

Pulling Back from the Job

by [Jeff Plude](#) (May 2021)



Dr. Mayer-Hermann, Otto Dix, 1926

Every weekday afternoon my wife and I take a half hour walk around the neighborhood before we eat lunch and go back to work in our home offices. Besides keeping us in good shape (“I have two doctors,” the historian G.M. Trevelyan said, “my left leg and my right”), we get to chat with our neighbors. We stop if somebody starts up a conversation, though usually we don’t have time to get into a big discussion. But on one recent spring day it couldn’t be helped.

We were almost back to our townhome when a neighbor who was fixing his mailbox post started talking to us. The last time we talked to him was in the fall, if you can call it talking. We were walking and he was on his porch and we said hello and he said with a smirk, “So did you hear the news?” We hadn’t heard the so-called news, because we’d been working and then walking. He was referring to Joe Biden supposedly winning the election. He’d probably been watching CNN, which is anything but news in the sense that I was taught to report it many years ago. He’s a big TV watcher, by his own admission. It came up one time that we don’t have a TV, haven’t had one in over a decade.

This time he starts out blandly enough, chatting about house-related projects—dryer vents, roof gutters, the HVAC system, crabgrass. A mundane but friendly exchange, in other words, between suburban homeowners. But when he finally has us warmed up, he says kind of sheepishly: “Can I ask you a personal question?”

I said sure, go ahead. I should’ve known better in the age of the cult of COVID.

“Have you gotten the vaccine?”

“No,” I said.

“Do you plan to?”

“No, we don’t plan to.”

“You should,” he said lowly.

Why should we? I said to him. I said I believed the pandemic was winding down, the infection rate was declining. My wife and I are healthy, and though we’re about to turn sixty we take no meds. He’s our age but he’s a big guy, and I don’t mean tall or burly.

“There are five hundred thousand people who have died,” he said in a grave tone.

I said that the numbers were suspect, that as a former reporter I know how easily statistics can be manipulated. I said that his own boss—he works for New York state—got caught cooking the numbers for the deathtrap he created when he transferred people infected with COVID from crowded hospitals to nursing homes, of all places, which are filled with people who are most vulnerable of all to the virus. On the other hand, I’ve read obits of people who were in their eighties or nineties that say he or she died of COVID, many of whom had serious underlying conditions, one of which they all had—old age!

“All the scientists agree,” our neighbor said.

That was CNN again, I figured. I said no they don’t—there are prominent doctors and scientists, a few brave souls, who disagree, and probably many, many more who don’t want to risk their livelihoods and careers. I said that even if a scientist or a doctor wants to say something about the virus dissipating, or that a vaccine isn’t necessary at this point, or that the vaccine may be dangerous or have long-term effects that could be extremely harmful or even deadly, he or she would have to weigh that against being hogpiled on social media and their career being canceled.

I didn’t think to tell my neighbor that the white

coats are also not exactly incorruptible. For instance, a few weeks after our chat the National Institutes of Health told a Senate committee that it's investigating more than 500 federally funded [scientists](#) whom it suspects of being "compromised" by China and other countries.

"They can't all be liars," our neighbor said.

I was dumbfounded that a person could live six decades and be this gullible. But my mother used to say to me in frustration, "You have to trust somebody!" The propagandists understand this very well.

The cult of COVID often invokes science, which is now part of the modern unholy trinity along with technology and so-called social justice. Let me say that I'm not anti-science, at least science in its true form. But even true science, like everything except God (if you believe in him), has its limits.

And I'm not an anti-vaxxer, though I do have considerable doubts about vaccines these days, especially since they're a part of Big Pharma. My wife knows somebody who is, though: an attorney whose younger sister was mentally incapacitated for life from a vaccine decades ago. The attorney now has an "exempt card" so that she doesn't have to get any shots herself. I acknowledge that vaccines have saved lives and protected against various diseases since Edward Jenner developed the first one, against smallpox, in the late eighteenth century. My generation benefited from the polio vaccine in the mid-twentieth century. But vaccines carry a risk. Some people have already suffered severe reactions from the COVID vaccines, like a healthy 39-year-old mother in Utah who died. The percentages may be low and nothing to worry about, we're told again and again—unless you happen to be in that unfortunate one percent. Not to mention any residual effects, which won't be known for many years.

In short, if you want to get the COVID vaccine, I won't try to stop you and I certainly won't attack you. In fact I've read that about half of Americans have gotten at least one dose of the vaccine. Many people I know have gotten it, including close relatives. Others are holdouts. Even some nuclear families are divided. My wife knows a woman who told her that her husband and their twenty-year-old son have gotten the vaccine but she and their seventeen-year-old son haven't. She said she thought their sons were old enough to decide for themselves about whether to get the vaccine or not.

I resent the implicit claim in my neighbor's "should" that I and the other vaccine abstainers are somehow not doing our civic duty. I fail to see how those of us who haven't gotten the "jab," as it's sometimes glibly called, are endangering those who have been vaccinated, since they're supposedly protected from contracting COVID. As for the unvaccinated, if they're truly in danger, they've elected to take that chance and must accept the consequences. That's part of living in a free society, which the United States of America used to be.

But now, as an extension of all this, the safetymongers are clamoring to require us all to carry vaccine passports. It all strikes me as similar to the social-media scoring system that China, that champion of human rights (except within its own borders), has now imposed on its people. Thankfully a few states, including heavyweights like Florida and Texas, have outlawed vaccine passports.

Nothing, however, seems to be stopping a business from requiring customers to show proof that they've been vaccinated. It's not hard to see how, once introduced, vaccine passports would then be required to return to work in person, or even to buy food in a grocery store.

New York state, where I live, already has produced vaccine passports. It has an app that those who have been

vaccinated can access on their cell phones, and Madison Square Garden is linking it to tickets. Governor Cuomo, in fact, had become the prince charming of COVID, even winning an Emmy for his daily TV briefings, in which he dictated *ex cathedra* to his subjects. But that was before he turned into another frog (a bullfrog, no doubt) in the infested #Me-Too pond.

I'm also not inspired with confidence by all the apparent confusion surrounding the vaccines. That's one of the problems, in fact—there isn't just one vaccine but three. And one had been halted because it has been causing blood clots in young women. And two of the COVID vaccines originally required two shots a short time apart, but now the Moderna version may require three.

No matter how low the infection rates, the equivocal Dr. Anthony Fauci declares that it's still not safe enough to live like a human. We must all stay in our bunkers like two-legged moles until COVID is completely obliterated. He's still calling COVID an "emergency."

But "zero COVID," according to Michael Yeadon, is a fantasy. "It's simply not possible to get rid of every single copy of the COVID-19 virus . . . It's not scientifically realistic. It's not medically realistic. And it's not what we have ever done."

And he should know. For more than thirty years Yeadon has been an expert on pulmonary viruses—in other words, like COVID—working for Pfizer for sixteen years as a research scientist and vice president. He tells a much different story about COVID than the media-technology complex. As a reward for his honesty and goodwill, he's been banned by YouTube and denounced by former colleagues.

Just like I told my inquisitive neighbor when he said "All the scientists agree."

Fortunately Yeadon doesn't have to worry about his

career—after he left Pfizer he started a biotech company and sold it for a few hundred million dollars. So the cancel horde be damned.

In a half-hour [video](#) late last year, Yeadon, who is English, says he's very dismayed about the shoddy science that has been disseminated by the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE, ironically), the panel driving the draconian COVID measures in England. He says SAGE didn't even include a "card-carrying immunologist." Somebody like him, in other words.

He believes that herd immunity was reached some time ago—in late April last year! He says he saw the death rate of the virus drastically declining, and while he expresses regret for all those who have died (as do I), that the situation wasn't nearly as bad as governments were claiming. "One of the things I've noticed that has happened in recent years is that we almost seem to be moving post-science, post-facts, as if facts don't matter," Yeadon says. ". . . I think it's deeply distressing."

Yeadon also mentions that early on in the pandemic several countries had a relatively low infection rate. That's because of the lockdowns and mask mandates, the governments claim. But Yeadon says it's because those countries—Greece, Germany, even China (except in the Wuhan province), for example—if you look at the data, were hit hard by the flu in the previous year. Therefore, their citizens probably have immunity to COVID, which he calls "cross immunity" among similar viruses. Presumably this would also include all the COVID "variants" we hear about.

He also says the emphasis has wrongly been on antibodies. The PCR test for COVID, according to Yeadon, finds not only live RNA cells, which means that COVID is present in the body, but dead ones too, and doesn't distinguish between them. So if a person was infected with a coronavirus sometime

in the previous weeks or months but successfully fought it off or had no symptoms (some coronaviruses cause the common cold), they'd still falsely test positive for COVID. So the test is "monstrously unsuitable," he says. If that weren't enough, the test is finicky, Yeadon says, and can easily yield false results when given by inexperienced lab technicians in makeshift outdoor clinics like "windswept" supermarket parking lots. Yeadon says the English government has conceded that the error rate of the test is 1 percent, but Yeadon says it's probably more like 5 percent.

T cells, which the body releases to fight off the virus, are the key, according to Yeadon, not antibodies. He says T cells retain memory of a virus and fight it off quickly if they spot it again, but it's uncertain how long. He says that since 2003 no person who had SARS, which is 80 percent like COVID (also known as SARS-CoV-2), has been reinfected with it. So the T-cell memory for SARS, we now know, lasts at least eighteen years and is likely lifelong, Yeadon says. The same can be expected to be true of COVID.

In the end, as an expert in the field, Yeadon is extremely frustrated with the whole COVID mania and the official response. "I have no other reason for giving this interview than that I really care what happens to my country," he concludes at the end of the video. ". . . I think we're right at the edge of the precipice, and I really hope we can pull back."

So the COVID vaccine battle lines are being drawn, whether we like it or not.

My debate with our neighbor lasted about ten minutes. I also brought up the lockdown—how it has gone on far too long and has been economically devastating (unless you happen to have a cushy job with the state like he does), not to mention psychologically. I gave examples, and he just kept talking about the deaths of "little kids," deaths by the "truckloads"

in New York City. More CNN.

We parted on seemingly friendly terms, since we grew up in an era when politics wasn't an all-or-nothing, winner-take-all war, at least among regular folks. He said, "We'll agree to disagree."

But I wonder. Mark Zuckerberg has started a campaign urging Facebook users who have gotten the vaccine to post a photo of themselves in a frame on the site. This is what social psychologist Robert Cialdini calls "social proof," which the scourge of social media has turned into a weapon of mass societal destruction. I suppose I should be grateful it's not the other way around—that the tech dons aren't telling people to post photos of those of us who haven't gotten the vaccine. Or even worse.

For now I'll mask up (reluctantly) when I have to and carry on. I'll continue to pray that God delivers us from this macabre masquerade. And I'll keep walking and chatting.

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