances compel them to be within 6 ft of others for sustained periods."*

But now, in October 2021 as the winds are changing, the above June 3, 2020 admonition is missing from the PDF version of the paper. As Kurt Vonnegut Jr. was wont to say: "Hi Ho."

Why did it take five authors from the Harvard Medical School, Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Infection Control Unit and Division of Infectious Diseases of the Massachusetts General Hospital to write 11 paragraphs of ethereal ambivalence, only to then try and back peddle and fall back on " *Well, what we REALLY meant to say was...* "?

When this happens, and someone points out the vacillation, authors (or their supporters) often lash out and try to undermine their detractor with *ad hominem* attacks. Other authors (I'm not implying Klompas, *et al*.) in recognition that the public has a short memory, simply don't care if they get caught in a lie, and they continue to move forward and misrepresent themselves regardless of the objective facts. [103](#) [104](#)

### Triggers and Catalysts

A common component of a fulminant availability cascade is the presence of an availability entrepreneur:

*Availability entrepreneurs- activists who manipulate the content of public discourse-strive to trigger availability cascades likely to advance their agendas.* [105](#)

The availability entrepreneur could be a person, such as Paul Brodeur [106](#) of the EMF public health scam or Lois M. Gibbs of the Love Canal Affair or Dr. Anthony Fauci of the COVID-19 debacle; the availability entrepreneur could be an organization such as the National Resources Defense Council in the Alar scare; it could be your kooky scientist neighbors such as Wertheimer and Leeper in the electromagnetic scare; [107](#) or even a Governmental Agency such as the US CDC during Dr. Vernon Houk's embarrassing radon debacle, promoting exaggerated risks, [107a](#) or his embarrassing dioxin debacle where he admitted suppressing important information and allowing exaggerated fear mongering to continue [107b](#) or the CDC's now disgraceful debacle with the COVID-19 affair.

Availability entrepreneurs are often charming, highly intelligent, good looking, and charismatic, (qualities they share with a successful con-artist), availability

entrepreneurs have a "knack," an inherent tacit knowledge of manipulation and how to make use of political institutions, academia and the media to trigger a potential cascade into a full blown misinformation avalanche.

*All American journalism is not 'yellow', though all strictly 'up-to-date' yellow journalism is American! - GK Chesterton, 1898*

### Media

Without a soapbox, availability entrepreneurs are impotent. It would be uncontroversial to state that mass media, whether formal or informal, is not a truth engine. With a brain surgeon's scalpel in one hand, and Botticelli's paintbrush in the other, the modern journalist cuts here, and daubs there to create a masterpiece of linguistic confusion that is neither accurate nor false. The art of the journalist is a form of broad mental reservation so sublime that the reader can be led in any direction the journalist wants, and the reader is unaware of the ring in their nose.

While the US does not have a monopoly on Yellow Press, it has a certain unique *savoir faire* that imbues it with an air of authority it does not deserve and that ability was seen in full force in the non-existent "toxic black mold" health scare of the 1990s. <sup>108</sup> In his essay "*The Tyranny Of Bad Journalism*" <sup>109</sup> GK Chesterton voiced his suspicion of journaltainment which he called "Yellow Press": *The Yellow Press is bad journalism: and wishes to stop the appearance of good journalism.*

This, of course isn't new and over the last 25 years, epidemiologists have become increasingly aware of how their field is suffering at the hands of journaltainment, which is more likely to report bad news than accurately reporting actual valid epidemiological findings although media are given both good news and bad news roughly equally. <sup>110</sup>

At the root of each exaggerated or non-existent public health scare is a journalist or group of journalists who delight in helping to spread distortions and myths for the sake of increasing the sales of their organization. Without this element, availability cascades would peter out like an isolated grassland fire on

a sea of sand.

As news media expanded from newspapers to radio to cable TV, the ability to transmit (mis)information to the public exploded and gave us availability super-cascades. Now with the advent of the internet, we have a new dimension of public attention that wasn't even imagined 30 years ago - we now have uncontrollable availability hyper-cascades. As pointed out by others,<sup>124</sup> the internet is perfectly designed to create a consensual hallucination that is spread within connected communities at the speed of light.

The death of science isn't complete, but it is now very popular; just do a quick survey around your office and inquire about the GP's knowledge of GMOs, or "Climate Change" if you have legitimate knowledge of these topics, your head will explode. Science has transformed from a creative formulation of reasonable paradigms to whatever the nice man on YouTube says it is - after all, HE works for the CDC, and they even listen to him in China, and even my neighbor agrees with him.

*"Whoever controls the definition of risk controls the rational solution to the problem at hand. ... Defining risk is thus an exercise in power." <sup>111</sup>*

The COVID-19 cascade is maintained by the incessant bombardment of COVID-19 in the news. The false information regarding "cases," "positive tests" and misclassified deaths as "COVID-19 deaths" has taken on a level of dishonesty that will damage the scientific community for decades to come. It will spawn regulatory requirements that are designed to correct problems that never actually existed. Those attempting to put the brakes on this downhill bandwagon are dismissed as "conspiracy theorists" and "science deniers" - the application of such labels is meant to ensure that the fear-based speaker doesn't have to engage with the "science-denier" using objective facts that are counter to their scientific para-facts. After all *Everybody knows that COVID-19 is the most dangerous viral killer the Human race has ever seen, and if you would just wear a facemask, and get a vaccine, we could all get back to normal.*

*Conclusion*

The world wide web has resulted in instantaneous information across the globe. A man sneezing on the Puerto del Carmen, Lanzarote Island in Spain is immediately available to me on my computer screen in Colorado.

Somebody in a coffee-shop in Delhi, India surfing Facebook on their laptop can spread a false rumor about a cancer causing agent that instantly frightens a teenager in England who posts to a blog that's picked up by a Canadian High School student who references it in a "science" project that catches the eye of a journalist in the US who always suspected the chemical anyway and now he has proof!

After considerable debate focusing on the appropriate use of risk messages by public officials, we concluded that no explicit guidelines can be drawn defining which techniques are appropriate or inappropriate in particular situations or for particular message sources. We agreed that informing is always an appropriate goal in the design of risk messages and *that deception is never appropriate*. But we recognize that messages that employ influence techniques or that have influence as an objective are often considered acceptable, even coming from public officials. We believe that more extensive public debate is needed to arrive at standards for responsible behavior by public officials in the design of risk messages. <sup>112</sup>

The italics in the above quote are from the original document prepared by the National Research Council. It reflects a perennial problem in all of human society - deception. There is not one of us, myself included who are not in some way deceivers. Consciously or unconsciously we all exercise some degree of deception. Most of us practice broad mental reservations, some of us practice strict mental reservations and a few of us are out right liars.

The Centers for Disease Control intentionally lied to the American People about dioxin at Times Beach; the EPA hired the Ad Council (Texaco Oil Company) <sup>113</sup> to intentionally lie to the American People about the dangers of residential radon (and the EPA continues to lie to the American People about residential radon). New Jersey's Health Commissioner Molly Coye lied to her public about

the dangers of radiation at Montclair. <sup>114</sup> And health officials in both the Trump and Biden administrations lied about COVID-19, Social Distancing and facemasks; the former because of getting bad information, and the later by generating bad information - since the source of the information, Dr. Fauci, is the same in both cases.

But now, in spite of the fact that Dr. Fauci admitted to lying, we are asked to put our faith in that same authority to detriment of our Republic, its economy, Freedoms, and Liberty? Have we learned nothing from the past, or the progression of the [Spanish Flu](#)?

In the last 21 months, the World has been in the grip of an availability hyper-cascade that is drowning objective facts and destroying sense and sensibility... and destroying lives.

The current conditions have not been sprung upon us like a trap, but rather we as a collective society have been slowly leading ourselves by our collective noses to this state of fear. Aaron Wildavsky said it succinctly when he said: <sup>117</sup>

"How extraordinary! The richest, longest lived, best protected, most resourceful civilization, with the highest degree of insight into its own technology, is on its way to becoming the most frightened."

The COVID-19 fiasco has conned the gullible and has frightened the responsible into thinking the knowledgeable are fools. Hospitals and First Responder agencies are firing their better informed professionals for refusing to wear facemasks and refusing to get SAR-CoV-2 vaccines, while rewarding the ignorant and docile with keeping their jobs.

When you see someone wearing a facemask or practicing "social distancing" or signs to the same effect, you are seeing the fruits of the largest wave of misinformation ever to have spread across the globe.

Those advocating or wearing facemasks fall into one of four categories:

- 1) They are fools

- 2) They are liars
- 3) They are sheep
- 4) or they are forced to do so by one of the above.

It's time for knowledgeable and ethical professionals and lay people to stand up and say "Enough."

*When someone says, "Science teaches such and such," he is using the word incorrectly. Science doesn't teach anything; experience teaches it. If they say to you, "Science has shown such and such," you might ask, "How does science show it? How did the scientists find out? How? What? Where?" It should not be "science has shown" but "this experiment, this effect, has shown." And you have as much right as anyone else, upon hearing about the experiments-but be patient and listen to all the evidence-to judge whether a sensible conclusion has been arrived at. (...) The experts who are leading you may be wrong. (...) I think we live in an unscientific age in which almost all the buffeting of communications and television-words, books, and so on-are unscientific. As a result, there is a considerable amount of intellectual tyranny in the name of science. - Richard Feynman*

Updated October 17, 2023

Endnotes and References

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all) or a "guy in the sky" or any of the nonsense thrown around by the hostile and ignorant secular world, but rather, the "God of Abraham"- a non-being, an ontological state known as "The First Principle" (Primum Principium). It was that fearful ontology that Steven Hawking called "The God Factor" and which, in a contingent universe, had to be present one billionth of one nanosecond before the "Big Bang." This event is what is described in the first couple of sentences of "The Bible."

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<sup>47</sup> Contrary to common belief, the catholic church is not a monolithic organization under the umbrella of the Roman Catholic Church (which is merely one of the largest rites), but rather an enormous cohesive body consisting of East and West branches many of whom (such as the Byzantine (East or West), Coptic, Maronite, Melkite, Syro-Malabar, Armenian, Krizevci, or Malankarese) are in "communion" with Rome, and others such as the Uniates and the Greek and Russian Orthodox are solidly catholic but articulate the nature of the Pope's jurisdiction differently. A good discussion on the subject can be found in scholiast Aiden Nichols' "Rome and the Eastern Churches" Ignatius Press, 1992

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<sup>126</sup> The appellation of "conspiracy theorist" is not limited to scientists. For example, during the COVID episode, on February 7, 2022, the US Department of Homeland Security attempted to keep fear of COVID at a fevered pitch by warning the US public about "conspiracy theories;" which it refused to define. However, clearly the conspiracy theorists would include medical doctors like Robert Malone, financial experts such as Edward Dowd, and psychologists such as Professor Mattias Desmet. See "DHS Issues National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) Bulletin" <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2022/02/07/dhs-issues-national-terrorism-advisory-system-ntas-bulletin>

<sup>127</sup> Martin Eger as quoted in J. Buell "Broaden Science Curriculum." Dallas

Morning News, March 10, 1989. Reportedly quoted by Buell from a telephone interview.

<sup>128</sup>Feser, E. *The last Superstition*, 2008

<sup>129</sup> Laudan L, *The Demise of the Demarcation Problem*, in *Physics, Philosophy and Psychoanalysis*, R.S. Cohen and L. Laudan Eds. 1983

<sup>130</sup> This is the extreme position held by Ms. Eugenie Scott, National Center for Science Education. See testimony Before U.S. Commission on Civil Rights On Curriculum Controversies in Biology, August 21, 1998