

Paul Krugman Now Has Nobel Disease



By Alex Berezow — December 18, 2016



Credit: Shutterstock [1]

There is a somewhat tongue-in-cheek, though still quite real, phenomenon known as "Nobel Disease." For some reason, many people who have won a Nobel Prize went on to become infamous for saying and believing incredibly stupid things, some of which are quite delusional.

Two explanations seem most likely. First, a person who wins a Nobel Prize may begin to think that all of his ideas are prize-worthy. As a result, like being intoxicated with alcohol, a Nobel laureate may feel less inhibited to blurt out whatever is on his mind. Second, it's possible that Nobel laureates are a bit kooky to begin with; earth-shattering ideas often don't come from pedestrian minds.

The newest inductee into this dubious club is Paul Krugman, the Nobel Prize-winning economist and columnist for the *New York Times*. Recently on Twitter, he insinuated that Donald Trump may orchestrate a 9/11-style attack to boost his presidency.



Paul Krugman @paulkrugman · Dec 16

Thought: There was (rightly) a cloud of illegitimacy over Bush, dispelled (wrongly) by 9/11. Creates some interesting incentives for Trump

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For lack of a better word, that is insane.

After much pushback, including a stinging rebuke from [Mediaite](#) [2] and various other outlets, Dr Krugman slightly [walked back](#) [3] his comments, suggesting instead that Mr Trump will simply [start a war with another country](#) [4]. Dr Krugman has always been a bomb thrower, but it appears that he has been emboldened by his new Swedish credentials.

Alas, he is in good company. Other Nobel Disease sufferers have included:

Linus Pauling. The winner of two Nobel Prizes (chemistry and peace), Linus Pauling spent the latter years of his life trying to convince people that [megadoses of vitamin C could improve health and cure cancer](#) [5].

Luc Montagnier. Luc Montagnier was awarded the Nobel Prize for helping to discover HIV. Since then, according to [Science-Based Medicine](#) [6], Dr Montagnier has embraced DNA teleportation, homeopathy, and the belief that autism (as well as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and various other diseases) is linked to bacterial DNA that emits electromagnetic waves. More bizarrely, he believes that HIV -- the very virus that he discovered -- can be cured through nutrition.

Alexis Carrel. Alexis Carrel earned the Nobel Prize for [vascular suturing](#) [7]. However, as [RealClearScience](#) [8] describes, he also supported eugenics, believed in "mysticism, telepathy, [and] clairvoyance," and possessed a "desire to move to South America to become a dictator."

Kary Mullis. Molecular biology was revolutionized by Kary Mullis, who won the Nobel Prize for inventing a method (called polymerase chain reaction or PCR) to quickly amplify DNA in a test tube. In recent years, however, Dr Mullis has dragged his own name through the mud. As [RealClearScience](#) [8] explains, he accepts astrology while denying that HIV causes AIDS. And he thinks he might have encountered aliens.

*Update: [Todd Myers](#) [9] of the Washington Policy Center reminded me of one more especially deranged case of Nobel Disease. Peace Prize winner **Wangari Maathai** believes [HIV was created by scientists as a biological weapon to kill black people](#) [10].*

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- [2] <http://www.mediaite.com/online/ny-times-paul-krugman-suggests-trump-could-engineer-terrorist-attack-on-u-s/>
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