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1/ I watched Robert F. Kennedy Jr. on Joe Rogan yesterday and it gave me an opportunity to look into some of the "old-school" antivax claims.

First Joe Rogan let's us know that he used to think RFK Jr. was "kinda loony", but now he's a true believer in RFK's antivax claims.



2/ Before getting into vaccine stuff, did you know RFK Jr. also believes that cell phones and WiFi give you cancer, damage your mitochondria and give you "leaky brain?" That's the kind of guy we are dealing with.



3/ Joe is initially skeptical but does a rigorous fact-checking by having Jamie pull up a website by a crackpot org (that works with RFK Jr.) "Environmental Health Trust" which repeats the same claims.

Joe is convinced. "We gotta get rid of WiFi!"



4/ RFK Jr's claims are a bit different from the covid conspiracy content that I usually watch because at least John Campbell, Bret Weinstein, etc. are churning out fresh bullshit every week. RFK's "thimerosal in vaccines causes autism" theory has been debunked for decades.

5/ But here it is anyways, I guess. His central conspiracy theory is that the CDC commissioned a study by Verstraeten which found that the thimerosal in vaccines causes autism...



6/ and then nefariously conspired at a conference called Simpsonwood to cover it up. And they would have gotten away with it too, if RFK Jr. hadn't exposed them by publishing the transcript of the meeting!



7/ Here is [@gorskon](#)'s article from a decade ago going over these claims in detail.

The central conspiracy theory of the antivaccine movement

Occasionally, there are issues that come to my attention that need more than just one blog post to cover. One such issue popped up last week, and it's one that's kept you all very engaged, with the c...

<https://www.respectfulinsolence.com/2014/08/25/the-central-conspiracy-theory-of-the-...>

In summary

- a) No, the Verstaeten study doesn't show that
- b) RFK's evidence for the grand conspiracy at Simpsonwood is one out of context quote.

8/ The general theme with all of RFK Jr.'s scientific claims are

- a) He takes correlations in observational studies (especially pre-controlling for confounders) to be conclusive evidence of causation
- b) He ignores studies that shows he is wrong or claims they are fraudulent

9/ If you actually look up the studies he mentions, it's trivial to find how he absurdly misrepresents them. E.g. he claims that a Burbacher study shows thimerosal only appears to be processed out of your bloodstream because it's accumulating in your brain!



10/ The actual study (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1280342/>) compares thimerosal to organic mercury (MeHg), and finds

"A much lower brain concentration of total Hg was observed in the thimerosal monkeys compared with the MeHg monkey..."

11/ ... Moreover, total Hg is cleared much more rapidly from the brain after thimerosal"

12/ He claims Remdesivir killed 53% of Ebola patients, and yet the inveterate psychopaths at the CDC decided to give it to Covid patients!

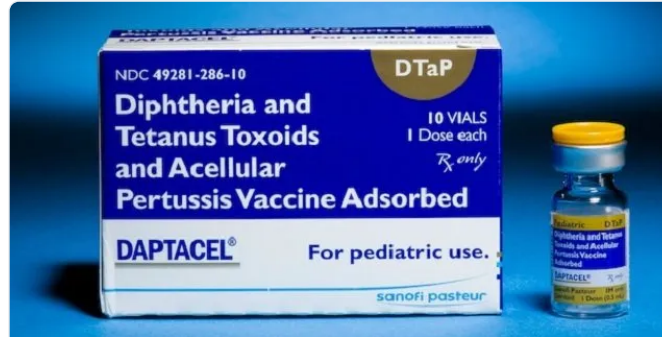


13/ Obviously this isn't true. He's just citing the percentage of people who died in the remdesivir arm of the ebola trial. They died from ebola.

(remdesivir is ineffective against ebola, and probably also covid).

<https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/nejmoa1910993>

14/ He claims a DTP vaccine is extremely deadly based on one cherry-picked correlational study. Here is a full discussion of this claim:



RFK Jr and vaccine safety – using a bad study to come to bad conclus...

Unfortunately, RFK Jr and vaccine safety took a new turn – he has doubled down on misusing this study in an article published today.

<https://www.skepticalraptor.com/skepticalraptorblog.php/rfk-jr-and-vaccine-safety-bad-...>



15) He thinks AZT (the first antiretroviral for HIV) was highly lethal and just pushed by big pharma for profit.

No, AZT monotherapy was highly suboptimal and early dose levels were too high, but it was still better than nothing.



Debunking Denialist Myths

Leer esta página en español. AIDS denialists claim that HIV does not cause AIDS, that the risks of antiretrovirals outweigh their benefits or that there is not a serious HIV epidemic in sub-Saharan...

<https://www.aidsruth.org/myths/#m8>

16/ Eventually we get into covid and covid vaccine conspiracies. They are all perfectly familiar. E.g. "Ivermectin was suppressed so the vaccines could get Emergency Use Authorization!"



17/ I love this theory because it's so iconically convoluted. The FDA organized a conspiracy of hundreds of scientists to run fake, intentionally underpowered clinical trials in order to satisfy a misreading of the requirements for EUA. More here:

A dark blue graphic with a white checkmark icon in a circle on the right. The text 'AP NEWS VERIFICATION' is in white, and 'VACCINES' is in yellow below it.

COVID treatments weren't suppressed to OK vaccines' emergency use
CLAIM: Ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine were suppressed as COVID-19 treatments because the vaccines couldn't receive emergency use authorization if such treatments were available.
<https://apnews.com/article/fact-check-covid-vaccines-emergency-use-873264912929>

18/ He enjoys playing bizarre word games, like insisting vaccines are the only drug that don't have to be safety tested before approval. It's trivially false and everybody knows it; vaccines are extensively tested for safety in clinical trials.



19/ If pressed on it, he would probably move the goalposts to insist that all of the post-marketing surveillance done to detect rare adverse vaccine effects should be done before approval, which is impossible.

20/ He favors the popular "make ridiculous extrapolations about all-cause mortality from the initial clinical trials" approach. I've posted about this many times before. The initial clinical trials were powered to detect efficacy against infection.



21/ Tea-leaf reading the statistically insignificant variation in all-cause deaths in those studies is meaningless. Post-marketing surveillance (VSD) and all large-scale studies find significant covid and all-cause mortality reductions due to the vaccine.

22/ For fun, here's one nonsensical claim he makes about how "they" (who?) claim 100% vaccine efficacy (they do?) because "2 is 100% of 1."

Anyone have any clue who made the claim he is supposedly refuting here? I think this man is very confused.



23/ Another bizarre claim, that some of the evil scientists purposely overdosing patients with Hydroxychloroquine to kill them to make it seem like HCQ doesn't work have been "charged with homicide"

Anyone know who he's referring to?



end/ Anyway, I think we're going to be hearing a lot from this guy in the next couple years so I thought it would be worthwhile to familiarize myself with some of his greatest hits.

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