

David Fuller: An example of how unqualified ‘journalists’ attempt to discredit and silence anybody publishing COVID-19 research that challenges the ‘official narrative’

Scott McLachlan

Introduction

On 12 August 2021 David Fuller wrote a long article¹ attempting to discredit the work of those who have challenged the ‘official’ narrative on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines and alternative treatments. His article claims to be a *detailed investigation* into two independent journalists who produce the *Dark Horse* podcast² - Bret Weinstein and Heather Heying, as well as several of their on-air guests³. However, the article quickly descends into a polemic aimed at others including Dr Pierre Kory, myself and co-authors. As I will show here, when challenged about the personal attacks against me in the article, Fuller claimed he had never heard of me and then tried to extricate himself from this by saying that he was not responsible for writing it - despite him being the sole named author.

Here I expand on three Twitter threads I posted on August 19⁴, August 20⁵, and August 22⁶ in response to Fuller’s hit piece.

Who is David Fuller?

David Fuller, is a “writer and journalist” who produces documentaries mainly for Channel 4 and the BBC⁷. Fuller started his own website called *Rebel Wisdom*⁸ in 2018, which he describes as a platform for *philosophical, transformational and cultural topics*⁹. The website asserts that he blogs “*frequently about politics, and the inner world*”, but the link provided on that statement (<https://medium.com/@davidfuller>) takes you to the page shown in Fig. 1. We might be given to wonder who Samuel Hinton is and why a URL containing David Fuller’s name lands on an empty account for Mr Hinton - but this isn’t the only incongruity we will see in the writings and claims of David Fuller.

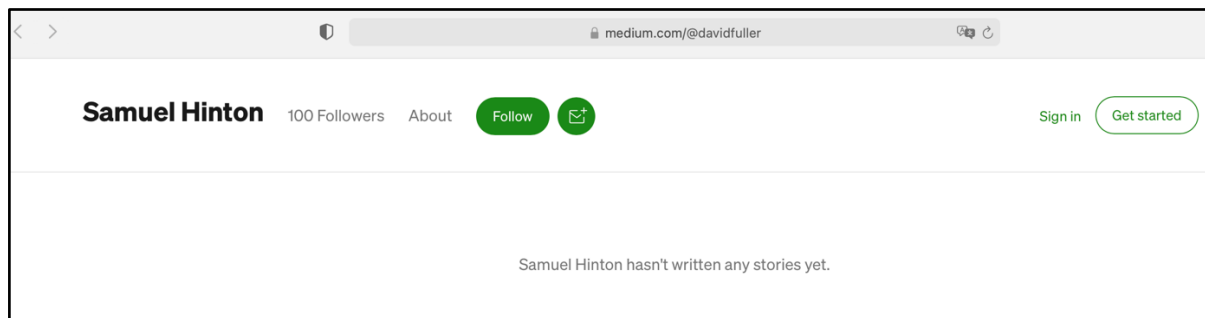


Figure 1: The @davidfuller page on Medium

¹ <https://medium.com/rebel-wisdom/on-vaccine-safety-ivermectin-and-the-dark-horse-podcast-an-investigation-f32491d4c970>

² <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/bret-weinstein-darkhorse-podcast/id1471581521>

³ In the interests of full disclosure: We have never been a guest nor have we solicited mention of ourselves, our work, or the work of others on *Dark Horse*.

⁴ https://twitter.com/Dr_ScottMc/status/1428333897117491200?s=20

⁵ https://twitter.com/Dr_ScottMc/status/1428798588969181195?s=20

⁶ https://twitter.com/Dr_ScottMc/status/1429493765417340937?s=20

⁷ <http://davidfuller.tv>

⁸ <https://www.rebelwisdom.co.uk/>

⁹ 1 at para 4.

Fuller claims to be engaged in a self-mediated truth-finding exercise he calls *SenseMaking*. However, from the outset his efforts are no different to those who have recently self-appointed themselves as ‘*fact checkers*’ - journalists often armed with little more qualification than a liberal arts or English literature degree who, for no other reason than the fact that they have found a platform, have decided they know more than clinicians, researchers and professors with far more appropriate qualifications in medicine, health science, health informatics, health law, mathematics or statistics. Often, these *SenseMaking* ‘*fact checkers*’ do little more than cross-link each other’s articles as ‘supporting evidence’ to debunk, discredit or deny what can sometimes be rigorously researched findings that run counter to the mainstream media’s COVID-19 narrative. And when they have nothing legitimate to support their views, ‘*fact checkers*’ like Fuller resort to indirect insults by linking to statements made by anonymous social media posters (Fig. 2 & 3) like **uberfeminist** described as the *nastiest* and *vilest* around (Fig. 4), which Fuller happily cites as though they are *authoritative sources*.



Figure 2: A typical post by the anonymous Twitter account @UberFeminist (UF)



Figure 3: A post in the @UberFeminist (UF) thread linked by David Fuller in his article

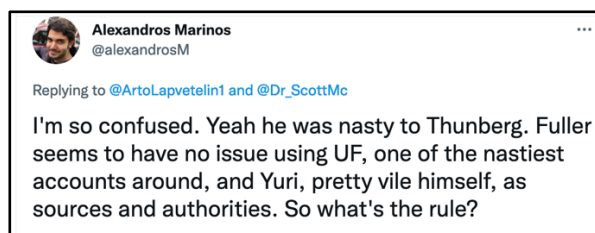


Figure 4: One of many posts describing @UberFeminist (UF) and another linked Twitter account (Yuri) cited in Fuller's article

Fuller’s claims about our work

Fuller’s claims relate primarily to an article¹⁰ in which I was the lead author with five other named co-authors. The article was a detailed analysis of a subset of the initial publicly available data (from VAERS) on vaccine adverse reaction. The article currently has over 89,000 reads on ResearchGate.

Media narrative, fact checking and Tucker Carlson in the ‘lead in’

Fuller opens his criticism of our work with the statement:

¹⁰ Neither in the *Executive Summary* or *Introduction*.

There hasn't been a systematic response to the paper's more detailed claims, but there are reasons to be suspicious¹¹.

He follows this imputation, presumably to demonstrate one of the alleged *reasons*, by stating:
Much of the lead-in to the paper is highly opinionated, a polemic against 'the media narrative and fact-checking' that mentions Tucker Carlson and several tweets the authors find objectionable.

This reproachful claim is deceptive and misleading.

First, nowhere in the 'lead-in' to our article do we mention *Tucker Carlson*. Nor do we discuss *the media narrative* or *fact checkers*. While these terms do arise in our paper, they only occur in the final paragraphs of the work. They occur in that area most academic works regard as *the discussion*, and have absolutely no bearing on the method or results already presented in the leading sections of the paper.

The characterisation by Fuller that we discuss these items in a manner *highly opinionated* and as a *polemic* is also wrong. Our crime, in Fuller's estimation, appears to be that we lift the veil on who exactly the so-called *fact checkers* really are. That the vast majority, like him, are journalists lacking relevant qualifications in the often highly technical, clinical and contested domains they claim to be fact checking¹². We make very clear that the reason we mention Carlson is because he is the **only** major TV presenter to have asked the following obvious questions about the same VAERS data we were analysing:

- How many people have died after taking [this medication]?
- What are the potential risks from taking [this medication]?
- What do we *really know* about the potential risks from taking [this medication]?

We simply pointed out that these were appropriate questions to ask and did not comment on anything else said in Carlson's piece to camera.

Our 'credentials'

In addition to trying to discredit our research of the basis of what he assumes our political beliefs to be, Fuller impugns our credentials. He writes:

The paper is a preprint... and it's authors don't seem to have the best credentials, either.

He doesn't support this claim either directly in its own paragraph, or even in the next paragraph. He leaves this claim hanging as if presenting knowledge that is either notorious or a *fait accompli*.

For the record, before gaining my PhD in computer science and health informatics I gained separate Masters degrees in Science and Law, which in turn had followed previous undergraduate study in health (clinical nursing), computer and information sciences. I am extensively published in the area of health informatics and health data analysis. These would seem to be relevant qualifications for someone analysing and commenting on what is a large health reporting dataset.

¹¹ Emphasis added.

¹² This is certainly the case for most who post at <https://www.factcheck.org>, including prolific *fact check* poster *Catalina Jaramillo*, a pre-COVID NPR reporter who berates others who do not present with appropriate scientific or medical qualifications while hiding behind her journalism major with aspirations in environmental issues and public policy but entirely lacking qualifications in immunology or medical science to support her own opposing viewpoints. The same is also true at <https://factcheck.afp.com> where career journalists and editors like *W.G. Dunlop* dispense personal opinion under the banner of *COVID Fact Checking* on a range of highly technical medical topics for which he possess no training or relevant qualification (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/w-g-dunlop-aa867920>)

My co-authors hold a variety of similarly relevant top-shelf qualifications. Fenton is world-renowned expert in probabilistic risk assessment¹³ and is Professor of Risk and Information Management at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL). Osman holds a PhD in Experimental Psychology and is currently a Reader in Experimental Psychology at QMUL. Dube holds a PhD in Computer Science and has researched and published extensively in health informatics and the privacy and ethical issues of using patient data. Chiketero is a Registered Nurse with more than a decade of experience. Choi holds Honours and Master's degrees in Health Science (Health Informatics). Critically, we also had two registered doctors and a practicing midwife working with us on our analysis of the VAERS data. However, given how the GMC and NMC have publicly attacked any member who doesn't absolutely adhere to the government and NHS narrative on COVID-19 issues, we felt it better to withdraw their names from the final preprint release to protect them and their current patients.

The paragraph of peculiar claims

In the next paragraph of his article (Fig. 5) Fuller claims that I have been *taken off Twitter*. This is, to say the least, grossly misleading; my account was unavailable for several days after someone with an IP address in the UK tried to hack into it which led Twitter to rightly lock the account. Shortly before the hacking attempt a complaint was apparently made *by a journalist* concerning posts on my account, yet no offending post was ever identified. It took several days to get Twitter staff to return the correct phone number onto the account and reset the password so that I could access it again. Given that these events all coincided with release of Fuller's article, it may be possible that this was coordinated rather than coincidence. Either way, the claim I was taken off Twitter was exaggerated for effect, but remains completely false.

The lead author, McLachlan (now taken off Twitter), has made several peculiar claims throughout the pandemic and beyond, including suggestions that: masking is causing pneumonia, unused swabs are creating positive tests, that Greta Thunberg should kill herself, Andrew Wakefield's autism and vaccine paper is better than we think, and (together with another red-flag raising co-author, Norman Fenton) that the lockdown "are just the precursor for climate lockdowns".

Figure 5: The 'peculiar claims' paragraph

Fuller's justification for the other claims in this paragraph are based entirely on three inflammatory Twitter postings of UberFeminist (some of whose previous posts we showed in Figs. 2 & 3). They are shown in Figures 6-8 (all were posted on 21 July). Fuller cites these posts, seemingly without having conducted any further research of his own, to validate the wider context and ignorantly collects them together in one prolonged sentence for amplification. In each case UberFeminist, like Fuller, makes inferences about something I posted on Twitter without directly linking to my real posts (he/she uses screenshots instead). This is to presumably to shield their audience from the true context and meaning of my tweets, which runs counter to the inferences both are making. UberFeminist's posts are little more than misleading *ad hominem* attacks and are in no way legitimate or credible review of the content. Specifically:

1. The tweet in Fig. 6 references a response I made to a tweet that includes a link to a paper from the DANMASK trial¹⁴ which concluded that *there is insufficient evidence to suggest wearing a mask as you go about daily errands will protect you from infection*, and that the prolonged mask wearing and poor mask hygiene practices of many of the general public increased the likelihood of bacterial pneumonia in the mask wearer. In the context of the wider thread from which UberFeminist deceptively pulls this one post¹⁵, I am not making the claim myself. Rather, as above (in italics), I am simply paraphrasing conclusions drawn from the paper itself.

¹³ <https://www.normanfenton.com/>

¹⁴ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32829745/>

¹⁵ https://twitter.com/Dr_ScottMc/status/1329332418961170432?s=20

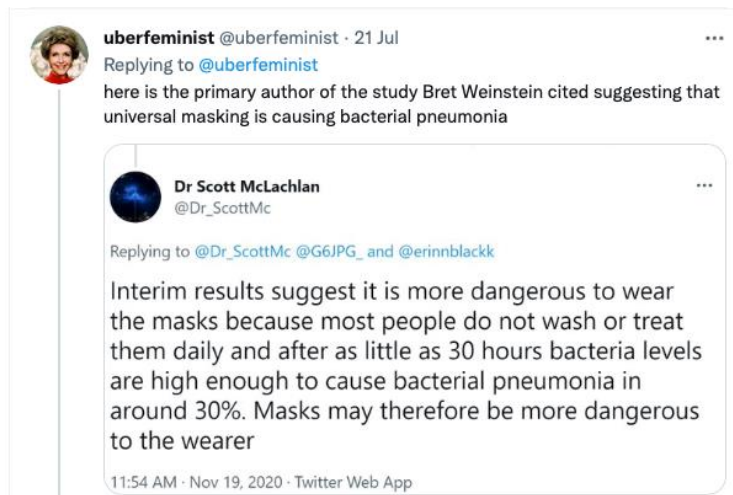


Figure 6: A post about prolonged mask wearing and possible increased bacterial infection

2. The post in Fig. 7 is one in which I stated a test was conducted using an unused swab which returned a positive COVID-19 result. Firstly, who is UberFeminist to say whether or not this happened, nor indeed whether or not I observed it? This anonymous malefactor cannot possibly know the answer to either of these propositions, yet he or she elevates themselves to sit in judgement of them.

Mainstream media and academic articles have variously reported that swabs taken from fruit juice¹⁶, goats¹⁷, soft drinks¹⁸, flaws in brand new manufacturer-supplied lab equipment¹⁹, unintentional laboratory contamination²⁰, and even unused cotton swabs²¹ have all returned positive PCR test results. The test I observed in a London lab was separately repeated in overseas labs by other researchers, including a follow-up test reported by Dr Edouard Broussalian in Belgium²². Given that some of these have been reported in the MSM on what is presumably the same political stance as both UberFeminist and Fuller, they surely cannot be arguing that all of these instances are fabrications?

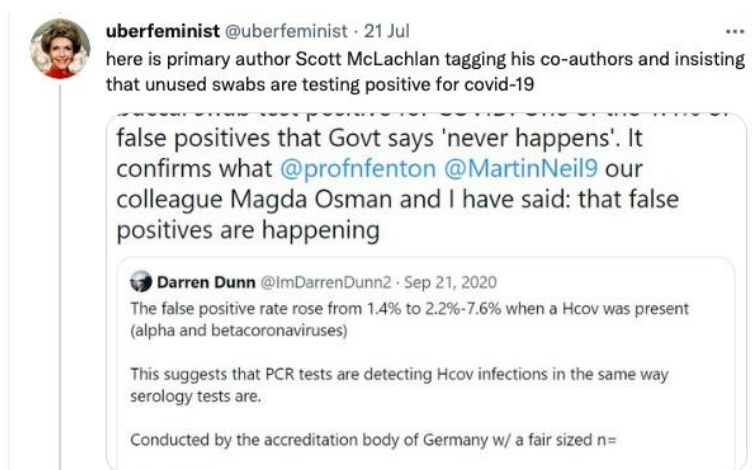


Figure 7: False positives from an unused swab

¹⁶ <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/health/coronavirus/watch-ni-radio-reporter-shows-how-fruit-shoots-can-change-covid-tests-from-negative-to-positive-40603574.html>

¹⁷ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-tanzania-idUSKBN22F0KF>

¹⁸ <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20210705-how-children-are-spoofing-covid-19-tests-with-soft-drinks>

¹⁹ <https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/coronavirus/state-says-90-positive-covid-9-test-results-were-false/2304893/>

²⁰ <https://www.surrey.ac.uk/news/false-positive-covid-19-tests-may-be-result-contamination-laboratories>

²¹ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11939394/>

²² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GcnUNsFSWeY>

- The third UberFeminist post Fuller draws on is one which Fuller characterises my tweets as arguing that *Andrew Wakefield's autism and vaccine paper is better than we think*. Given the content in the particular screenshot UberFeminist provides, shown in Fig.8, quite a long bow must be drawn to get from the words of the post as shown to *Andrew Wakefield or autism*. Research during the last decade *has indeed* found that the bacteria in our intestinal tracts (often described as *gut flora or microbiota*) can directly influence brain function, brain chemistry (neuro-transmitters) and mood; and that a definite relationship exists between gut flora and many psychiatric disorders²³. Further discussion on the Wakefield paper itself is provided in Appendix A.

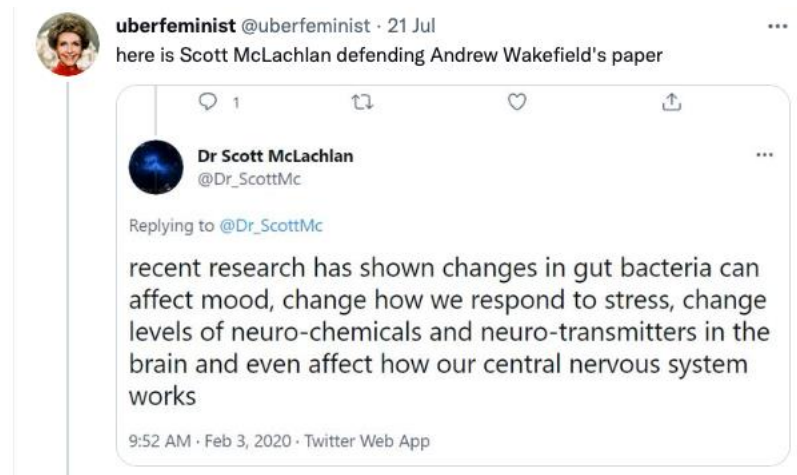


Figure 8: A post Fuller characterises as being about Andrew Wakefield and Autism

As we have seen here, in every case UberFeminist takes one post from a thread and sensationalises it: ascribing negative and incredible meaning to it while taking it *entirely out of context*. At no time does UberFeminist even attempt to give even-handed attention to the research or established science that the post is borne out of.

This is amplified by Fuller's credibility-lacking methodology for journalistic research, and his exceedingly poor 'fact checking' skills where he chooses to cite UberFeminist seemingly as a dependable authoritative source.

It is also important to note in Fig. 5 that Fuller generalises anyone discussing things he disagrees with as *red flag raising*. The implication to be drawn is that anyone who quotes Tucker Carlson or discusses the side effects and existence of now undeniable adverse reactions arising from COVID vaccines must be a right-wing extremist who needs to be investigated, shunned and *cancelled*. In this way Fuller, who actually has no idea at all what our political beliefs are, suggests that the beliefs *he assumes we have* discredit any research we produce because they are not aligned with his own world-view.

Fuller denies responsibility for contents of the article

What makes Fuller's attacks on me especially bizarre is that when challenged about it he claimed never to even have heard of me. In the days after his article was released others, including Steve Kirsch and Pierre Kory, challenged the veracity of Fuller's claims and narrative. By email, one such challenge was

²³ Some of the over 2,000 clinical and academic works that present research on the gut microbe and brain chemistry link include: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fgene.2019.00098>; and <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6469458/>; and <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6199944/>; and <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s13073-016-0292-1>.

made by Kirsch who rallied against Fuller's *ad hominem*²⁴ attack on me, and indirectly at the VAERS work I led that resulted in our preprint paper (Fig. 9).

On Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 1:54 PM Steve Kirsch <stk@skirsch.com> wrote:

...and one more thing re: scott Mclachlan...

there is a big difference between the two of us... You spent all your time researching Scott's background for your ad hominem attack on him.

We spent all of our time with Scott on drilling in on his data... his conversations with HHS, the actual VAERS recordIDs he claimed didn't indicate vaccine as cause of death, etc. We were VERY IMPRESSED with his work. HE IS THE ONLY person we talked to that actually knew things about VAERS that our team didn't already know.

So there is a reason there hasn't been a systematic attack on his paper... because from all our probes on it, everything he said was true.

Figure 9: Steve Kirsch's email to David Fuller

In response (Fig. 10), Fuller doesn't just deny attacking me or knowing who I am - he incredulously denies having ever even heard of me. This denial comes in spite of the fact that he spends several paragraphs in his article attacking me as a straw man for the VAERS data analysis I led, and goes against his claims in the article that he conducted a *detailed investigation*. Such investigation should surely have included reading the twitter posts he is so offended by, and investigating my academic background and qualifications. How is it that he comes away from that investigation having written these paragraphs about me, and yet maintains he has *never even heard of me*?

On Aug 18, 2021, at 8:06 AM, David Fuller <fullydavid@gmail.com> wrote:

hey Steve - I've never even heard of Scott, so I have no idea what you are talking about.

Please see my previous email, and stop messaging me now, this is enough. I'll get back to you if there are developments to report.

many thanks,
David.

Figure 10: Fuller's response

When I pointed out to him that he must have heard of me since he had just investigated and written about me, Fuller provided an astonishingly dishonest response shown in Fig. 11. He purports to blame another author and states that he *agreed with the conclusions* drawn by that author.

²⁴ Note that Fuller himself admits his method constituted an *ad hominem* attack in the same article.

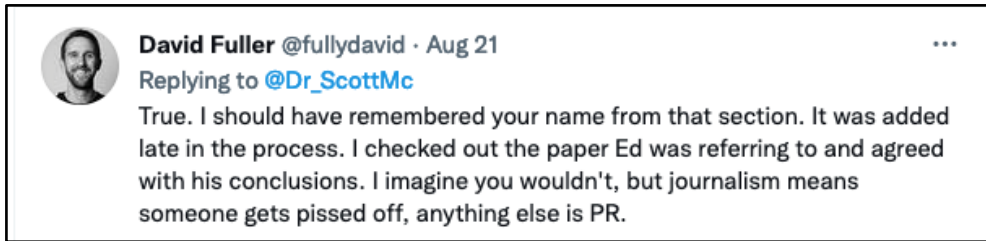


Figure 11: Fuller agrees with the conclusions in his article

When challenged about authorship Fuller came up with a remarkable defence. He compounded the false and misleading claims with a new one claiming someone else *co-wrote* his article (Fig. 12).



Figure 12: Fuller claiming an unnamed co-author in the by-line

As countered by Professor Fenton (also Fig. 12), this claim does not stand up to basic scrutiny. Fuller's name is the **only** name at the masthead and on the by-line as well as the end of the article. He has therefore taken ownership of, and responsibility for, the entire article. An article that we have now seen gets many things wrong, and which reports on investigations he seems to have not ever performed or even read.

Fuller's attacks on others

Others who were attacked in Fuller's article have spoken about Fuller's misunderstanding of key documents, events and contexts, his polemic approach, and the seemingly misleading position he promulgates of being a *truth seeker* absent a *personal agenda*. The prominent researcher, Dr Pierre Kory, who was especially attacked in Fuller's article distributed an email to Fuller with all those who Fuller targeted in his article. Kory's email opens with an expression of astonishment at Fuller's character attack of him. He goes on to describe the article as 'misunderstanding' academic research work (including the Peru paper), and implies that Fuller cannot have actually read these works based on the commentary and conclusions contained in Fuller's article. This concurs with Steve Kirsch's comments shown in Fig.10 where he also points out that Fuller spent his time researching and attacking the people, rather than interrogating and critiquing their work.

Fuller asks us in the article to **consider the language being used** when reviewing other people's work, while at the same time one supposes we are meant to ignore the acrimonious and disdainful language Fuller himself relies on. Review of many of the articles Fuller has posted on the rebel Wisdom account show that his *SenseMaking* fact checking project is predominately occupied with divisively criticising and attacking anyone with the temerity to have views Fuller disagrees with. People calling for further investigation into alternate pharmaceutical treatments to COVID jabs for those who are symptomatic with COVID have apparently all been *infiltrated by anti-vaxxers*²⁵. Further, Fuller's journalistic style relies heavily on name-calling and labelling people as *scammers*²⁶, *fascists*²⁷, *reprehensible*²⁸, *dubious actors*²⁹, *psychedelics*³⁰, *ruthlessly corporate*³¹, and *conspiracy theorists*³², and he admits he created his soapbox in order to be critical of such people³³.

And, like other prominent journalist *fact checkers*, Fuller decries others for speaking out on health matters without a medical degree (Fig. 13). Yet where is Fuller's medical degree? Fuller is himself making pronouncements about what he believes is the right medical science to follow, and casting aspersions on anyone who has different views - yet Fuller also appears to lack even basic medical training. At least, as reported but ignored by Fuller, Kirsch was having these discussions with someone who was medically trained. Fuller wrote his article with no such expert input.

More notably, Dr Pierre Kory has made appearances with Steve Kirsch, a computing entrepreneur and medical philanthropist who has shared several other widely-discredited claims relating to the vaccines. Kirsch, who has no medical training — yet was deemed by Kory to have “nailed” the WHO and the NIH on “the insanity that is modern evidence-based medicine” — has advanced suggestions that:

Figure 13: Fuller shooting down others for not having the medical training that he also lacks

Conclusion

Like many of the other posts fuller has published on his Rebel Wisdom account, Fuller's entire article showed predetermination and a complete unwillingness to consider any of the academic and clinical

²⁵ <https://medium.com/rebel-wisdom/has-the-case-for-ivermectin-been-hijacked-by-anti-vaccine-activists-7252b94f8c4a>

²⁶ <https://medium.com/rebel-wisdom/brian-rose-scammer-mayor-of-london-on-journalistic-ethics-and-a-cautionary-tale-eaf067940c22>

²⁷ <https://medium.com/rebel-wisdom/sensemaking-gatekeeping-talking-with-fascists-fda652608f0e>

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ <https://medium.com/rebel-wisdom/cashing-in-on-covid-london-real-david-icke-c4cac9f897dc>

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² <https://medium.com/rebel-wisdom/cashing-in-on-covid-london-real-david-icke-c4cac9f897dc> and <https://medium.com/rebel-wisdom/spirituality-conspiracy-whats-going-on-2c84f91777b0>

³³ *Ibid.* Where he states: “Our system needs critics... Indeed, Rebel Wisdom was itself created with this in mind...”

research evidence that may exist on either side. The article and the sum of Fuller's twitter account shows that he refuses to even consider the possibility that the vaccines may not be totally safe and effective, or that alternative treatments may be effective in treating COVID-19.

In common with many other mainstream journalists there has been a concerted effort to discredit (and ultimately censor) not just the research of those whose findings challenge the mainstream narrative, but also the researchers themselves.

Appendix A

While Wakefield clearly reports³⁴ that parents (that is, not himself or his research colleagues) anecdotally associated the onset of behavioural disorders with MMR vaccination, this is not actually one of his research findings. In fact, in the discussion he strenuously emphasises the following standalone statement:

We did not prove an association between measles, mumps and rubella vaccine and the syndrome described.

In this statement alone he shows that the claim his paper was retracted for was never actually made *in the paper*. His paper does not claim MMR jabs cause autism - in fact it states the opposite quite clearly. The actual research suggests there may be some relationship between chronic intestinal inflammation observed in the subject children and the affective changes in mood, behaviour and neuro-development. Wakefield's paper discusses theories about altered digestion and gut absorption, and altered chemical processes in the intestines. However, and likely because his research was 'cancelled'³⁵ before he could make the connection, he never fully realises the link between the inflammation and the other microbial histological findings he observed and neurological changes that so many present day researchers and clinicians now know absolutely exists. So in rebuttal, it may be fair to note that Wakefield's retracted paper was formative in the gut-brain link research space. Had he been allowed to continue, and had he succeeded, he would have pre-empted all of the work I cite in footnote 23.

³⁴ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(97\)11096-0/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(97)11096-0/fulltext)

³⁵ to use the current term for people being shut down, taken off the air, vilified and often having their life's work withdrawn