

Wooden Noses

May 24, 2021

“The core of the dispute is this,” declares *The Washington Post*’s “Fact Checker” column: “Did the virus emerge from nature — ‘zoonotically’ from animals — or was it the result of a lab experiment gone awry?”

Ah, modern journalism: even when dealing with some actual facts: is the real point to maneuver the reader *not* to consider possibilities?

In “Fact-checking the Paul-Fauci flap over Wuhan lab funding,” the *Post*’s fact-checkers seem most concerned to tell readers that while it is now OK to question the origin of SARS-CoV-2, still, only within limits: as between normal viral evolution and an accident regarding gain-of-function research into viruses.

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Outside this Overton Window, though, readers are still being instructed *not* to think about sabotage, conspiracy and biochemical warfare.

The upshot of the *Post* piece?

Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) gets “two Pinocchios” for his alleged overstatements about NIH funding of Wuhan



gain-of-function research.

After the *Post*’s listicle treatment of relevant facts, though, if you came to a different distribution of wooden noses — say, giving a few to Dr. Anthony Fauci, instead — you could make a plausible case.

After all, when Fauci himself says that he’s not convinced that the pandemic was not human-created — despite telling Rand Paul that the senator’s facts were “entirely and completely incorrect” — we should take that not merely as a cue to accept the *Post*’s latest Overton Window placement.

I say, open up that window all the way.

On *Medium*, science writer Nicholas Wade treated the actual evidence seriously, discovering that “the science” we were fed early on — the “science” that insisted that the gain-of-function story was highly unlikely — was actually orchestrated by the NIH’s subcontractor at Wuhan.

If you smell a rat — or a bat — at this point?

Your schnozz is in working order.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.

Note: While trying to put this story to bed, *The Wall Street Journal* broke news that “Three researchers from China’s Wuhan Institute of Virology became sick enough in November 2019 that they sought hospital care, according to a previously undisclosed U.S. intelligence report that could add weight to growing calls for a fuller probe of whether the Covid-19 virus may have escaped from the laboratory.”