

Orthodoxy v Heterodoxy: How our reaction to the coronavirus is challenging notions of verifiable science and truth

What if SARS-CoV2 leaked from a lab? What if there are long-term effects of mRNA vaccines? What if Ivermectin is a safe and effective prophylaxis against, and treatment for, COVID-19?

...

[T]he answers to these questions are not yet resolved. But the very posing of them has been considered—again—beyond the pale, unacceptable in polite company, outside the Overton window.

...

In the modern era—when the crowd is not just madding but has the capacity to be anonymous and thus avoid any repercussions—many adults are happy to play the schoolyard bully, taunting those whose ideas run even slightly counter to the accepted orthodoxy.

Science functions best when all hypotheses are on the table. Some will be easily dismissed. Others will prove recalcitrant to falsification, even if we eventually come to understand that they are not true. But what science needs, above all else, is the freedom to discuss the possibilities. Without that, there will be no new discoveries.

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What are today’s equivalents of the heliocentric model of the solar system, evolution by natural selection and plate tectonics? Nobody can be certain. And those who claim certainty on such matters should never have control of who gets to speak, or of what they say when they do.

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