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Vaccination Disasters: The People v. Adam Riggio, A Reply

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My argument ... is fundamentally practical, but no less universal: that too many of our populations are unable to understand this truth [of the origins of HIV]. — Adam Riggio

Hilary Koprosky's Oral Polio Vaccine OPV), on inference to the best explanation, likely led to the deaths of tens of millions by HIV and its resulting AIDS. The numbers still grow,

Situation and trends: 680 000 [480 000–1.0 million] people died of HIV-related illnesses worldwide in 2020. Expanded access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) and a declining incidence of HIV infections have led to a steep fall globally in the number of adults and children dying from HIV-related causes. The estimated 680 000 [480 000–1.0 million] people dying from HIV globally in 2020 were 64% fewer than in 2004 (the peak) and 47% fewer than in 2010 in spite of a period of substantial population growth in many high burden countries. Nevertheless, there is no room for complacency. Countries need to live up to their commitment to end the AIDS epidemic as a public health threat by 2030 -- a target included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015. The drop in HIV-related mortality is especially evident in the regions with the greatest burden of HIV infection, including the WHO African Region, home to over 67% of people dying from HIV-related causes in 2020. An estimated 460 000 [320 000–680 000] people died in the African Region from HIV-related causes in 2020.¹

It continues to kill millions today. Skepticism about the ability of normal humans to have and use intelligence is always troubling and self-defeating by its very nature. On the broad horizons of social epistemology, thinly shrouded demands for mass-suppression are of course always welcome because they provide yet another opportunity to show how ill-advised they are. We have to know who or what manner of argumentation is against a rational, public epistemology in order to defend this epistemology. These revealing elitist outbursts—“diatribes” might be too strong a characterization, but it's hard to find another—are important as we cannot always separate our fears, our frustrations, from our rational mind. These indulgences are a human right even if not an ideal practice. Adam Riggio provides. It's clear that his intentions, as I understand them, are good. So the road is paved and typically, the destination inevitable. Riggio's is one of those roads.

Riggio's view of our “populations”, these billions of humans that comprise them is skeptical to the point of subverting and rejecting the idea of personal autonomy and democracy. We are not worthy. Plato, in his *Republic* famously insisted on the same. Lies were Plato's infamous methods, a myth of metals and many others, omission and commission, physical execution, a final resort. All, demeaning deceptions. Quite ironic when contrasted to the

¹ The yearly HIV toll according to the World Health Organization, <https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/number-of-deaths-due-to-hiv-aids>, (Retrieved March 18, 2020). See also, <https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/overview/data-and-trends/global-statistics>.

early dialogues attributed to Socrates. Riggio's estimation of our fellow humans is difficult to fully understand and appears misguided. In this manner, Riggio deflects the question of rare but real toxic vaccine catastrophes—which he concedes occur—but wishes we not publicly attend to these rare but powerful disasters. One thing puzzling about his piece is that I suspect he, like me, believes almost anyone could, without much difficulty, follow his argument. That most any “person on the street” would find it misguided because of the dim view it takes of them is, I think, also a certainty.

Riggio's response does not contest the strong evidence that the Koprowski vaccine introduced SIV variants into humans and led to the horror of HIV in our global population. No attempt is made. Instead, it is a moral one and in method, a thesis of epistemic manipulation; we must remain silent. He expresses concern that our discussion might even become public.² It already is. His reasoning is a garden variety of consequentialist/utilitarian thought. While I appreciate his concerns, we should not accept this explicit, and as he develops it, elitist thesis: That people as we find them today are generally intellectually incapacitated, because poorly “educated”, excitable and therefore should not be given access to relevant facts, relevant history. His argument is so general as to apply to anything. Riggio writes,

We must also now consider our own actions in terms of how even the basic matter of “just raising questions” has been weaponized by extremists to launder into mainstream media racist and misogynist propaganda, as well as calls for mass violence against socialists, liberals, and minority rights activists. It is not enough for us, as researchers and intellectuals, to raise controversial and dangerous questions and deny responsibility for when others use our speech to manipulate others in dangerous ways.

Someone could share Basham's article on Telegram channels that promote anti-vaccination propaganda, and guide conversations about it to make people further distrust any vaccines. If a parent's conversation about that article solidifies an anti-vaccination belief such that they refuse all vaccinations for their children, not only against COVID, but also chickenpox, measles, pertussis; if one or more of those children contracts a virus and dies or suffers injury, Basham and SERRC bear some share of the responsibility.³

Unlikely. Parallel to arguing against taking children hiking in the mountains; the children might be injured if they trip on a log or in the rarest cases, killed by a rockfall or attacked by a bear. The same method of argument applies to taking our children to get an ice cream cone. Perhaps we will have a car crash? Or the ice cream will become an addiction for the

² In light of this, it now is more so.

³ Riggio, Adam. 2022. “The Dangers of Intellectual Honesty in a World of Lies: A Reply to Lee Basham.” *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective* 11 (3): 61-69, page 61, <https://wp.me/p1Bfg0-> (retrieved March 31, 2022), (here after “DIH”).

child and lead to type 2 diabetes? For some reason a small faction of people cannot see their reasoning equally applies to mountain hiking and ice cream. That said, Riggio's is an empirical claim and no empirical evidence for it to be provided. Evidence clearly indicates most people can discern the difference between various vaccines, their effectiveness and history of the same. Most of these vaccines have been in existence for generations, so has this knowledge. Without such, Riggio's remark is of little significance. But more important, it is hard to over-emphasize how intellectually crippling and in that, misguided, this objection is.⁴ Even condescending to the billions of intelligent humans mentioned. Not to me, which would not particularly bother me, but to people in general. Yes, someone could publicly share the best explanation for the HIV pandemic, which appears to be Simian Immunodeficiency Virus (SIV) present in certain mass-distributed production lots of the Koprowski vaccine. But the claim that we should censor history on this basis is epistemically unacceptable. Let's develop a parallel argument and see where this one-dimensional and ahistorical manner of reasoning leads,

P1) Africans were enslaved, beaten, abused, exploited and executed. They were also used as experimental subjects; a paradigm case of racism;

P2) Promoting more extensive knowledge of this might incite violence and other anti-social, destructive behavior;

P3) One should not report knowledge that might incite violence and other anti-social, destructive behavior;

P4) A historian and philosopher has been studying these racist crimes that Africans were enslaved, beaten, abused, exploited and executed. They were also used as experimental subjects; a paradigm case of racism and is now publishing her findings in SERRC;

C) This historian and philosopher should not present these findings, nor should SERRC publish these.

This is the template for Riggio's reasoning. Albeit a more dire case. If he does not recognize this in his writing, I encourage him to examine it again. *If* we followed his reasoning, it is a reduction to absurdity worthy of suppression of US antebellum slavery abolitionists—civil war could arise—and today, of historians of human history in general—riots might be invited, and racial division promoted. Such consequentialist moral arguments have little place in epistemology. Racist revisionism is clearly not his intent, but his simple manner of reasoning entails it.⁵ His desired response given his method of argumentation: Slavery? What slavery? What if people knew? That might incite violence and other anti-social, destructive

⁴ Riggio must at this writing be aware that our COVID-19 therapeutics have proven disappointing in protection, longevity, anti-transmission and sometimes, though rarely, even deadly. So our situation is hardly new.

⁵ Riggio is not a racist, any more than anyone reading this; this parallel argument is a reduction of his manner of reasoning to absurdity. He is an intellectual elitist, nothing else in this context.

behavior. In the context of our current discussion, massive abuse of Africans as experimental test subjects? What massive abuse of Africans as experimental subjects? None of this even happened. Even if it did, what if people knew? That might incite violence and other anti-social, destructive behavior (see premise 2 above). Recall where the HIV disaster first originated; in Africa. And by our best evidence, was produced by the mass administration of Hilary Koprowski's Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV).

The rest of Riggio's plea for enforced historical amnesia has little or nothing to do with what I have drawn attention to, the extensive and insightful research of Edward Hooper and the fact it has been suppressed. Here we see again, a new attempt at mass suppression.

But Riggio's project is more ambitious than this. It is a political diversion that simply takes advantage of a note on the most probable source of HIV in order to launch a far-reaching conspiracy theory (one far less significant) of his own liking; that certain wealthy persons, often behind the scenes, have conspired to use their fortunes to influence the beliefs of others and in this gain some effect on public policy. This is correct. The efforts of a famous Hungarian finance tycoon are perfectly parallel in method, if different in goals. On my last trip to Budapest I discovered George Soros was quite unpopular. Perhaps a prophet is unpopular in his own land, but I doubt this man is a prophet. He is thought to be an unwelcome and fortunately, banished manipulator. Concerns about the use of vast wealth by anyone to broadcast opinions in a democracy is natural and normal to those of us who advocate for an *informed polis*. The use of vast wealth to pursue influence is also normal and natural. It is not going to end anytime soon. Censorship follows the same pattern, with the opposite method, not loud-speakers, but silencing. This is Riggio's proposal.⁶

So the impassioned outburst of frustration we find in Riggio's note is something we should not scorn for its mere existence, but perhaps question its relevance to social epistemology in the present context. We must also note how painfully, and I think, needlessly elitist his expression of it is. We might end with that, secure in our response to Riggio's complaint. Still, a few more points should be made. Let's examine the accusations against a "rational *polis*" Riggio makes.

Let's first examine Riggio's case against the people. Then we will turn to the people's defense. Riggio prefaces his concerns in this way,

I argue that we do not, at a society-wide level, have the capacity to be rational enough to discuss the possibility that mistakes in vaccine development caused an immense harm, without that discussion being exploited to spread greater harm.⁷

⁶ Naturally, the classic Paul Simon song mentioning the subway wall might come to mind in light of Riggio's thesis. SERRC might be, sometimes, such walls. While no prophet, I'm an analyst.

⁷ *DIH*, 62.

Of course, it is hard to imagine that such historically literate questions could kill 100 million people and continue to kill today, unlike Hooper's case against the Koprowski vaccine makes, but Riggio continues, presenting these three as necessary and jointly sufficient conditions of a rational *polis*,

A rational polis is a society whose people are educated and socialized to respect the disinterested pursuit of knowledge. People in such a society would have, on the whole, *three* virtues that are the expressions of having cultivated political rationality. I argue that our society is not a rational polis by discussing three virtues that, if they existed prevalently among a population, and its culture and institutions encourage them to grow, would be sufficient conditions to make that society a rational polis. They are not virtues in the philosophically technical sense of the world, because they regard both individual attitudes and beliefs as well as the social infrastructures that nurture them. These three virtues are not present in sufficient preponderance for human society across the world today to be genuinely rational.⁸

Three Pillars of Paternalistic Pathologizing Censorship

Riggio's contribution is filled with tensions and contradictions that I would argue are crippling, from a rational perspective. One cannot escape the experience, while reading on, "Would you make up your mind?" The first pillar,

In a rational polis, people would learn about the world from properly journalistic sources. The workplace and professional cultures of journalistic businesses and state media would prioritize truth, peace, and public safety. There would be a large number and variety of reliable news sources across all available media. An especially important journalistic institution to keep strong is local news so that people throughout a society can learn truthful information about what affects their communities and immediate circumstances.

Few, if any, news media and journalistic institutions operate this way anymore. Local newspapers have folded in massive numbers in the United States and throughout Western democracies...The exodus of wealth and revenues from local journalism has destroyed those organizations.⁹

We should be very cautious with a purist, unattained and unattainable as a pillar for epistemic censorship. It's all too convenient for the censor. Terms like "*properly* journalists" are political in Riggio's hands, not epistemic. There is little doubt that whatever the high bar for proper journalism is, Hooper succeeds or exceeds this test. But the greater concern is

⁸ *DIH*, 63.

⁹ *DIH*, 63.

how this phrase can be manipulated with political tests that involve manipulation and deceit in a pretended pursuit of rationality, both logical and evidential and actually defeat epistemic rationality. The internal tension with Riggio's position appears in an admonishment that I generally agree with,

An especially important journalistic institution to keep strong is local news so that people throughout a society can learn truthful information about what affects their communities and immediate circumstances.¹⁰

The tension is the original reports of the polio cases in the Cutter event that infected large numbers of children with polio came from local news sources and the hospitals their reports mirrored.

The second,

A news network's general political orientation is now part of its brand. The powerful analytic powers of today's social platform companies accelerated public discourse into a field where we most frequently encounter rumour and partisan provocation. Our uncertainty, anxiety, fear, and anger keep us engaging with media organizations whose business incentives encourage presenting genuinely terrifying events in ways that make us more doubtful, worried, afraid, and enraged.¹¹

Again, we should not think of this as a new reality. It is thousands of years old, stretching down through the annals of religion and empire. I find it entirely legitimate that informed people are concerned when important facts are brought to their attention. This is the prime motive of social epistemology. Riggio writes,

The affordances of modern mass media, especially now that we must include the exponential proliferation powers of social platforms, will not encourage the calm, sober frame of mind with which we must approach public engagement in a rational *polis*. If the most effective method of audience engagement is psychological triggering, then a mass media business model that maximizes revenue will bury you in startling distractions.¹²

This appears to be precisely backwards. These are often not distractions, they are well reasoned, well evidenced, startling facts. This horizontal, not hierarchical, epistemic system in fact teaches critical thinking. Most people are keenly aware of this. They recognize the difference between rants and reasoning. The human mind is exceptionally good at such pattern-recognition. Of course, we might ask, is Riggio's more ideal a world that renews the

¹⁰ *DIH*, 63.

¹¹ *DIH*, 63.

¹² *DIH*, 64.

hierarchical system of thought control the internet has shattered. Current attempts at this have been failures and have in fact revealed how these attempts at control are easily mocked.

The puppet-master view of people as passive sponges of manipulation that Riggio relies on is not new either but attends all of his demand for silence as a handmaiden. It is ahistorical and psychologically misguided. It is competing narratives, not epistemic censorship and mental hegemony, that have effected change and I would add, great moral, scientific and political progress. Recall Galileo's views were radically destabilizing. At Galileo's infamous trial, it is clear what side Riggio would be on, which side the rest of us are on. If it wasn't, his concern, and his essay, would be wonderfully mute; entirely unnecessary. So we find another crippling tension. He's worried that people think for themselves and then argues they don't, and so our populace is irrational. Social epistemology is premised on the idea that individuals and collections of these, in open and unfettered communication, do this better than Riggio's ideal world of lie by omission and commission.

The third pillar; enter a Koch family conspiracy,

Regarding their influence on public discourse and our wider political culture, many educational institutions and centres of scientific research are fading from prominence. Analyzing the sources and promoters of major COVID-critical messages and ideas provides an excellent example of how private, conglomerate-owned research centres have crowded out of public discourse the institutions most influential in any rational polis. This recent investigation by journalist Walter Bragman shows the extent to which research institutes and private funding streams to universities are parts of the same business conglomerates for which we seek a corrective. Two of the most prominent such conglomerates are those owned by the DeVos and Koch families.¹³

Here we meet with a conspiracy theory. There's little doubt the rich wish, in their vast fortunes, the graduate to influencers of society. I have argued at length that many conspiracy theories are normal, ordinary, rational and evidentially justified. Let's return to the issue at hand, the origins of HIV/AIDS, a pattern of organized denial in this case and in all probability falsified evidence concerning the actual origins of AIDS is a particularly powerful and tragic example of conspiracy. Recognizing it, a well-evidenced conspiracy theory in the *nonpejorative* sense of the phrase; organized, intentional deception. Hooper's intellectually honest and thorough work is a fine example of this. Riggio is wrong about what communication institutions generally distort; today the best opportunities for informed understanding are the internet and, in some instances, social media. The smoke signals of our times.

As already noted, the frequently absurd and quietly withdrawn declarations of "fact checkers" have attempted to sabotage this vast, horizontal, not hierarchical, epistemic benefits of these epistemic resources. Our rational *polis* has developed and is developing free-

¹³ *DIH*, 64.

speech counter-platforms within the internet. These have arisen to allow a healthy ecology of rational choice, not the ubiquitous, anti-rational, hierarchical censorship Riggio appears to desire. These are necessary to allow critical thinking within the people, not suspiciously imposed upon them.

Logician and philosopher Donald Hatcher of Baker University, one of the original architects of the critical thinking movement, makes a basic distinction between weak and strong sense critical thinking. Strong sense requires a review of all relevant information. Weak sense at best pretends to do this, acknowledging the facts and then proceeds as if these relevant options don't exist. At its worst, weak sense critical thinking simply refuses to mention well-developed alternative theories and evidentially well-grounded bodies of facts. Unfortunately, Riggio's approach falls into this latter category of intellectual and communitive conduct, however well intended. Riggio continues,

We cannot be living in a rational polis when the institutions most responsible for informing the public are driven by such [profit and attentional] incentives. The approach to truth and falsity in our mass media has become a kind of informational nihilism, an indifference to the weaponization of knowledge.

What matters most about any communicated information, for someone with such priorities, is to provoke the receiver to act. Most generally, that act is simply to start or continue paying attention.

The information itself acts to capture attention. Its effectiveness at capture does not depend on the information in the communicated content being true or fair-minded. Commercial imperatives in contemporary mass media discourage presenting information in fair-minded or thoughtful ways, because such audience engagement calms instead of excites. Under an attitude of informational nihilism, there need be no limits on how to use information legitimately.¹⁴

Again, like "*proper* journalism", we find the idea lurking in the background, "*legitimate*". According to whom? Worse, by what manner enforced? Riggio's background premise is the belief we censor is what the dominant political powers view as destabilizing social speech. His three pillars have gone to some lengths to publicly advocate we censor severe problems in the history of vaccination, thereby necessarily attracting attention to these very problems. Riggio's argument is once more self-refuting. (1) We must stop anyone who discusses a provocative thesis concerning vaccination, here Riggio's own speech that we must not talk about the things he is speaking of. So he must be censored. (2) It tumbles into the abyss of politically imposed and enforced micro-management of human thought and study; we must remove rationality from the *polis* and dictate it from above, eliminating meaningful

¹⁴ *DIH*, 64.

democracy and endangering the mental prospering of thousands of millions. In either case it self-destructs. He must be censored.

The People Respond

We can also notice, however, that we live in a rational *polis* only when profit pays journalists, researchers and analysts and excellent writing and provocative research gains public attention. In fact there is no other mechanism for it to flourish by. The limits of legitimacy in a context like this are well known in historiography and philosophy: Evidence and logical inference. These suffice here. One cannot develop and maintain a rational *polis* with anything more. Censorship like Riggio advocates is the ultimate form of such an informational nihilism. Nihilism is the view something does not exist; here information. It is twice troubling when it is also a feigned nihilism. But again, Riggio never questions Hooper et al's thesis. Instead, surprisingly, he argues for feigned informational nihilism. This is textbook political epistemic paternalism of extreme ambition, amnesia, one so great it could be deployed to silence a civilization about almost anything of import.¹⁵ Recall Riggio does not dispute Pascal, Curtis and Hooper on the origin of HIV and AIDS. But he pathologizes discussion of the same. Political epistemic paternalism and its accompanying tendency to pathologize the truth has been used to cover a multitude of democidal government sins¹⁶. Is such an epistemic, paternalistic pathologizing project consistent with a functional, representational democracy? An argument to the contrary,

P1) In the political realm, functional representative democracy requires democratic oversight concerning the standards and actual applications of epistemic paternalism;

P2) Epistemic paternalism in the political realm functions by suppressing information to the *polis*, both about what the *polis* is being prevented from knowing in general and in particular instances, and the motives for this suppression;

P3) When information about what a *polis* is being prevented from knowing and the motives for suppression is withheld, the *polis* cannot contest or modify this withholding;

P4) By its very nature the political epistemic paternalism project cannot proceed if what it is preventing knowledge of is revealed to the *polis*; this is intrinsic to the political epistemic paternalism project;

C) Political epistemic paternalism is intrinsically contrary to democratic oversight.

¹⁵ See my, "Political Epistemic Paternalism, Democracy, and Rule by Crisis" in *Political Epistemic Paternalism, Conceptions, Justifications and Implications*, 2020, Bernal, Amiel and Axtel, Guy, eds., 61-77, for further explanation and some dramatic historical instances, including the Pearl Harbor attack and the Gulf of Tonkin incident.

¹⁶ "Democide" is the mass killing of people (the *demoi*) by tyrannical and other powerful governments.

P5) What is contrary to democratic oversight is contrary to functional representative democracy;

C2) Political epistemic paternalism is contrary to functional representative democracy.

This is the fundamental trap Riggio's reasoning falls into. His over-reach is clear to anyone with a modicum of historic literacy. It is, at root, a species of political piety; the root problem with an argument like Riggio's is it would allow the dismissal of anything a high-placed political authority deems disruptive. The historical antecedents of this fallacy are well known, including the Stalin show trials, the censorship regime within China in the 20 and 21st century, and some of our finest cautionary literature, including George Orwell's¹⁷ dystopian masterpiece, *1984*. Yet here we are again. The real question is what is most dangerous here, historical literacy or fallacious appeals to mass manipulation by omission of the past to allegedly protect our supposedly intellectually incompetent and so, non-rational population, from itself? The answer appears perfectly clear to me. The latter, by far.

Our concern with the claim that these three "sufficient conditions" for a "rational *polis*" are not. They are far too malleable and easily abused to be taken seriously as justifications for epistemic manipulation. What we should notice is all these are resolved by access to the facts, facts of the sort ordinary, easily understood distinctions between different vaccines almost anyone is capable of. For instance, anyone who can drive a car or microwave a meal. The author's misplaced penchant for epistemic paternalism and its necessary contempt is on full display, and he should be cautioned about the entailments of his position. I hope these cautions do not find the author deaf but help encourage more careful reflection.

Resort to *Ad Hominem* Attacks

As Riggio's essay progresses he becomes unusually strident. Especially egregious is Riggio's attack on physicist Brian Martin, a person who is widely and rightfully regarded as scientifically capable. Martin is also well known as a champion of intellectual freedom and its concomitant rational, evidential evaluation and expression of the same,

The COVID policy agenda of these Koch-funded institutions even has a prominent voice on SERRC in Brian Martin. His recent piece "A COVID Paradigm?" uncritically repeats disinformation and lies such as: that COVID is a minor ailment that can be prevented [Martin argues] through good exercise and nutrition that healthy people do not [typically] get seriously ill from COVID; that vitamins, horse dewormer, and malaria medications are effective COVID treatments. Martin repeats these lies in the spirit of criticism against mainstream institutions of medical and scientific knowledge.

¹⁷ *Nom be plume* of Eric Blair

He closes his arguments repeating rhetoric that reveals just how thoroughly he has been duped by the propaganda of the Koch family of companies.¹⁸

Brian Martin is a puppet of the Koch family fortune? This seems a tad unhinged. Riggio's remarks also appear to be medically outdated, as is now widely recognized by the medical community. His invocation of the Koch conspiracy theory is, we should all acknowledge regardless of our own perspectives, ironic. The information bubble Riggio protests is really his own and easily escaped by even the most cursory research, which I encourage. These treatments are widely and successfully used by medical experts and in many cases endorsed and deployed successfully. Riggio's comments are libel and likely legally actionable. I do not support any action of the sort, but the remark shows that reason and sobriety has left the room at this point in his essay and personal attacks framed by a conspiracy theory have taken their place. This is questionable behavior for anyone wishing to engage in rational discussion. Why the perennial censorial impulses appear and reappear is a question for social psychology, not one relevant to our discussion as philosophers and students of history. That it is evidentially and intellectually misguided, is however. Because I find Riggio's remarks generally fair and of interest, I suspect he regrets this remark, but I cannot, in fairness to Martin, make no mention.

In his fever, I noticed with some amusement (shared by others), that in Riggio's keywords list he chose to juxtapose my name with the word "lies". Clever; beneath us, of course, but I enjoyed the joke. While reading Riggio's piece I was reminded of an old joke, not a particularly good one, but it seems to sum up his position nicely, "A parrot calls his owner on the phone and protests, 'The dogs are lying to me again!' The owner asks, 'What are the dogs doing now?'. The Parrot says, 'The dogs are sleeping now, what should I do?'. The owner responds, 'Well, you know what they say. Let lying dogs sleep!'". The owner would be Riggio. My reply is that we appear to have been lied to about the actual origin of HIV and Riggio's position is we must not discuss it. That is, let lying dogs sleep. This is, in fact, no laughing matter. My view is we should not let lying dogs sleep. They must be prodded if social epistemology as a real life, powerful and truth-apt practice is to succeed. Not a carefully curated abstraction of elitist censorship.¹⁹

Riggio's argument is next of kin to the idea that we should not bring notice to the fact airplanes sometimes fall out of the sky due to design and manufacturing flaws because this might dissuade passengers from getting on the next flight to Hawaii. The readers of this should not tip-toe around the truth that vaccinations are powerful medical interventions and these technologies sometimes have their tragic flaws, too. Instead, these technologies should

¹⁸ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8390115/> , <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8248252/>; <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33278625/> and many additional positive professional citations challenging Riggio's criticism of "horse de-wormer" (ivermectin). Martin's reference to health as a factor finds the CDC in agreement, <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/obesity-and-covid-19.html>, (above retrieved April 5, 2022) and so on.

¹⁹ I apologize if this pun and reversal is lost on readers not familiar with the common British and American folk saying, "let sleeping dogs lie", the meaning being, "do not disturb what, if disturbed, is a potentially volatile situation".

be subject to historically literate scrutiny and caution as a matter of both functional social epistemology, medical ethics and in effect, responsible public policy, lest historic mass-tragedy in one way or another repeat itself.

Conclusion

Hilary Koprosky's OPV, on inference to the best explanation, likely led to the deaths of tens of millions and continues to kill millions today.²⁰ COVID 19 in all its variants cannot approach this magnitude of tragedy. There is no shame in conceding this, nor should the public be denied this knowledge. This is how we maintain a rational *polis*. To instead sublimate this, as Freud might put it, into a project of forgetting appears irrational, psychologically suspect and morally irresponsible. Our *polis* is rational, and denial of that, as the corner stone for a project of elite "truth curation" is more than suspect. It is not the *polis* that are rationally incapable, it is those of us beguiled by sophistic political ambitions who might seek rule them through secrets and direct lies. Any normal person will eventually notice. That is the nature and virtue of real social epistemology and prepares the well-deserved destiny of all pseudo-benevolent epistemic tyrannies, including those epistemic tyrannies proposed by censors, hiding an evil past, even if with good intention. Let's end with an insightful remark from author, Daniel Quinn,

Once when I was in college," I told him at last, "I wrote a paper for a philosophy class. I don't remember exactly what the assignment was—something to do with epistemology. Here's what I said in the paper, roughly: Guess what? The Nazis didn't lose the war after all. They won it and flourished. They took over the world and wiped out every last Jew, every last Gypsy, black, East Indian, and American Indian. Then, when they were finished with that, they wiped out the Russians and the Poles and the Bohemians and the Moravians and the Bulgarians and the Serbians and the Croatians—all the Slavs. Then they started in on the Polynesians and the Koreans and the Chinese and the Japanese—all the peoples of Asia. This took a long, long time, but when it was all over, everyone in the world was one hundred percent Aryan, and they were all very, very happy. "Naturally the textbooks used in the schools no longer mentioned any race but the Aryan or any language but German or any religion but Hitlerism or any political system but National Socialism. There would have been no point. After a few generations of that, no one could have put anything different into the textbooks even if they'd wanted to, because they didn't know anything different. "But one day two young students were conversing at the University of New Heidelberg in Tokyo. Both were handsome in the usual Aryan way, but one of them looked vaguely worried and unhappy. That was Kurt. His friend said, 'What's wrong, Kurt? Why are you always moping around like

²⁰ There is progress on an immune-response therapy that allows the immune system to detect HIV in all its fast evolving variants, bypassing the sugar molecules that coat portions of the virus and recognizing the large array of different types of HIV within. See, for instance, <https://www.scripps.edu/news-and-events/press-room/2021/20210203-hiv-vaccine.html> (retrieved April 2, 2022).

this?’ Kurt said, ‘I’ll tell you, Hans. There is something that’s troubling me— and troubling me deeply.’ His friend asked what it was. ‘It is this,’ Kurt said. ‘I can’t shake the crazy feeling that there is some small thing that we’re being lied to about.’²¹

Indeed.

The People rest, your Honor.

²¹ Quinn, Daniel, *Ishmael*, Bantam Books, 1992, 15-16. Turtledove, Harry, “The Last Article” is also of interest in this regard:
<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B5rMljbFiemoMWIxZjkNjctOGJmMS00Njg1LTg4YzMtODRjNGQwM2JlZWEz/edit?pli=1&resourcekey=0-DqcA4bJmsRifVCIOA1WksQ> (retrieved Sept.ember 26, 2021).