

Dangerous Myths, Cold Causing Colds and More Media Links



By Hank Campbell — July 18, 2016

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1. A website called the National Observer is an "online only" publication whose editor [has been accused of political boosterism and using her publication to attack opponents](#) [1] of her family. [A weird, disjointed op-ed by an alternative medicine practitioner](#) [2] easily tells you what political side of the aisle they serve. The author is firmly against biology, specifically genetically modified organisms, and embraces every crank out there, from Zen Honeycutt of Moms Across America to retracted fraud Gilles-Eric Seralini.

Dr. Warren Bell - his degree is not specified - probably has plenty of credibility...in the anti-science community anyway, because he is Past President of the Association of Complementary and Integrative Physicians of BC, which means he embraces homeopathy, acupuncture and herbal supplements and is against actual medicine.

Given that, it's no surprise he sees demons among real scientists and doctors and embraces merchants of doubt. He doesn't outright lie about the qualifications of the detractors he invokes, he vaguely calls them scientists and qualifies them with "impressive practical knowledge of biological processes" - basically, they have a garden and think that is how the world can be fed. Why are they credible to him? It doesn't have to be credible when you are interested in politicization of science and paranoid conspiracy theories. Oh, and endorsing "'First Peoples' empirical wisdom" about growing food.

Would National Observer publish an anti-global warming op-ed by an alternative medicine practitioner who cited biologists, claiming they had "impressive practical knowledge of atmospheric processes" because they checked the temperature outside? Glyphosate causes autism? Check. Glyphosate causes cancer? Check. This has every debunked talking point about pesticides. What

it also has is libel. In this random polemic, he tries to claim

With industry-friendly partner organizations like the American Council on Science and Health, the American Seed Trade Association, the American Soybean Association, the National Corn Growers Association and National Cotton Council, Monsanto worked with large biotech companies to set up a web site called "GMO answers."

That's a flat out lie, we are a 501c3 educational non-profit, not a trade group. In applied science, 100 percent of it will be done by industry, so of course anyone who defends science will tangentially defend the companies who do science, but visit any talk I give and I make fun of Monsanto. He is defending organic food, which is \$100 billion in corporations, was his article paid for by them? Canadian defamation law is pretty clear on the consequences of lying to damage someone's reputation.

We had nothing to do with GMO Answers, I have never spoken to any of the groups he lumps me in with, most of them I had never heard the name. He thinks we're in cahoots with Big Cotton? What? Now, he can probably find some fringe website that made such a goofy claim, he clearly doesn't read anyone in science, but that doesn't make it true - and claiming it without doing any critical thinking is certainly not journalism. It's just a smear tactic. Sourcewatch is a dark-money funded political attack site run by a former lawyer for the Clinton administration that exists to tear down scientists, so maybe it came from there.



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That's still no defense. And why would he

think the kooky philosopher Vandana Shiva, who insulted every rape victim in India by claiming farming with GMOs was just like that horrific crime, knows anything about biology?

It's a science mystery. The site took down the article down on Friday and said they would call me to 'check the facts.'

Look for it to be back up after they decide that, yes, "First Peoples' empirical wisdom" and paranoid fan-fiction by a supplement huckster is superior to the National Academies of Science, all biology experts, the USDA, etc.

If they were interested in facts, they would have asked some awkward questions of the author in the first place, instead of providing a pulpit for crackpots to lie about us. You know, like actual editors and journalists do.

2. Compare National Observer, which is letting fringe political activists and anti-science crackpots pretend to do journalism, with Refinery29, which doesn't claim anything but being about style - yet

they have a lot more scientific critical thinking. **They take apart the blood type diet** [3], and for separating fact from nonsense about food there is no better person than our Senior Nutrition Fellow Dr. Ruth Kava.

What further complicates the matter is that D'Adamo's unproven statements about blood types sound similar to facts that do have scientific backing. While there's no evidence that blood type is so directly linked with evolution, it is likely that certain antigens evolved with humans to protect us from environmental threats (like malaria). It's also true that there is a higher incidence of certain illnesses in different blood groups, though the reasons are as yet unclear (and, adds Dr. Kava, "they have nothing to do with diet").

3. While anti-science activists are incapable of acting civil and addressing the facts, elsewhere the discourse is far more civil. I signed a letter addressing concerns about the U.S. Senate's version of a GMO labeling bill, and another group on the pro-science side was firmly in favor of it. What did they not do, despite being in complete disagreement with me and others? **They didn't engage in name-calling or insist anyone was being bought off** [4]. Even in an election year.

4. CDA News linked to our work showing your grandmother wasn't wrong in saying cold would make you more likely to catch a cold [5]. One way healthy cells deal with being invaded by a virus like the rhinovirus, or common cold virus, is to intentionally commit suicide, or "apoptosis."

It kills the infected cells, but stops the virus from spreading further. In our article, we discussed how researchers found that the common cold virus incubated at a colder temperature led to infected cells less likely to commit suicide, aiding in the spread of the virus. It is more difficult for infected cells to commit suicide when they are colder.

So you get a cold.

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Links

[1] <http://citycaucus.com/2012/06/questions-raised-by-top-journalism-award/>

[2] <http://www.nationalobserver.com/2016/07/15/opinion/last-roundup-how-monsanto-created-fable-%E2%80%9C-world%E2%80%99s-safest-herbicide%E2%80%9D?source=acsh.org>

[3] <http://www.refinery29.com/2016/07/116159/blood-type-diet-myths?source=acsh.org>

[4] http://www.science20.com/science_20/there_is_reasonable_discourse_in_the_gmo_label_debate-176530

[5] <http://cdanews.com/2016/07/cold-weather-can-contribute-to-getting-a-common-cold/?source=acsh.org>