

# When Do Noble Lies Just Become Blatant Lies?

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✓ Fact Checked

## STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › A noble lie is paternalistic, or those where the deceiver must make an assumption that lying serves the best interest. Fauci claims misinformation and lies he shared may have been to influence behavior
- › Fauci's first comments were that masks are not effective in the community, after which he recommended people wear one or even two masks; he stated the spread of the virus was unlike anything he's seen before, but the varying severity of the illness he quotes are much like flu virus
- › In a video from a Senate committee, Jim Jordan, D-Ohio, quickly illustrates the change in Fauci's position over gain-of-function research in the last 18 months, from "it never happened" to "it would have been negligent not to fund the lab"
- › Fauci has consistently been nudging up the percentage of people required to be vaccinated to achieve what he calls herd immunity. He started at 60% and currently believes it may need to reach 85%. "But I'm not going to say 90%" – right now, he says

The past 18 months has provided Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and chief medical adviser to the president of the U.S., ample opportunity to truthfully share information about an ongoing health situation. However, as his statements have been tracked, it appears he has not taken the higher path of truth that would have helped American's make smart decisions.

Instead, he has engaged in what the daily online magazine Slate labeled “noble lies.” The writer asks this question: “Do we want public health officials to report facts and uncertainties transparently? Or do we want them to shape information?”<sup>1</sup>

Although this is a question only you can answer for yourself, Fauci’s inaccurate representation of the truth likely has a deeper meaning than what philosophers define as a noble lie. It may be difficult to untangle the reason behind the lies, but there are several theories as to why Fauci believes he can determine what is true and what is not.

The lab leak theory was first publicly proposed by then-President Trump<sup>2</sup> and vehemently denied by Fauci. Experts postulate the reason the media did not further explore the idea was the announcement politically polarized it, burying the possibility it might be fully and independently investigated.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, objective accurate news reporting may only be an illusion since, as TechStartUps reports,<sup>4</sup> six corporations control 90% of what is published in America as of September 2020. And, Vanguard and Blackrock are the top investors in each of those six corporations, namely Comcast,<sup>5</sup> Disney,<sup>6</sup> ViacomCBS,<sup>7</sup> News Corp,<sup>8</sup> and AT&T.<sup>9</sup>

As you may note, there are only five corporations listed above. That’s because TechStartUps listed Viacom and CBS separately as the merger between the companies had only recently closed.<sup>10</sup> In other words, the five or six supposedly competitive corporations vying for 90% of the American public are really controlled by two investment firms, Vanguard and Blackrock. And, in an interesting twist of events, Vanguard is the top investor in Blackrock.<sup>11</sup>

Whether Fauci is politicizing the truth, or the news media is picking and choosing the truth they tell you to serve their own financial needs, it is highly likely that what you read in mainstream news media is exactly what serves the purposes of an elite class that controls “what we read, watch or listen to.”<sup>12</sup>

## **What Is a Noble Lie?**

The origin of a “noble lie” is from Plato’s Republic,<sup>13</sup> a book written in 380 B.C., which essentially is a discussion of the meaning and nature of justice.<sup>14</sup> Without getting too embroiled in the philosophical argument over truth and lies, it’s important to note that Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was a central figure in the development of modern philosophy.<sup>15</sup>

His position was that lying was never morally acceptable,<sup>16</sup> something few contemporary philosophers agree with. Philosophically, there are two lies that are generally believed to be acceptable. The first prevents catastrophic events and the second are “white lies,” where the consequences are considered by the speaker to be insignificant.<sup>17</sup>

A noble lie falls under the category of paternalistic lies. The American Psychological Association<sup>18</sup> states this about lies with paternalistic motives: “Many lies that are intended to help others require the deceiver to make assumptions about whether lying serves others’ best interest.”

In other words, Fauci may be functioning under the delusion that he has the right and responsibility of making an assumption about whether the lies he tells are serving the best interest of those who have the full capacity and capability of understanding the science and making up their own mind.

## **One of the Lies Began With Masking**

Although Fauci’s string of lies about the public health response and origins of COVID-19 are far-reaching, some of the first he told were about the effectiveness of wearing masks to reduce the spread of the virus.

In the short video below, Rep. Jim Jordan, D-Ohio, gives a scathing account of Fauci’s vacillating recommendations regarding masking in public. Fauci was appointed the director of the NIAID in 1984, which you would think would make him an expert by 2020 on infectious disease transmission. However, he hasn’t been able to make up his mind during the entire pandemic what his “expert” advise is on mask wearing.

Fauci explained his first recommendation not to wear masks during a March 2020 “60 Minutes” interview, saying using a mask in the community was unnecessary, and specifically:<sup>19</sup>

*"The masks are important for someone who is infected to prevent them from infecting someone else. There's no reason to be walking around with a mask. When you're in the middle of an outbreak, wearing a mask might make people feel a little bit better and it might even block a droplet, but it's not providing the perfect protection that people think that it is.*

*And often, there are unintended consequences. People keep fiddling with the mask and people keep touching their face."*

In other words, based on his expert knowledge, wearing a mask in the community would not be effective. But just three months later in an interview on TheStreet, Fauci justified changing his expert advice as he talked about some of the characteristics of the illness:<sup>20</sup>

*"It is a very unusual infection. I've quite frankly never seen anything like it, where a single, well characterized virus in an individual is going to have a range of manifestations that go from being completely asymptomatic, no symptoms at all, to having a few symptoms that don't bother you much to having symptoms that are enough to keep you home, to have symptoms enough to keep you in bed really feeling poorly for a couple of weeks to having the symptoms and signs of having to go to a hospital to then possibly having to go to intensive care and then to dying."*

The only thing is, as the director of NIAID who focuses on infectious diseases, Fauci has to have been aware of studies demonstrating the asymptomatic nature of other respiratory viral illnesses such as influenza<sup>21</sup> and statements on the CDC website that flu “can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death.”<sup>22</sup>

In other words, while we know that a SARS-CoV-2 infection can trigger symptoms like flu, it seems odd that Fauci’s characterization of COVID-19 spread is something “I've quite frankly never seen anything like.”

# Fauci Claims We Can Crush COVID as Vaccinated People Get Sick

During the same interview he said the reason he recommended not wearing masks in the beginning was to avoid mass panic that might lead to a shortage of masks for health care workers.<sup>23</sup> Fauci's unique brand of justifying behavior, like his flip-flopping over mask wearing, has also slipped into his reasoning for the shot program. In an interview with MSNBC, he says:<sup>24</sup>

*"The delta variant is the totally dominant variant now in this country. More than 80 or 85%, and in some areas 95%, but even more importantly it is clear now that when there are breakthrough infections, namely people who are vaccinated but still get infected with the delta variant, which happens because no vaccine is 100% effective.*

*We've learned clearly now, without a doubt, that people who are vaccinated get a breakthrough infection, actually have enough virus in their nasopharynx, that they can actually transmit it to other people and have documented transmission to other people."*

From here he advises that all people who have been vaccinated to wear a mask indoors to prevent the spread of the infection. His explanation is that the delta variant has "changed the entire landscape." However, as we know from other viruses, the coronavirus will continue to mutate and change, which means, from Fauci's explanation, people will always be wearing masks to prevent the spread of a continually mutating virus.

The interviewer points out that as the virus continues to change, it means we won't be able to "turn the page on coronavirus, because there might be new variants ..."<sup>25</sup> to which Fauci responds, "It doesn't have to be if the overwhelming majority of the people in this country get vaccinated. We could nail this down by just crushing it."<sup>26</sup>

So, within the space of four minutes Fauci said that without a doubt, people can get infected after vaccination and carry enough virus to transmit the infection – BUT – if the overwhelming majority of people are vaccinated the virus would be crushed.

## Fact Checkers Believe What's Missing Is Context

The evidence about mask effectiveness does not change based on one virus among well over 200 different types<sup>27</sup> that affect the respiratory system. February 5, 2020, Fauci wrote in an email: "The typical mask you buy in the drug store is not really effective in keeping out virus, which is small enough to pass through the material."<sup>28</sup>

June 2, 2021, under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), BuzzFeed received 3,234 pages of Fauci's emails.<sup>29</sup> Some of these emails concerned the changing mask recommendations for the community. The writer of a fact-checking article in USA Today wrote that guidance on masks and other mitigating measures were updated as scientists learned more about the virus.

Ultimately, the writer defends the information released through the FOIA, claiming that the emails are missing context.<sup>30</sup> In other words the supposedly most superior infectious disease expert in the U.S. only developed a greater understanding about the effectiveness of masks against viruses, which have been used and studied for decades,<sup>31</sup> as the SARS-CoV-2 infection evolved over 2020.

## Half-Truths About Gain-of-Function Research and Herd Immunity

Gain-of-function research can make a pathogen more infectious or more lethal. The moratorium on gain-of-function research that began in October 2014 was lifted in 2017 so federal money could once again be used for this purpose.<sup>32</sup> In this short video, Jordan quickly illustrates the change in Fauci's position over the past 18 months, saying:<sup>33</sup>

*"He initially said the United States taxpayer money did not fund the Wuhan Institute of Virology. He later changed that to say, no we did fund it, but it was through a sub-grant.*

*Then he subsequently said, no we funded it but we did no gain-of-function research. And then just last Sunday he said, we funded it, there was gain-of-*

*function research, but it was a sound scientific decision. And then he said this:  
It would have been negligent to not fund the lab in China."*

Jordan goes on to say, "Talk about being all over the board. I'll tell you what's negligent. Negligent is Dr. Fauci's ever-changing statements to the American people regarding the subject matter that this committee should be looking into."

In June 2021, The Nation pointed out that as he testified before the U.S. Senate in May, "Fauci was asked by Rand Paul, 'Do you still support [National Institutes of Health] funding of the lab in Wuhan?'" to which Fauci replied "with all due respect, you are entirely and completely incorrect."<sup>34</sup> However, this half-truth, told after his admission that it would have been negligent not to fund the lab in China, is not a noble lie as it doesn't protect anyone except Fauci.

Later in his testimony, Fauci hedged: "Dr. Baric is not doing gain-of-function research, and if it is, it is according to the guidelines, and it is being conducted in North Carolina."<sup>35</sup> So, does this mean research is being done, or it isn't?

Fauci's lies include his definition of herd immunity. A New York Times<sup>36</sup> article in December 2020 discussed Fauci's perspective on herd immunity. The reporter noted that in the early months of 2020, Fauci cited a 60% to 70% estimate.

Later in the year he boosted this to 70% to 75% during television interviews. In an interview with CNBC news December 16, 2020, he said, "I would think that you would need somewhere between 70, 75, maybe 80%."<sup>37</sup>

In a telephone interview with The New York Times the very next day, Fauci admitted that he had slowly been moving the goal posts, "partly based on new science and partly based on his gut feeling that the country is finally ready to hear what he really thinks."<sup>38</sup>

Fauci claimed he had delayed raising the estimate because of vaccine hesitancy, saying, "We really don't know what the real number is. I think the real range is somewhere between 70 to 90 percent. But, I'm not going to say 90 percent."<sup>39</sup>

## **Can Fauci Predict the Future?**

What is Fauci saying? In his own words, he was raising the estimate for the target range for herd immunity to promote more people taking the vaccine. However, infectious disease specialists are not necessarily social behavioral experts and cannot predict how people will react to information.

Fauci claims he downplayed the importance of wearing masks to avoid a shortage for health care professionals. However, does this mean he knew masks were not effective against viral transmission and were less likely to be effective in the community, or that he just didn't care?

The question remains, do you want a public health official who reports the facts transparently, or one who manipulates your behavior to take specific actions?

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