

Designer Babies Debunked, Wildfire Physics, We Get A Nod From A Partisan Activist Group, And More Media



By Hank Campbell — September 11, 2017



Babies in Jakarta, Indonesia. (Photo: Adi Weda, epa)

The American Council on Science and Health writes at least 1,300 original articles on our website, produces five books, and writes science op-eds in America's largest newspapers every month. That means we get a lot of media traction. Here is who used our work this past week.

1. *Alternative Daily* calls out Environmental Working Group (EWG). A partisan anti-science activism publication rightly notes that EWG has now taken to terrifying people about water everywhere in the US. Those litigation-motivated frauds insist 250 million Americans are exposed to excessively high amounts of chromium-6 in water without noting that the amounts they talk about are harmless. While bad if inhaled, Cr-6 can't cause problems when ingested.

After promoting scaremongering about our water supply, EWG then sells a water purifier *which can't even remove it*.

[That's the part that galls *Alternative Daily*](#), ^[1] so they rightly note our criticism of these environmental lawyers who are just fancy charlatans.

What is the real story? Chromium-6 is the chemical produced in processes like welding and making stainless steel. Erin Brockovich made it famous when she got PG&E to write a check for over \$300 million, by creating enough "cancer cluster" anecdotes that PG&E was sure they'd lose billions in front of a jury. It was later found that not only did the town she called a cancer cluster not have more cancer, it had less. But California still recently imposed a limit on Cr-6 that was 10% of

the EPA recommendation - forcing terrified residents in some towns to drink bottled water until a judge struck California's limit down as arbitrary. The real irony: the EPA limit itself was only created due to anecdotal evidence in the Erin Brockovich case.

Alternative Daily has not come over to the pro-science side, they still believe EWG is right about Cr-6 in water, but at least they criticize those sue-and-settle cranks for being hypocrites. Which is more ethical than Mother Jones, Sourcewatch or Organic Consumers Association, a corporate front group for that industry, will ever be.

2. In USA Today, our Alex Berezow, along with Ben Locwin, [settle down scaremongering about CRISPR and the ability to make designer babies](#) [2]. It's just not that simple. There is no gene to make you taller or prettier.

Oddly, the same people who embraced eugenics still do. They call it other things, but you don't see a lot of political activists behind cultural selection arguing their group should not procreate. People in the wealthiest counties, like in the D.C metropolitan area, New York and California, are absolutely marrying others like them. That has for more impact on designer babies than anything science can do.

3. There is physics to wildfires and [Dr. Ethan Siegel has it on his Forbes blog](#) [3]. But there is also malevolence in too many of them, as he notes.

4. CNN used our work in discussing the [problems states are having getting drugs for executions](#) [4]. Despite their reputation for being greedy malcontents suppressing cures for cancer, or whatever else Mother Jones claims this week, companies are refusing to sell drugs for that purpose. Oddly, [states are turning to fentanyl](#) [5], which our Dr. Josh Bloom brought to national attention after he testified at FDA about how government was focusing on the wrong thing by claiming an "opioid crisis" was due to doctors and pain patients.

"You got something that's killing hundreds of people a day across the United States," Bloom said. "And you got prisons who can't get death penalty drugs, so they're turning to the drug that's killing hundreds of people across the United States."

5. In World Net Daily, Professor David Lightley debunks a "study" which appeared in the journal *Stroke* in April which tried to claim diet soda caused Alzheimer's. Along the way [he provides a terrific overview of what the scientific method should be](#) [6] for these claims, but which rarely is when it comes to mainstream journalism. And he cites our work defusing the same hysteria bombs.

6. Huffington Post Canada must be a lot more pro-science and apolitical than its American parent, because they have an article criticizing the federal government for changing tack from being anti-smoking - obviously a good idea - to being anti-tobacco now that smoking is almost eliminated. [It makes no sense to claim vaping or pipes are just as harmful as cigarettes with their toxic smoke](#) [7]. And a government that cares about public health should be embracing smoking cessation, or at least harm reduction.

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Links

[1] <http://www.thealternativedaily.com/250-million-americans-are-drinking-this-in-their-tap-water/?source=acsh.org>

[2] <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2017/09/08/human-embryo-editing-wont-lead-designer-babies-berezow-locwin-column/581489001/?source=acsh.org>

[3] <https://www.forbes.com/sites/startswithabang/2017/09/06/the-terrifying-physics-of-how-wildfires-spread-so-fast/?source=acsh.org>

[4] <http://www.cnn.com/2017/09/01/health/execution-nevada-fentanyl-opioid/index.html?source=acsh.org>

[5] <http://www.daytondailynews.com/news/gen-politics/nevada-use-fentanyl-execution-drug-death-penalty-cases/OoSxMkvJO5450pchP4yioO/?source=acsh.org>

[6] <http://www.wnd.com/2017/08/a-nutrition-professor-and-my-diet-dr-pepper/?source=acsh.org>

[7] http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/jasmin-guenette/feds-dont-want-you-to-know-about-safer-tobacco-products_a_23192381/?source=acsh.org