The Health Wars
By Nelle Maxey
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October 8th was an interesting day. First, I listened to [James Corbett's weekly propaganda watch](#).

Very funny. The first live search he does pulls up a mainstream media "experts say" news article on the flu vaccine with no mention of who the "experts" even are.

That same day, I came across a massive propaganda piece about "antivax" Facebook pages. It was so bizarre that I spent hours investigating who the authors were, where they work, how they are funded and their other work in this same vein.

When you read their study, you'll see why I was so moved to action. There are references to terrorism, hate, and child sexual abuse in various other studies by these same authors. Now we are lumped in with these groups. Note also the military language—wars, insurgency, recruits, etc.—and of course the **ever present, primary propaganda assumption** that all the sites they title anti-vax show "distrust [of] expertise in medical science".

Mainstream media is losing relevance as they cling to state-sponsored memes and attempt to control discussion on a myriad of scientific, political and ethical issues. To counteract this loss, they label any alternative discussions as "fake news". What this paper represents is yet another co-mingling of the mainstream media fake news meme with the interests of the military-industrial complex as they attempt to supress information reaching the public on the internet. Supressed health information includes big pharma proliferation of drug and vaccine use, references to any alternative health care solutions, big agriculture proliferation of GMO crops and factory farm animals, and big surveillance interests like 5G technologies with its microwave radiation pollution, to name only a few.

Tom Naughton in *Diet, Health and the Wisdom of Crowds* humorously describes how people like the authors of this paper think. They are the "anointed" and have "grand plans" to save us from ourselves thus:

The Vision of the Anointed

1. The Anointed identify a problem in society
2. To fix the problem, The Anointed propose a Grand Plan.
3. The Anointed dismiss all evidence that the theory behind the Grand Plan is wrong.
4. The Anointed assume that no good, intelligent person could possibly oppose the Grand Plan.
5. If possible, The Anointed will impose the Grand Plan on others (for their own good).
6. The Anointed will never, ever, ever admit that the Grand Plan was a bad idea.

So, in our case, the problem–disease—is **bad**. The grand plan—vaccination—is **good**. All evidence that the theory behind vaccinations is wrong—increased chronic illness/death for children in the most highly vaccinated populations and both older and recent evidence-based science showing the biologic causes behind this—is dismissed. **Only stupid and/or evil people would oppose or question vaccination**. Therefore, **it must be imposed for our own good**, since there is **no possibility that the plan is such a bad idea** that it actually leads to unhealthy populations. And the response to this self-created problem as more and more people question vaccines and lose trust in both the medical establishment and media?

If The Grand Plan Fails:

1. The plan was good, but people didn't follow it correctly – because they're stupid.
2. The plan was good, but it was undermined by people – because they're evil.
3. The plan didn't go far enough. We need to do the same thing again, ONLY BIGGER.

"Bigger" in this case means vaccine mandates for all, no exceptions, and more and more vaccines imposed. With this information in mind, let's look at the paper.

Here is the full title of the creepy paper: *Health Wars and Beyond: The Rapidly Expanding and Efficient Network Insurgency Interlinking Local and Global Online Crowds of Distrust*

Yikes, Eh? And it gets much worse. Here is the best link to the paper as it has an easy download link and also bibliography links on each author's name, as well as the history of the paper. It was submitted

on-line as a "note" on Oct 4, 2019. It is a "working paper", i.e. in progress. Now would be a good time to read the paper that I discuss below.

Here is the opening statement. Note all the inflammatory, assumptive and/or biased statements of these authors:

> "We present preliminary results on the online war surrounding distrust of expertise in medical science -- specifically, the issue of vaccinations. While distrust and misinformation in politics can damage democratic elections, in the medical context it may also endanger lives through missed vaccinations and DIY cancer cures. We find that this online health war has evolved into a highly efficient network insurgency with direct inter-crowd links across countries, continents and cultures. The online anti-vax crowds (referred to as Red) now appear better positioned to groom new recruits (Green) than those supporting established expertise (Blue). We also present preliminary results from a mathematically-grounded, crowd-based analysis of the war's evolution, which offers an explanation for how Red seems to be turning the tide on Blue."

Okay, so we are **red** and the pro-vaxxers are **blue** and the neutral (or undecided) are **green** in the diagrams in this study. Just in case you are wondering who is winning this terrible on-line war, according to this study, we are! Below is one of the graphics in the study showing the 'evolution" of this "war" referred to above:
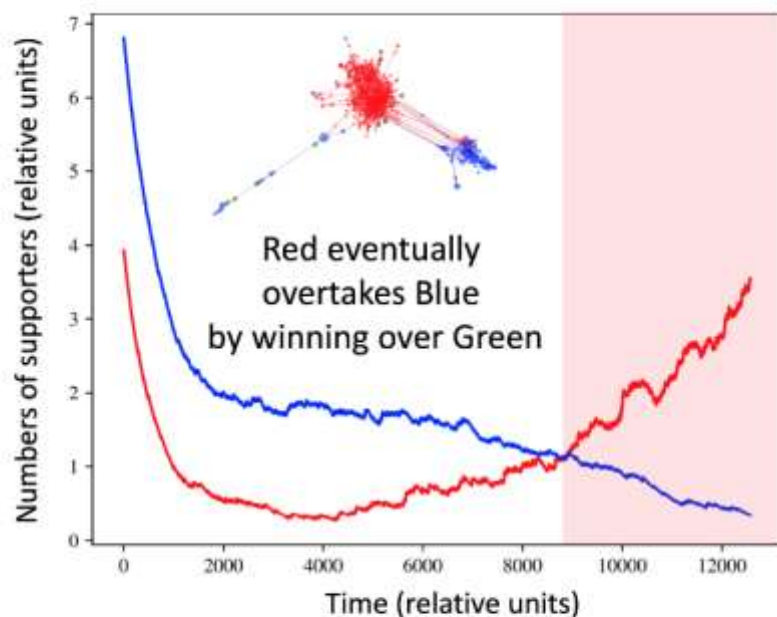

Figure 3. Preliminary results from our mathematically-grounded, crowd-based analysis of the war's evolution, which offers an explanation for how Red turns the tide against Blue. A full version of the network (i.e. with a full search for connected Greens) is given in Fig. 4, and shows similar features.

This study therefore justifies any censorship that Facebook chooses to take, now doesn't it? Especially in the context of the following second paragraph of this "study":

"Distrust and misinformation pose an acute global threat to established science and medicine, as well as political processes [1-10]. Death threats are being made against climate scientists [3], and doctors and mothers who vaccinate [4]. In addition to widespread spreading of diseases such as measles and HPV through vaccination hesitancy [5-8], distrust of established scientific treatments for cancer are leading patients to adopt dangerous substitute measures [9]. More generally, the number of countries with disinformation campaigns is reported to have more than doubled to 70 in the last two years, with Facebook remaining the top platform for those campaigns [10]. Given the difficulty social media companies such as Facebook are having with online activity related to hate [11], terrorism [12]and child sexual abuse [13,14], it is no wonder that they are also struggling to understand how such online misinformation develops and spreads from local to global scales, and hence how to go about dealing with it. There have been many valuable studies of distrust, misinformation and disinformation at the level of individuals' behaviors including on Twitter. However, DiResta and others have pointed out that what is missing is a big picture understanding in the national and global populations involving millions of people [15] while Starbird has also highlighted the need to understand the important role of unwitting crowds [16,17]. Indeed, the impact of crowds --and in particular undecideds --is known to play a central role in the dynamics of other societal systems such as financial markets [17] and elections [1,2,18]."

Are you gasping yet?

Wait till you check out all the references noted in this paragraph. Just one example, remember that Russian bot article from last year that got a lot of press: *Weaponized HealthCommunication: Twitter Bots and Russian Trolls Amplify the Vaccine Debate*? That's reference number 6 for this paper and the lead author, D.A. Broniatowski is one of the authors of this paper as well.

You may well ask how they arrived at all this amazing information about the on-line health wars? It's all down to **gelation theory**. Say what? It's a bit complicated and to me quite suspect, but hey, these guys are the "experts", right?

Searching around, I found a reference to **gelation theory** in another paper written by the lead author of *Health Wars* where the justification of the theory's use is presented in detail. The ominous title of that paper is *Generalized Gelation Theory describes Human Online Aggregation in Support of Extremism*. In fact, looking at all the bibliographic references connected to the authors of this "extremism" paper one can see a vast amount of work has been done to establish this meme. The *Health Wars* paper now dumps the "anti-vaxxers" into this stew of terrorists, haters, and child abusing extremists. At the same time, a number of papers have been written by these authors shoring up the "Zika virus" hoax and vaccine development which has been disclaimed by many looking at the facts. It's not hard to discern their vaccine stance.

One other comment on the *Extremism* paper is very important. They didn't just collect data on ISIS extremism. They also collected data on **mass public demonstrations** in Brazil. The text accompanying the graphic for this says:

"…**B** and **D** concern the unexpected outburst of protests in Brazil in June 2013, commonly termed the "Brazil Winter," which involved some violence and for which we were able to collect accurate information following the Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA) OSI program."

This means the authors had access to data from IARPA and are maybe even one of the teams funded by a program of this part of the US intelligence community. Surprised? This interview with the Director of IRAPA may interest you as he comes from what he calls the "global health community".

IARPA defines themselves as an anticipatory intelligence agency under the office of the Director of the National Intelligence (DNI): [Emphasis mine]

> "Key research areas include **forecasting events** related to science and technology (S&T); social, political, and economic crises; **epidemiology and biosecurity**; counterintelligence; and cybersecurity."

Now back to the *Health Wars*.

What is Gelation Theory?

As described in Wikipedia, **gelation** is a **physical or chemical process** whereby a liquid forms a gel. You know, like adding hot water to Jello powder: [Emphasis mine]

> **"Gelation** (**gel transition**) is the formation of a gel from a system with polymers. Branched polymers can form links between the chains, which lead to progressively larger polymers. As the linking continues, larger branched polymers are obtained and at a certain extent of the reaction links between the polymer result in the formation of a **single macroscopic molecule**. At that point in the reaction, which is defined as gel point, the system loses fluidity and viscosity becomes very large. The onset of gelation, or gel point, is accompanied by a sudden increase in viscosity [thickening of a liquid]. This "infinite" sized polymer is called the gel or network, which does not dissolve in the solvent, but can swell in it."

This very brief article also says:

> **"**While the physical gels involve physical bonds, chemical gelation involves covalent bonds."

So, what these geniuses of "medical physics" have done is assumed that what happens physically or chemically also happens in the minds or maybe emotions (very unclear) of people in Facebook groups on the internet, i.e., humans in a social context. This is what the following rather obscure sentence from the *Health Wars* is talking about:

> "Our focus on clusters – and in particular, the mesoscale cluster dynamics of Red, Blue and Green -- is consistent with the fact that clustered correlations are known to provide the key to understanding the dynamics of many-body physical, chemical and biological systems and the likely extension to social systems."

Note they have to use the word "likely" when they talk about the "extension" of this physical/chemical gelation theory into the context of social systems. After all, they are scientists of some ilk and know this is not proven, and therefore is only (maybe) "likely"! And that is the wobbly basis for all their work.
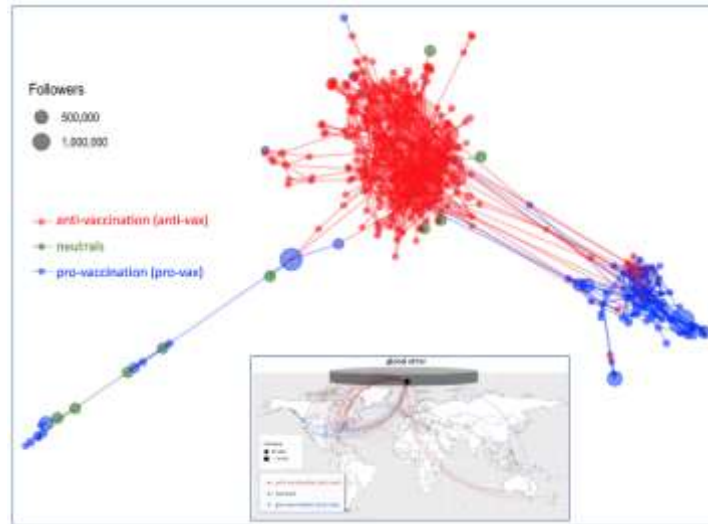
Above is a gelation theory diagram from *Health Wars*. You can view it in larger format in the [pdf of the paper](pdf). Note all those humans (greater than 10 million the authors say) on Facebook pages coalescing into red and blue jello blobs, with a few scattered greens? The biggest blob is certainly red. Bill Gates Foundation is that biggest blue circle in that blob on the right. Wonder which red blob is VCC? Not that it matters since we have clustered in a network, are apparently approaching gel point and will soon…likely…maybe...be irreversibly one and turn the tide on the good old blue boys.

This statistics-based scheme is subject to the principle of "garbage in, garbage out". Therefore, questions arise. First, how exactly did they determine the Facebook sites that fell into their three, pre-determined categories? The map accompanying this graphic seems terribly American-centric and even English language-centric. In other words, did they really get a representative set of global red, blue and green Facebook groups?

Second, there is the question of the green groups. One supposes that Facebook groups set up for a specific purpose are easy enough to determine by their content. In other words, those with strong "pro- or anti-vax" sentiments. But how exactly did they find the "neutrals" or "undecided" Facebook groups? Would such groups even exist? People who are neutral or undecided don't usually form groups of any kind. I don't know, but perhaps this will be explained in the finalized paper?
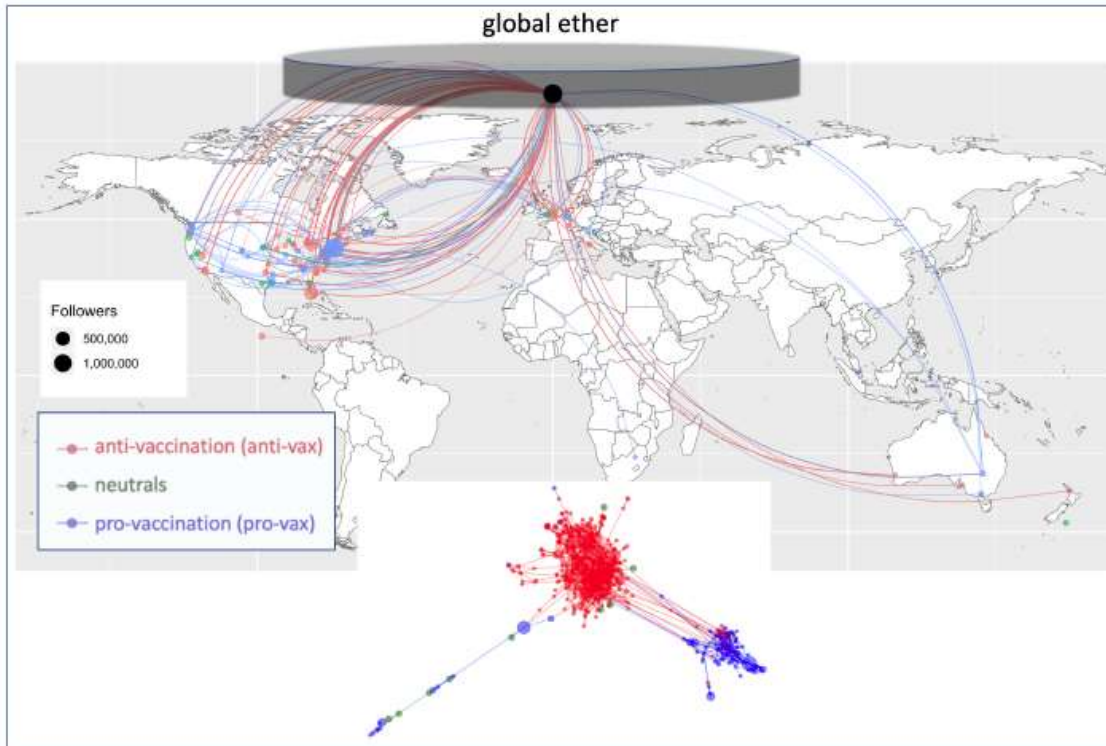
The Map:

Figure 2. Health war showing clusters from the network in Fig. 1 mapped onto their declared geographical location. Inset shows the cluster network drawn without regard to location, and instead with an arrangement based on closeness of links using ForceAtlas2 algorithm (see also Fig. 1). These results, while again preliminary due to missing data about other Green clusters and the need to cross-check Red and Blue, show how clusters connect this online war across countries and continents. The "global ether" is made up of those clusters who choose not to localize themselves further than the global scale – and hence which presumably see themselves as a global cause or community.

Map questions: Wonder who that big red blob in Florida represents? Or that red one in central Canada? Is the big blue blob in the "global ether" the World Health Organization?

Who are these people?

The authors of *Health Wars* are listed as: N.F. Johnson, N. Velasquez, N. Johnson Restrepo, R. Leahy, N. Gabriel, S. Wuchty, D.A. Broniatowski. As you see in the **_Health Wars_ pdf** they are all affiliated with various departments at George Washington University in Washington, DC, and one author with the computer department of the University of Miami in Florida.

In fact, the lead author on this paper, Neil F. Johnson worked at the University of Miami until July 2018 when he went to work in the George Washington University (GWU) Physics Department and then the GWU **Institute for Data, Democracy and Politics** (IDDP) as well. Interestingly, a year later the Provost (senior academic administrator) of Miami University became the head of the IDDP at George Washington University. A congealing of experts to one location in Washington, DC, perhaps?

As we learn in this interview with lead author Johnson, Washington, DC, is the ideal place for him to work [emphasis ours]:

> "Continuing his work at GW will be a "tectonic shift" in his research, Dr. Johnson said. Washington, D.C., is the **nerve center for conversations on extremism**. Being in D.C. will

enable Dr. Johnson to work more closely with partners such as the **U.S. Department of Defense (DOD)** and the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. **Put simply, "this is where decisions are made," Dr. Johnson said**.

"Dr. Johnson currently receives funding from the National Science Foundation for his work on a Cyber-physical (CPS) systems project primarily led by computer scientists and engineers who seek to optimize systems. Dr. Johnson instead focuses on identifying the bad things that can happen in the system, and how those concerns can be mitigated. **He also receives funding from DoD**."

Six of the seven authors of this paper also work for the **Institute for Data, Democracy and Politics (IDDS)** at GWU. As you'll see at the link, the Institute's mission is to counter 'disinformation':

"Our nation's political discourse, our media, and most importantly our democracy, depend on facts. With generous support from Knight Foundation, this new institute leverages GW's strengths convening interdisciplinary teams and using data and research to solve complex challenges facing our nation and world."
—Thomas LeBlanc, President of the George Washington University
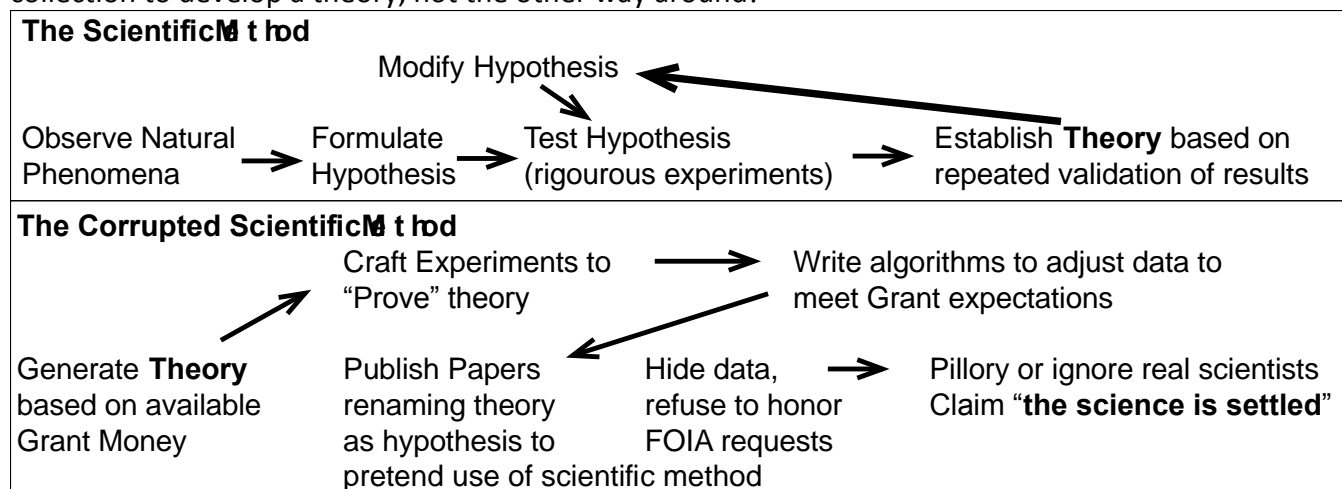
Big Guns in the Health Wars

GWU's new institute, IDDS, was set up in the summer of 2019 with the support of a $5 million investment from the Knight Foundation. The Knight Foundation, founded by the Knight brothers who ran one of America's largest 20th century newspaper companies, largely distributes journalism grants as it is deeply concerned with the loss of trust in mainstream media and the effect that social media is having on public opinions in this regard.

GWU is not the only academic institution that received grants from the Knight Foundation in 2019. Below is a list of similar institutions who received funds for this type of "research".

Knight's investment will support...	Institution	Investment amount
The creation of new cross-disciplinary research centers	**Carnegie Mellon University** The Center for Informed Democracy and Social Cyber-Security	$5 million
	The George Washington University The Institute for Data, Democracy, and Politics	$5 million
	New York University The Center for Social Media and Politics	$5 million
	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill The Center for Information, Technology, and Public Life	$5 million
	University of Washington Center for an Informed Public	$5 million
Existing research initiatives and projects	**Data & Society Research Institute**	$3 million
	Indiana University The Observatory on Social Media	$3 million
	Stanford University The Project on Democracy and the Internet	$2 million
	University of Texas at Austin The Center for Media Engagement	$2.5 million
	University of Wisconsin – Madison The Center for Communication and Civic Renewal	$1 million
	Yale University The Project on Governing the Digital Public Sphere	$2 million
	Yale University The Thurman Arnold Project	$200,000

Statistics are NOT Science

Data collection, even if you call it 'data science' is not science. What we see in all the papers by these authors is a bastardization of the scientific method based on the pretence that their data collection proves their theory. As I explained with the diagram below on page 5 in the _VCC Response: 2017 Ontario Vaccination Exemption Form_, the true scientific method tests hypothesis based on data collection to develop a theory, not the other way around!

The Scientific Method

Modify Hypothesis

Observe Natural Phenomena → Formulate Hypothesis → Test Hypothesis (rigourous experiments) → Establish **Theory** based on repeated validation of results

The Corrupted Scientific Method

Craft Experiments to "Prove" theory → Write algorithms to adjust data to meet Grant expectations

Generate **Theory** based on available Grant Money → Publish Papers renaming theory as hypothesis to pretend use of scientific method → Hide data, refuse to honor FOIA requests → Pillory or ignore real scientists Claim "**the science is settled**"

So, first these 'experts' **generate the gelation theory**, which says like-minded groups are likely to form clusters on the internet and grow organically by absorbing those with no ideas and worse eventually overwhelm opposing ideas. Then they **craft the experiment** by defining groups as having either good

and bad ideas. Then they **write algorithms** to go looking for proof such clusters exist as good and bad Facebook groups on the internet. Lo and behold, they find that in the most highly vaccinated populations (a fact they do not mention) there are bigger clusters of those who question vaccination (because the rate of damage is more visible —another fact they do not mention). They proclaim a dangerous situation that must be stopped before the bad ideas of stupid, evil people reach gel point and overwhelm the settled science. The only solution is censorship of Facebook groups that question vaccinations. Imagine that!

Justifying Censorship

As I read through various articles by these authors on the George Washington University website, the issue of online censorship is clearly justified not only in *Health Wars* but explicitly in an article titled *Novel Mapping Model Tracks How Hate Spreads and Adapts Online*:

> "The team, which included researchers at the University of Miami, used insights from its online hate mapping to develop four intervention strategies that social media platforms could immediately implement based on situational circumstances:
> - Reduce the power and number of large clusters by banning the smaller clusters that feed into them.
> - Attack the Achilles' heel of online hate groups by randomly banning a small fraction of individual users in order to make the global cluster network fall apart.
> - Pit large clusters against each other by helping anti-hate clusters find and engage directly with hate clusters.
> - Set up intermediary clusters that engage hate groups to help bring out the differences in ideologies between them and make them begin to question their stance.
>
> The researchers noted each of their strategies can be adopted on a global scale and simultaneously across all platforms without having to share the sensitive information of individual users or commercial secrets, which has been a stumbling block before."

Considering the ties of these researchers with the US intelligence community and the US Department of Defence and thereby the large social media platforms themselves (whose development was funded by these agencies), it is easy to see where the censorship strategies for social media are emanating from. Being aware of the four strategies listed above confirm what we are seeing, inform us of what to expect and protect us from being pitted against each other or infiltrated by 'intermediary clusters', i.e, the self-professed trolls in the last strategy listed above.

In conclusion, I can only say that the magnitude of the blowback against a public who are increasingly questioning vaccines is simply a measure of the state's realization that they are losing their own self-proclaimed war. The system's inability to ever, ever admit they are wrong and have no right to force medical treatments on anyone for any reason is bringing about their own demise. It is the wisdom of crowds, not the unwitting crowds who have tipped the scales.