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SHARYL ATTKISSON

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(VIDEO) Exclusive Investigation: Separating rumor from fact on Covid-19's origin

DATED: APRIL 27, 2021 BY SHARYL ATTKISSON — [2 COMMENTS](#)

Sharyl Attkisson investigates Covid-19 origins

- Numerous scientific insiders are signing onto the "lab origin" theory for Covid-19 and a link to controversial research funded by your tax dollars.
- High profile health figures who have worked to "debunk" lab origin questions are linked to funding and vaccine research partnerships with China's Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV).
- The U.S.- Chinese research involved genetically engineering bat coronavirus to make it infect human airway cells in mice, in order to invent vaccines and other therapeutics.
- U.S. taxpayer money supported the controversial vaccine research with Chinese scientists through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Some support came from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), led by Dr. Anthony Fauci.

Transcript and additional information follow the video.



MRN: 18 BEIJING 138
Date/DTG: Jan 19, 2018 / 190739Z JAN 18
From: AMEMBASSY BEIJING
Action: WASHDC, SECSTATE ROUTINE
E.O.: 13526
TAGS: SHLH, ETRD, ECON, PGOV, CN
Captions: SENSITIVE
Reference: 17 WUHAN 48
Subject: China Opens First Bio Safety Level 4 Laboratory

1. (SBU) **Summary and Comment:** The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) has recently established what is reportedly China's first Biosafety Level 4 (BSL-4) laboratory in Wuhan. This state-of-the-art facility is designed for prevention and control research on diseases that require the highest level of biosafety and biosecurity containment. Ultimately, scientists hope the lab will contribute to the development of new antiviral drugs and vaccines, but its current

U.S. State Dept. cables
 January 2018

5:58 / 9:52

Transcript with additional info. **Clean transcript without additional info is here.**

When the former head of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Dr. Robert Redfield, recently said Covid-19 likely leaked from a Chinese research lab, news headlines called it "**shocking**."

Dr. Robert Redfield on CNN: "I still think the most likely etiology of this pathogen in Wuhan was from a laboratory— you know, escaped."

That was followed by a flurry of **media reports ridiculing** the notion; insisting that Covid-19 probably jumped from bats to people through an unexplained, natural route. But there's new information that hasn't been widely reported. A sizable segment of the research community has formed the same opinion as Dr. Redfield: that Covid-19 leaked from experiments at the Wuhan Institute of Virology in China.

Jamie Metzl, World Health Organization International Advisory Committee on Human Genome Editing: "There are scientists all around the world who have told me that they believe the most likely origin of COVID-19, of the pandemic, is an accidental lab leak from the Wuhan Institute of Virology."

Jamie Metzl is a member of the World Health Organization International Advisory Committee on Human Genome Editing.

*Additional info: **About Jamie Metzl:** Metzl served as Deputy Staff Director of the Foreign Relations Committee under then-Sen. Joe Biden (2001-2003); on the National Security Council (1997-99); and at the State Department (1999-01) under President Bill Clinton.*

Sharyl (to Metz): "What have you been told, and what have you found about scientists who feel like they can't step forward?"

Metz: "Many of these people are afraid to step forward. They've called it career suicide, because there are so many contentious issues, because the stakes are so high. Because the Chinese government, in collaboration, or conjunction, or maybe not even association, but with some very high-level and prominent scientists have put forward this story that I think is wrong."

Two scientists with knowledge of the matter told me the U.S. government conducted genome sequencing almost immediately in the pandemic. Among other things, they say Covid-19 shows clear hallmarks of man's intervention.

French virologist Luc Montagnier, a Nobel Prize recipient, arrived at the same conclusion a year ago. He says Covid-19's genetics reveal "manipulation." "Someone added sequences," he said. "It's the work of professionals, of molecular biologists...a very meticulous work."

*Additional info: **Analysis saying Covid-19 is lab-derived:** Dr. Stephen Quay, M.D., PhD., CEO of Atossa Therapeutics **conducted** a Bayesian analysis that he says **concluded** beyond a reasonable doubt that Covid-19 is lab-derived.*

Genetic analysis alone isn't 100% conclusive, because results must be compared to viruses from the Wuhan lab. And sources confirm: "We never got the sample from China."

But scientists who spoke with me say genome sequencing, coupled with what's known about research conducted by a U.S.-Chinese partnership, leaves them with little doubt that Covid-19 is a product of experiments.

The scientists I talked to don't want to be quoted by name for fear of repercussions in today's politically-charged environment. They're highly critical that a U.S. research collaboration was allowed with China— a communist nation that has an active bioweapons program and, is arguably, our biggest world competitor and foe.

Scientists from the U.S. and the Wuhan lab joined up on experiments that involved making bat coronavirus more infectious, to try to invent a vaccine.

It's called "gain of function" research, and it's controversial because it could create a lethal virus that escapes and causes a pandemic. So risky, the U.S. temporarily **halted** such studies in 2014.

But an exception was made. The "gain of function" research underway by the U.S. and Wuhan scientists was "reviewed and approved for continued study by [the National Institutes of Health.]" or "NIH."

Reported studies were initiated after the University of North Carolina Institutional Biosafety Committee approved the experimental protocol (Project Title: Generating infectious clones of bat SARS-like CoVs; Lab Safety Plan ID: 20145741; Schedule G ID: 12279). These studies were initiated before the US Government Deliberative Process Research Funding Pause on Selected Gain-of-Function Research Involving Influenza, MERS and SARS Viruses (<http://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/gain-of-function.pdf>). This paper has been reviewed by the funding agency, the NIH. Continuation of these studies was requested, and this has been approved by the NIH.

Above: Excerpt from controversial **2015 Gain of Function study** funded by NIH and approved to continue beyond publication date

NIH didn't only approve the research, it paid for it with six grants of tax dollars, including from the "National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases," led by Dr. Anthony Fauci.

More taxpayer money from Fauci's institute and the U.S. Agency for International Development was funneled to the coronavirus research with China through **EcoHealth Alliance**, a New York based nonprofit led by Peter Daszak, a zoologist who specializes in viruses transmitted from animals to people.

Additional info: **EcoHealth Alliance**: EcoHealth Alliance describes its mission as: "Protecting global health by preventing the outbreak of emerging diseases." According to tax records, the nonprofit brought in \$18.5 million in 2018, almost entirely from U.S. government agencies. Its biggest single, reported expense was about \$5.43 billion in grants to foreign governments. About 1/3 of that total, \$6.3 million, was spent on salaries and other employee-related costs.

EcoHealth Alliances' Top 5 contributors in 2018

- \$11.5 million: from U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
- \$2.5 million: from U.S. Dept. of Defense
- \$601,474: from U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- \$783,412: from U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS)
- \$900,000: from Johnson and Johnson

Additional info: **Johnson and Johnson**: Vaccine maker Johnson and Johnson did not reply to multiple requests for information on its contribution to EcoHealth Alliance.

(a) No.	(b) Name, address, and ZIP + 4	(c) Total contributions	(d) Type of contribution
1	US AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1300 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE WASHINGTON, DC 20004	\$ 11,506,448.	Person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Payroll <input type="checkbox"/> Noncash <input type="checkbox"/> (Complete Part II for noncash contributions.)
2	US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE 1400 DEFENSE PENTAGON WASHINGTON, DC 20301	\$ 2,505,438.	Person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Payroll <input type="checkbox"/> Noncash <input type="checkbox"/> (Complete Part II for noncash contributions.)
3	US DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES 9000 ROCKVILLE PIKE BETHESDA, MD 20892	\$ 601,474.	Person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Payroll <input type="checkbox"/> Noncash <input type="checkbox"/> (Complete Part II for noncash contributions.)
4	US DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY 245 MURRAY LANE, SW 0015 WASHINGTON, DC 20528	\$ 783,412.	Person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Payroll <input type="checkbox"/> Noncash <input type="checkbox"/> (Complete Part II for noncash contributions.)
5	JOHNSON AND JOHNSON 410 GEORGE STREET, 6TH FLOOR NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08901	\$ 900,000.	Person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Payroll <input type="checkbox"/> Noncash <input type="checkbox"/> (Complete Part II for noncash contributions.)

Source: EcoHealth Alliance's 2018 IRS filing

Also working on the research, **Ralph Baric** at the University of North Carolina. His work centered on **genetically manipulating** coronavirus in part to allow for "rapid and rational development...[of]...vaccines and therapeutics."

Additional info: **Vaccine tests:** Baric's 2015 NIH-funded Gain of Function study with the lead virologist from China's WIV involved infecting mice with genetically modified bat coronavirus and testing a "live-attenuated virus vaccination" on them: "For vaccination, young and aged mice were vaccinated by footpad injection...then boosted with the same regimen 22 d later and challenged 21 d thereafter...All experiments were conducted contrasting two experimental groups (either two viruses, or vaccinated and unvaccinated cohorts)."

Together, they teamed up with the renowned Chinese virologist nicknamed "bat woman," at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Shi Zhenli. They engineered genetic hybrids of bat coronaviruses, successfully getting them to infect human airway cells grafted in mice.

Additional info: **China-U.S. research genetically-manipulated bat coronavirus to make it infect human airway cells:** "...**plasmids** containing wild-type, **chimeric** SARS-CoV and SHC014-CoV genome fragments were amplified, excised, ligated and purified. In vitro transcription reactions were then performed to synthesize full-length genomic RNA, which was transfected into Vero E6 cells ...Synthetic construction of **chimeric** mutant and full-length SHC014-CoV was approved by the University of North Carolina Institutional Biosafety Committee and the Dual Use Research of Concern committee."



plas·mid

/ˈplazmɪd/

noun BIOLOGY

a genetic structure in a cell that can replicate independently of the chromosomes, typically a small circular DNA strand in the cytoplasm of a bacterium or protozoan. Plasmids are much used in the laboratory manipulation of genes.

Chimeric genes (literally, made of parts from different sources) form through the combination of portions of two or more **coding sequences** to produce new genes.

Peter Daszak, EcoHealth Alliance: "You can manipulate them in the lab pretty easily..."

Daszak talked about the collaboration in this [interview](#) [Virology Today] just before the Covid-19 outbreak. He said the team's research was designed to stop coronavirus from crossing into people, and to help develop a vaccine for the resulting illness: SARS.

Daszak: "The logical progression for vaccines is, if you're going to develop a vaccine for SARS, people are going to use Pandemic SARS, but let's try to insert some of these related...and get a better vaccine."

Additional info: **From Peter Daszak Virology Today interview:** [In the interview](#) published online on Dec. 9, 2019, EcoHealth Alliance's Daszak discussed testing of modified coronaviruses on human cells and humanized mice in the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV). EcoHealth Alliance, which receives most of its funding from U.S. federal agencies, has provided funds for bat coronavirus research with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Phase 1 of a study Daszak coordinated with Shi Zhengli at WIV to catalog bat coronaviruses in China is reported to have taken place from 2014 to 2019.

Discovery of a rich gene pool of bat SARS-related coronaviruses provides new insights into the origin of SARS coronavirus

Ben Hu , Lei-Ping Zeng , Xing-Lou Yang , Xing-Yi Ge, Wei Zhang, Bei Li, Jia-Zheng Xie, Xu-Rui Shen, Yun-Zhi Zhang, Ning Wang, Dong-Sheng Luo, Xiao-Shuang Zheng, Mei-Niang Wang, [Peter Daszak](#), Lin-Fa Wang, Jie Cui , Zheng-Li Shi 
[[view less](#)]

Published: November 30, 2017 • <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.ppat.1006698>

Above: 2017 study partnership between Daszak and Chinese scientists from the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV)

Funding: This work was jointly funded by National Natural Science Foundation of China (81290341, 31621061) to ZLS, China Mega-Project for Infectious Disease (2014ZX10004001-003) to ZLS, Scientific and technological basis special project (2013FY113500) to YZZ and ZLS from the Ministry of Science and Technology of China, the Strategic Priority Research Program of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (XDPB0301) to ZLS, the National Institutes of Health (NIAID R01AI110964), the USAID Emerging Pandemic Threats (EPT) PREDICT program to PD and ZLS, CAS Pioneer Hundred Talents Program to JC, NRF-CRP grant (NRF-CRP10-2012-05) to LFW and WIV "One-Three-Five" Strategic Program (WIV-135-TP1) to JC and ZLS. The funders

Above: Funding notice for the 2017 China-US study

As far back as 2015, numerous independent scientists **objected** to the "gain of function" research with China. In a published paper, a virologist at the Pasteur Institute in Paris (Simon Wain-Hobson) noted the research had produced an engineered novel coronavirus that "grows remarkably well" in human cells and "If the virus escaped, nobody could predict the trajectory." A biodefense expert (Richard Ebright, Molecular biologist, Rutgers University) added: "The only impact of this work is the creation, in a lab, of a new, non-natural risk."

Additional info: **Coronavirus used as "vaccine vector"**: Scientists have long conducted research into the "potential of coronaviruses as vectors for vaccine development" noting that, "[s]everal features make these viruses attractive as vaccine and therapeutic vectors." Some research has involved "recombinant" coronaviruses altered in a lab, "bringing together genetic material from multiple sources." Scientists have also noted "unique safety issues associated with virus-vector vaccines," warning that such vaccines could mix with wild strains of coronavirus and "theoretically generate a more pathogenic strain."

Additional info: **How viral vector vaccines work:** "**Viral vector vaccines** use live viruses to carry DNA into human cells. The DNA contained in the **virus** encodes antigens that, once expressed in the infected human cells, elicit an immune response."

In 2018, the year before China's outbreak, U.S. State Department science diplomats visited the Wuhan Institute of Virology. They said the research conducted on bat coronaviruses was critically important. But they were so concerned about safety issues at the lab, they dispatched sensitive **cables** to Washington D.C. warning that the work posed a possible risk of a new SARS-like pandemic. Josh Rogin at the Washington Post later obtained and published the cables.

*Additional info: **About the State Dept. cables:*** According to sensitive U.S. diplomatic **cables** from the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, China, published by the **Washington Post** last July, the Washington Institute of Virology (WIV) took 11 years to build the highest level biosafety lab, level 4, to research "among the most virulent viruses that pose a high risk of aerosolized person to person transmission." Construction was finished Jan. 31, 2015 and the lab was accredited by the Chinese in Feb. 2017. The cables, dated Jan. 19, 2018, the year before the Covid-19 outbreak, found, "The new lab has a serious shortage of appropriately trained technicians and investigators needed to safely operate this high-containment laboratory." According to the cables, the Wuhan lab "has scientific collaborations" with the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston— supported by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), which is led by Dr. Fauci. Further, according to the cables, Fauci's institute and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) had supported a five year **study** (2017) on bat coronaviruses with the Chinese scientists from the Wuhan lab and Peter Daszak of EcoHealth Alliance.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases: "Obviously, there are a number of theories..."

For his part, Fauci responded to Redfield's opinion— that Covid-19 escaped from the Wuhan lab— without addressing his agency's funding of research at issue.

***Fauci:** "So Dr. Redfield was mentioning that he was giving an opinion as to a possibility. But again there are other alternatives, others that most people hold by."*

*Additional info: **Fauci comments about Redfield:*** "The alternative explanation which most public health individuals go by, is that this virus was actually circulating in China, likely in Wuhan, for a month or more before they were clinically recognized at the end of December of 2019. If that were the case, the virus clearly could have adapted itself to a greater efficiency of transmissibility over that period of time, up to and at the time it was recognized."

Fauci declined our interview request.

Additional info: **Fauci documents:** The federal government has failed to lawfully respond to multiple Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests I made regarding Fauci's emails, which are public documents. The documents are required by law to be produced within 30 days. It's been over a year.

May 1, 2020

Sharyl Attkisson

Re: FOI Case No. 53945

Dear Ms. Attkisson:

This acknowledges your April 8, 2020, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request addressed to National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) FOIA Office, which was received in this office April 9, 2020, and amended on May 1, 2020. You requested copies of all email communications mentioning "SARS-COV-2," and/or "coronavirus," and/or "COVID-19," to or from Dr. Anthony Fauci, and/or on which Fauci is copied on the following dates in 2020: Jan. 16, Jan. 23, Jan. 28- Jan. 31, Feb. 11, Feb. 21, Feb. 24-Feb. 25, March 11, April 2-April 3.

Above: NIH has failed to provide a lawful response to FOIA requests made over a year ago.

So did Baric, the researcher at the University of North Carolina as did Daszak— the researcher who leads EcoHealth Alliance.

Additional info: **About Ralph Baric's vaccine-related work:** Baric lists his specific areas of interest as: Coronavirus Reverse Genetics and vaccine development. "We have developed infectious cDNAs from two coronaviruses," he writes on his bio page. "Specific applications include...rearranging the coronavirus gene... development of coronavirus replicon RNAs and coronavirus replicon particles for vaccine development... Most of the research in our laboratory has used coronaviruses as models to study the genetics of RNA virus transcription, replication, persistence, and cross species transmission. We have also been using alphavirus vaccine vectors to develop novel candidate vaccines against caliciviruses."

On Twitter, Daszak called the idea that Covid-19 links to his research— "rabbit hole conspiracies."

"The same gang of right wing media outlets are also posting fraudulent claims about my work," Daszak tweeted. "Pure politics w/out a care for how this ultimately puts public health at

risk."

Despite Daszak's research partnership with Wuhan lab scientists, the World Health Organization raised eyebrows by inviting him to help investigate the origins of Covid-19. That team recently issued a report saying it's "extremely unlikely" the virus came from a lab.

*Additional info: **WHO findings:*** In February, a World Health Organization (WHO) team claimed: "The findings suggest that the laboratory incidents hypothesis is extremely unlikely to explain the introduction of the virus to the human population."

*Additional info: **Risk of experiments:*** Daszak acknowledged in a 2015 [presentation](#) that experimenting on coronavirus with the "humanized" mice have the highest degree of risk.

Sharyl to Metzl: "Do you have any idea who was behind the effort in the United States to controversialize the mere asking of the question about whether it came from a lab early on?"

Metzl: "Absolutely. I have repeatedly called for Peter Daszak to be removed from the WHO Organized International Advisory Committee looking into the origins of the pandemic, and the reason why I have done so is Peter has a tremendous conflict of interest as someone through his organization, the EcoHealth Alliance, who is a significant funder of Gain of Function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology."

Metzl says Daszak and EcoHealth Alliance were a [driving force](#) behind efforts to discredit questions about a lab origin of Covid-19 as "crackpot theories."

*Additional info: **Attempts to discredit China lab link:*** Early in the pandemic, as reporters followed the Covid-19 trail, medical journals added "Editors' notes" on the bat coronavirus studies involving China in an attempt to debunk any lab ties at the outset. The notes read: "March 30, 2020, We are aware that this article is being used as the basis for unverified theories that the novel coronavirus causing COVID-19 was engineered. There is no evidence that this is true; scientists believe that an animal is the most likely source of the coronavirus."

They helped orchestrate a [letter](#) signed by prominent scientists labeling talk of lab origins as "conspiracy theories." Their own ties to the Chinese lab in question were omitted.

Metzl: "This letter was considered at the time, very credible. There were a number of Nobel laureates who signed it. And only later did it come out through a Freedom of Information

request that the entire process had been managed and manipulated, and it really took the better part of a year."

As the question is debated, five scientists who spoke with me said the sensitive U.S. research with China should never have been allowed.

One source, a medical doctor, says it was "irresponsible" to "partner with China on how to make [coronavirus] more infectious." Another, also a medical doctor and biodefense expert says, "Hell, no, it's not a good idea...[China has] an active bioweapons program, a very good one...and you're going to cooperate with them on gain of function research? Somebody's IQ dropped sharply when that decision was made."

Additional info: **State Department Fact Sheet Jan. 15, 2021:** On January 15, shortly before the end of Trump's presidency, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo issued a **Fact Sheet** about the origins of Covid-19. It said "several researchers inside the WIV became sick in autumn 2019 . . . with symptoms consistent with both COVID-19 and common seasonal illnesses." It also stated that the Wuhan Institute of Virology had not disclosed all of its related work, and collaborated on secret projects with China's military. In public statements, Pompeo has said there's "enormous evidence" supporting the idea that Covid-19 leaked from the Wuhan lab.

Shi, of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, has been firm in her denial of anything to do with Covid-19 calling the virus, "nature's punishment on the human race." "I swear on my own life that the virus has no connection with the laboratory," Shi said in a statement. "To those people who believe in and are spreading the rumours perpetrated by third-rate media outlets... I would like to give this advice: **Shut your dirty mouths!**"

Additional info: **Biden administration:** The Biden administration has called on the Chinese government to be more transparent and asked WHO to complete a full and independent investigation.

Additional info: **Petition:** About 1,000 people have signed onto a **petition** created by independent scientists asking WHO and EcoHealth Alliance's Peter Daszak to explain more about the 2019 research that was taking place during the time the pandemic broke out.

Additional info: **Ongoing U.S. funding for China's WIV and EcoHealth Alliance:** With the Wuhan Institute of Virology's (WIV) possible role in the Covid-19 outbreak an

open question, the Trump Administration cancelled remaining funding for the EcoHealth Alliance research with WIV on April 27, 2020. After receiving political backlash for the cancelled funding, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) reinstated the grant, but made China receiving additional funds contingent upon WIV answering questions about the lab's practices and the Covid-19 outbreak; and providing a virus sample. EcoHealth Alliance **criticized** the conditions saying it made the research "impossible." On Aug. 27, 2020, it was **announced** that the National Institutes of Health had awarded an even larger grant of taxpayer money, \$7.5 million, to EcoHealth Alliance. EcoHealth Alliance is now reportedly one of 11 institutions and research teams approved to receive part of an \$82 million bundle of U.S. tax money to study viruses crossing from nature into people, and rapid response strategies.

Clean-Transcript:

When the former head of the Centers for Disease Control, Dr. Robert Redfield, recently said Covid-19 likely leaked from a Chinese research lab, news headlines called it "**shocking**."

Dr. Robert Redfield on CNN: "I still think the most likely etiology of this pathogen in Wuhan was from a laboratory— you know, escaped."

That was followed by a flurry of **media reports ridiculing** the notion; insisting that Covid-19 probably jumped from bats to people through an unexplained, natural route. But there's new information that hasn't been widely reported. A sizable segment of the research community has formed the same opinion as Dr. Redfield: that Covid-19 leaked from experiments at the Wuhan Institute of Virology in China.

Jamie Metzl, World Health Organization International Advisory Committee on Human Genome Editing: "There are scientists all around the world who have told me that they believe the most likely origin of COVID-19, of the pandemic, is an accidental lab leak from the Wuhan Institute of Virology."

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Sharyl (to Metzl): "What have you been told, and what have you found about scientists who feel like they can't step forward?"

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French virologist Luc Montagnier, a Nobel Prize recipient, arrived at the same conclusion a year ago. He says Covid-19's genetics reveal "manipulation." "Someone added sequences," he said. "It's the work of professionals, of molecular biologists...a very meticulous work."

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Also working on the research, **Ralph Baric** at the University of North Carolina. His work centered on **genetically manipulating** coronavirus in part to allow for "rapid and rational development...[of]...vaccines and therapeutics."

Together, they teamed up with the renowned Chinese virologist nicknamed "bat woman," at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Shi Zhenli. They engineered genetic hybrids of bat coronaviruses, successfully getting them to infect human airway cells grafted in mice.

Peter Daszak, EcoHealth Alliance: "You can manipulate them in the lab pretty easily..."

Daszak talked about the collaboration in this [interview](#) just before the Covid-19 outbreak. He said the team's research was designed to stop coronavirus from crossing into people, and to help develop a vaccine for the resulting illness: SARS.

Peter Daszak: "The logical progression for vaccines is, if you're going to develop a vaccine for SARS, people are going to use Pandemic SARS, but let's try to insert some of these related, and get a better vaccine."

As far back as 2015, numerous independent scientists [objected](#) to the "gain of function" research with China. In a published paper, a virologist at the Pasteur Institute in Paris (Simon Wain-Hobson) noted the research had produced an engineered novel coronavirus that "grows remarkably well" in human cells and "If the virus escaped, nobody could predict the trajectory." A biodefense expert (Richard Ebright, Molecular biologist, Rutgers University) added: "The only impact of this work is the creation, in a lab, of a new, non-natural risk."

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Dr. Anthony Fauci: "So Dr. Redfield was mentioning that he was giving an opinion as to a possibility. But again there are other alternatives, others that most people hold by."

Fauci declined our interview request. So did Baric, the researcher at the University of North Carolina as did Daszak— the researcher who leads EcoHealth Alliance. On Twitter, Daszak called the idea that Covid-19 links to his research— "rabbit hole conspiracies."

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Metzl: "This letter was considered at the time, very credible. There were a number of Nobel laureates who signed it. And only later did it come out through a Freedom of Information request that the entire process had been managed and manipulated, and it really took the better part of a year."

As the question is debated, five scientists who spoke with me said the sensitive U.S. research with China should never have been allowed.

One source, a medical doctor, says it was "irresponsible" to "partner with China on how to make [coronavirus] more infectious." Another, also a medical doctor and biodefense expert says, "Hell, no, it's not a good idea...[China has] an active bioweapons program, a very good one...and you're going to cooperate with them on gain of function research? Somebody's IQ dropped sharply when that decision was made."

Shi, of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, has been firm in her denial of anything to do with Covid-19 calling the virus, "nature's punishment on the human race." "I swear on my own life that the virus has no connection with the laboratory," Shi said in a statement. "To those people who believe in and are spreading the rumours perpetrated by third-rate media outlets... I would like to give this advice: **Shut your dirty mouths!**"

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About Sharyl Attkisson

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APRIL 27, 2021 AT 9:21 PM

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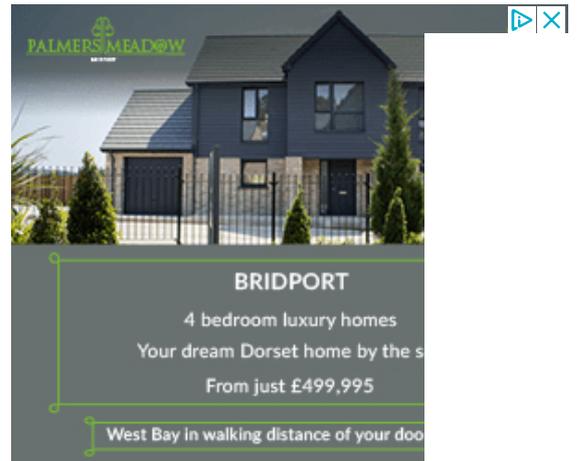
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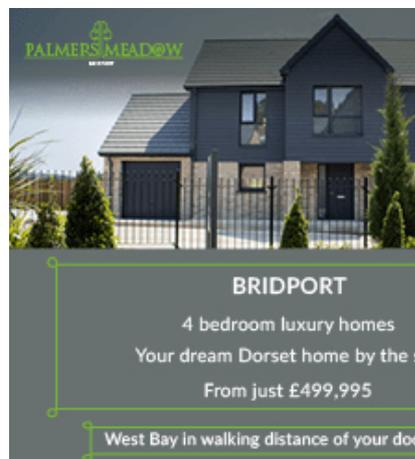
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