



Concerned Scientists' Weekly News Bulletin [June 1, 2020]

NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES

New York Times: [Two crises convulse a nation: A pandemic and police violence](#)

By one estimate, black people accounted for at least 29 percent of known Covid-19 cases in Minnesota, despite making up about 6 percent of the state's population. African-Americans make up 35 percent of coronavirus cases in Minneapolis, though they are less than 20 percent of the city's population.

New York Times: [Blaming China for pandemic, Trump says U.S. will leave the W.H.O.](#)

Last Friday, Trump announced the US will leave the WHO, deeply concerning public health officials across the country. However, it is unclear whether Trump needs congressional approval to do so.

Science: [U.S. lawmakers unveil bold \\$100 billion plan to remake NSF](#)

The National Science Foundation (NSF) would get a sweeping remake—including a new name, a huge infusion of cash, and responsibility for maintaining U.S. global leadership in innovation—under bipartisan bills that have just been introduced in both houses of Congress.

The Hill: [Renewables top coal in the US for the first time in more than 130 years](#)

The last time renewable energy was more widely consumed than coal was prior to 1885, when wood was the main source of energy, according to the Energy Information Administration (EIA).

The Hill: [Trump administration looks to fast track logging on public lands](#)

The proposals from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) would eliminate a 15-day protest period afforded to the public to comment on timber sales and other forest management decisions.

AP: [US sends Brazil malaria drug unproven for COVID-19 treatment](#)

The U.S. has sent to Brazil more than 2 million doses of a malaria drug touted by President Donald Trump as potentially protecting against and treating the coronavirus, even though scientific evidence has not backed up those uses.

The New York Times: [Economic giants are restarting. Here's what it means for climate change](#)

The delay of global climate talks, decreases in international cooperation, and varying economic goals for countries after the coronavirus leaves the future of climate policy uncertain. The EU is focusing their recovery on transitioning away from fossil fuels, while the US is decreasing environmental regulation and China is building more coal plants.

NPR: [Trump takes credit for space launch that got its start a decade ago](#)

With plans for transferring some NASA procedures to commercial companies starting in 2006, the success of the SpaceX launch is due to the “continuity of purpose going from one administration to the next.”

The Guardian: [New Trump public land rules will let Alaska hunters kill bear cubs in dens](#)

The National Park service is reversing Obama-era hunting regulations in Alaska that were established to protect predators and avoid destabilizing local ecosystems.

REGIONAL NEWS

Herald Times: [Candidates forum on science and technology](#)

CSIU organized a forum for Indiana 9th Congressional District candidates focusing exclusively on issues of science and public policy. Seven of eight candidates answered questions posed to them; incumbent Rep. Trey Hollingsworth declined the invitation.

OPINION AND ANALYSIS

Scientific American: [Partisan differences over the pandemic response are growing](#)

New polling by the Pew Research Center finds public trust in medical scientists has increased, but only among Democrats—while optimism about a vaccine is broadly shared. The partisan gap in confidence in medical scientists has widened from just 5 percentage points in 2019 to 22 points today. But while 65 percent of Republicans say they would definitely or probably get a vaccine, 34 percent say they would decline.

Vox: [Inside corporations’ war on science](#)

“The Triumph of Doubt,” a new book by David Michaels, the former assistant secretary of labor for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) under the Obama, offers a close look at how powerful corporations fund junk science and misinformation campaigns in order to obscure evidence and undercut regulatory efforts.

The Boston Review: [Will evidence-based medicine survive COVID-19?](#)

The author, a professor of primary health care sciences at the University of Oxford, argues that evidence-based medicine—or at least, its exalted position in the scientific pecking order—will turn out to be one of the more unlikely casualties of the COVID-19 pandemic and that our definition of good medical and public health practice must be urgently updated.

Nature: [Coronavirus conversations: Science communication during a pandemic](#)

In this new installment of the Working Scientist podcast series about science communication, Pakinam Amer explores crisis communication and asks how researchers can tackle the “infodemic” of hearsay, speculation and falsehoods and how well they have explained the underlying uncertainties to the public.

Science: [New tools aim to tame pandemic paper tsunami](#)

The COVID-19 literature has grown to more than 31,000 papers since January and by one estimate is on pace to hit more than 52,000 by mid-June—among the biggest explosions of scientific literature ever.

InsideClimate News: [How a contrarian scientist helped Trump’s EPA defy mainstream science](#)

James Enstrom’s outsider work on air pollution, at odds with three decades of medical research, has provided the underpinning for the Trump administration’s wide-ranging assault on environmental protection policy, from its retreat on climate change to its current effort to restrict the type of science used by the EPA.

The Harvard Crimson: [How COVID-19 made a Harvard epidemiologist into a public ambassador for science](#)

In the face of a lack of adequate federal communications, Harvard epidemiologist Marc Lipsitch said it is the scientists' duty to take up the role of public communicators, interpreting the information they learn as the public health crisis continues.

Science: [Reducing transmission of SARS-CoV-2](#)

A large proportion of the spread COVID-19 appears to be occurring through airborne transmission of aerosols produced by asymptomatic individuals during breathing and speaking. For society to resume, measures designed to reduce aerosol transmission must be implemented, including universal masking and regular, widespread testing to identify and isolate infected asymptomatic individuals.

The Guardian: [Covid-19 expert Karl Friston: 'Germany may have more immunological "dark matter"'](#)

UCL Neuroscientist Friston who advises the UK's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies on Covid-19 discusses the predictive power of his mathematical modelling and the risk of a second wave.

Inside Higher Education: [Social Scientists on COVID-19](#)

What motivates people to wear masks, the effects of social isolation on children and the elderly, infection rates among the incarcerated. These are just some of the COVID-19 research topics social scientists are investigating right now.

TAKE ACTION

Union of Concerned Scientists: [Don't Let Scientists Be Silenced—Tell the EPA to Listen to Air Pollution Experts](#)

The Trump administration is set to ignore the science on pollutants that affect millions of people in the United States. EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler and the rest of the Trump administration must heed the advice of scientists, protect our health, and strengthen pollution standards.

Our CSIU news bulletin is intended to provide a brief update on recent news, editorials, as well as action items related to science integrity and science policy. Note that editorial pieces and action items are assembled from a variety of sources and organizations; they do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policy priorities of Concerned Scientists @ IU. This week's news bulletin was compiled by ASIU and IU biology major Emma Hand and CSIU member Christoph Irmscher of IU's Department of English. We're looking for volunteers! If you'd like to volunteer—or if you have additional links you'd like to share for future bulletins, send them to Christoph at cirmsche@indiana.edu.

To join our listserv, send an email to csiu-l-suscribe@list.indiana.edu, with the following message in the email body: SUBscribe csiu. To unsubscribe from this list, send an email to csiu-l-unsubscribe@indiana.edu. You can leave the subject line and message blank.