

Viewpoint: We can't blame genetics for government 'indifference, missteps and political calculations' in COVID-19 deaths

The influx of geneticists studying Covid-19 is good news; brilliant minds that examine a problem from different perspectives is our most likely way forward.

But it also highlights a new set of concerns. Finding a gene is one thing; whether that gene determines an incontrovertible cause for Covid-19 mortality is something else. A genetic predisposition can easily be mistaken as a death sentence, but in many cases, luck, exercise, and a good diet can still play a role in reducing the risk of disease. Despite this, it's easy to imagine that the emphasis on genetics could take the heat off political leaders like President Donald Trump or Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro, who have downplayed their responsibilities during this crisis. How convenient it would be for them to be able to suggest that a disastrously managed, highly lethal pandemic outbreak was actually nothing more than the result of the wrong genes in the wrong place at the wrong time.

...

We welcome the expertise of the newest scientists on the block with their swirls of DNA and brilliantly sideways views of how things happen. But even if they do find a genetic basis to explain the different rates of mortality, we must not lose sight of the fact that the government's indifference, missteps and political calculations are responsible for the tragic deaths of more than 109,000 people in the US.

[Read the original post](#)