



Covid and Climate Change: A tale of two global crises

When reflecting on Covid-19 and anthropogenic climate change, a surprising number of parallels are revealed. This article explores some of these similarities, and considers the role of global crisis narratives in creating the conditions for increasing levels of centralised coordination and control.

BY ALICE ASHWELL | 06 OCTOBER 2023

At the International Covid Summit 3 held in Brussels in May 2023, Nick Hudson, Chairman of PANDA, stated in an interview with Bright Light News [1]:

Problems are being presented to us continually as ‘global crises’. Very often these global crises are completely fabricated – there is no real substance to them; they exist often in models, not in the real world ... [and] these fabricated global crises admit only global solutions ... no local solution is possible or necessary ...



cannot be directly observed by ordinary people. German sociologist Ulrich Beck was prompted by the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster to explore the societal impact of the many anonymous and invisible threats of global scope resulting from modernity. He argued that, in what he called a 'risk society', people had become radically dependent on specialised scientific knowledge to define what was and what was not dangerous [2]. Today, as members of the public, we are instructed to 'trust the experts' who tell us that these invisible agents are responsible for untold damages to human health and the Earth's climate. We willingly consume the cartoon depictions of a malicious SARS-CoV-2 virus, and images of chimneys belching particulates as truthful illustrations of these invisible deadly enemies.

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and rising levels of atmospheric CO₂ due to human activities causing climate change – are widely accepted. They are not uncontested, however.

Many people contend that Covid-19 was not a lethal pandemic, as we had been made to believe. It tended to affect mainly elderly persons with comorbidities who were poorly treated as a direct or indirect result of new protocols, while most young and healthy people were either mildly affected or not affected at all [3]. In the case of climate change, the overwhelming focus on CO₂ ignores the contribution of volcanoes [4], solar cycles [5], geoengineering [6][7], and general degradation of the biosphere [8]. In short, contrary to what we have been told, the science is not settled.

Numerous scientists have signed the World Climate Declaration [9], which asserts that “There is no climate emergency”. Furthermore, a large number of scientists and other professionals have contested the actual scale of casualties directly associated with the SARS-CoV-2 virus. In 2020, a large number of professionals signed the Great Barrington Declaration [10], which expressed “grave concerns about the damaging physical and mental health impacts of the prevailing Covid-19 policies, recommending instead focused protection for a period. More recently, PANDA’s team of multidisciplinary scientists, argued that SARS-CoV-2 was not entirely novel or particularly deadly in a series of articles published under these titles:

- [What the Diamond Princess tells us about NYC in Spring 2020](#)
- [It is impossible that the vaccines saved 14 million lives in 2021](#)
- [How many lives were actually saved by the Covid-19 vaccines?](#)
- [Did side effects from the Covid shots cause any excess mortality?](#)
- [Was SARS-CoV-2 entirely novel or particularly deadly?](#)
- [Did lockdowns save the world from certain Covid doom?](#)



publications destroyed. Today it is hard to believe that both Galileo Galilei [11] (1564-1642) whose observations by telescope supported the heliocentric model of Copernicus; and Ignaz Semmelweis [12] (1818-1865), who called for disinfecting the hands before assisting at the birth of a child to prevent mothers dying of puerperal fever, were treated as heretics. Then, as now, the authorities could not permit alternative explanations to disrupt their established interests. The list of medical professionals [13] and scientists [14], including Nobel laureates [15], who have been silenced [16][17], dismissed, deregistered, and scorned for remaining true to their observations and convictions regarding covid and climate change is very long indeed, and an uncomfortable measure of the extent to which these fields of inquiry have become corrupted by powerful interests.

The model makers

Another similarity between these two major global crises is the use of computer modelling in predicting their impacts, which has resulted in significant overestimates in both cases [18] [19][20][21]. While models have their uses, they are by their nature utilitarian and unable to grasp the complexity of human, epidemiological, ecological, and climatological systems and processes [22][23]. This renders them dangerous when applied uncritically to prediction, policy-making, and public awareness. As the World Climate Declaration states:

To believe the outcome of a climate model is to believe what the model makers have put in. This is precisely the problem of today's climate discussion to which climate models are central. Climate science has degenerated into a discussion based on beliefs, not on sound self-critical science. We should free ourselves from the naïve belief in



chanting of mantras like ‘Zero Covid’ or ‘Net Zero Carbon’.

Fear sells

Media houses are well aware that our brains are wired for a negativity bias [25], and they also know that ‘fear sells’ [26]. Both in relation to Covid and climate change, the media has picked up on inflated predictions resulting from computer modelling, and fuelled widespread fear and even panic with unremitting doses of propaganda and sensationalism.

Throughout the Covid event, in addition to being assailed by mind-numbing images of the (frankly abnormal) ‘new normal’ in every news bulletin and visit to the supermarket, we were inundated by a tsunami of tallies representing ‘Covid cases’. There was concern that these numbers did not reflect clinical cases, but rather positive PCR test results, which were not just unreliable but arguably fraudulent [27][28][29]. This unreliable test was also used to attribute deaths to Covid, substantially inflating Covid mortality rates, even if this was clearly not the proximal cause of death [30].

In the case of climate change, for decades we have been presented with shocking headlines, disturbing images, and worrying graphs supporting the narrative that rapid global warming due to rising CO₂ levels (for which humans are responsible) is destroying the planet. Every drought, flood, hot summer, or hurricane is blamed on climate change, but so far global warming has failed to live up to the predictions [31].

In 2013, when journalists were still able to critique the climate narrative, the Mail Online reported on the cover-up of a report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) [32]. Politicians were concerned because it revealed that the global temperature had not risen for the previous fifteen years, and they worried that this information would



The role of propaganda during the covid period has been well documented by PANDA [35], with their ‘Breaking the Chains’ campaign [36] exposing many of the behavioural science techniques used to ‘nudge’ the public [37] into accepting and going along with the official narrative. A company that has played a pivotal role in advising governments and media on both their covid and climate change campaigns is the Behavioural Insights Team. Their website curates numerous articles reflecting “thoughts, analyses and materials on the behavioural aspect of ... Covid-19, and how to tackle its spread.”[38] Recently, they have been focusing more attention on climate change, releasing the report *How to build a Net Zero society* [39] in January 2023.

Becoming aware of propaganda techniques during covid was invaluable in helping me recognise their use in the weaponization of climate change [40]. And while this is not the place to expand on propaganda techniques used in relation to these two crises, the following pair of weather forecast maps – both recorded on 21 June – provide an intriguing example of the use of one subliminal tool: colour. They show clearly how, simply by changing the colour scheme, we can tell a completely different story. The temperatures in 2022 appear to be extreme due to the shades of red used on the map. They are, however, noticeably lower than temperatures on that day in 2017, when the green hues suggest nothing out of the ordinary for that time of year.



Screenshot from German weather forecast: Tagesthemen, 20 June 2017 [41]



Screenshot from German weather forecast: Tagesthemen, 20 June 2022 [42]

Even weather forecasts may contribute to fear of climate change.

Censorship is the sibling of propaganda. Getting the populace to buy into a narrative requires both flooding of the airwaves with your version of the truth and suppressing alternatives. As anyone who voiced their misgivings about covid and associated interventions quickly discovered, it was not acceptable to question the official story. Despite the uncertainty surrounding the 'novel coronavirus', there was a dearth of curiosity and debate. Questions were more likely to be met with the cold shoulder, a sense of disbelief, the 'conspiracy



misinformation; a blank YouTube screen telling you that the video you are looking for has been sent to the naughty corner for ‘violating community guidelines’; and swathes of articles repeating the official line, it takes a determined sceptic to research an alternative view.

Catastrophism and centralisation

Considering again the threat of ‘global boiling’ mentioned above, there is a strange – possibly intentional – tendency towards catastrophism amongst those in authority. There is apparent reluctance to consider the possibility that a crisis may not be as dire as initially feared, that our efforts to address that crisis may actually be having an effect, or even that – in the case of climate change – a warming trend may be more positive than a cooling planet [43], and rising CO₂ levels may actually be beneficial [44]. Instead of working to encourage and calm the public, however, the authorities appear to hope that the crisis will continue, showing disappointment when an Omicron variant comes along and heralds the end of the pandemic [45], or when global temperatures appear to stabilise.

Both pandemics and climate change are complex in nature, difficult to understand, and have impacts at a global scale. This makes these issues appear insoluble by ordinary human beings, leaving people feeling not only afraid, but also powerless. In this state, people are more likely to hand responsibility over to powerful actors to solve the problems and tell them what to do. These actors include government representatives and unelected technocrats from supra-national organisations like WHO, the IPCC, and the WEF [46].

While focusing on a major global crisis, a myriad of other issues affecting people tend to be overlooked. For instance, during 2020 and 2021, the single-minded focus on Covid-19 made this appear to be the only health condition worthy of attention. Sadly, this resulted in people suffering and dying from many other untreated diseases and health conditions, as well as



Top-down public health and sustainability policy measures represent the opposite of citizen action at a local level. Centralised responses increasingly ignore human rights, freedoms, and autonomy; they seek to control populations, and offer one-size-fits-all ‘solutions’ to whatever the current crisis happens to be. In contrast, addressing issues at a local level builds a sense of camaraderie, empowerment, and optimism within communities; it also encourages diverse, locally appropriate, and often more affordable solutions.

When issues become global in scale, local action feels almost pointless – I mean, who cares about restoring a local wetland if global boiling is going to evaporate all the water anyway? Instead, all that seems left for climate activists to do is (rather ineffectually) to wave placards [49], deface priceless works of art [50], and glue themselves to roads [51].

Beware the cure

Over the past three years in particular, many have become suspicious about measures to address these global issues that have felt arbitrary, ineffectual, and even nonsensical. These measures have been implemented with no cost-benefit analysis or accountability, but have invariably resulted in debilitating costs for the people.

In the case of covid, measures included masking, lengthy lockdowns with absurd restrictions, and the mass rollout of inadequately tested experimental injections that have turned out to be mostly ineffectual and, in many cases, harmful [52]. At the same time, many experienced clinicians were prevented from treating covid in the early stages with cheap, over-the-counter medicines, resulting in patients having to be hospitalised, where many died.



cattle [55], which are considered major polluters, and to block sunlight with geo-engineering [56] thus risking food security; and confining citizens to fifteen-minute cities [57] where their mobility will be restricted to 'save the planet'.

Breath of death

These two crises are presented as threats to the survival of humanity and the planet. One rather sinister similarity is that both the covid and climate change narratives target human exhalations, deeming them so dangerous that they may cause death. In one case, even in the absence of symptoms, our out-breaths harbour deadly viruses that can kill; in the other, our exhalations are suffused with a gas that is no longer recognised as food for plants, and thus the basic building block of living things, but is now rebranded a 'pollutant' that will overheat the planet and destroy life on earth.

To limit the danger we pose to people and the planet, these crises demand that human beings curtail their activities and withdraw from circulation – in other words, that we live small lives, and sacrifice our freedom and joy. But far more ominous than a simple curtailing of freedoms is the fact that global leaders who promote and profit from these crises have for decades been seriously discussing the need for human depopulation to save the natural world [58]. These Malthusian tendencies are discussed in a separate article, which considers further similarities between Covid and climate change, and reflects on our complicity as ordinary people in sustaining crisis narratives.

Have we learnt from the Covid crisis?

The covid lockdowns gave us a taste of how easily people can be terrified into relinquishing those things that are most precious to humanity – bodily autonomy, contact with family and



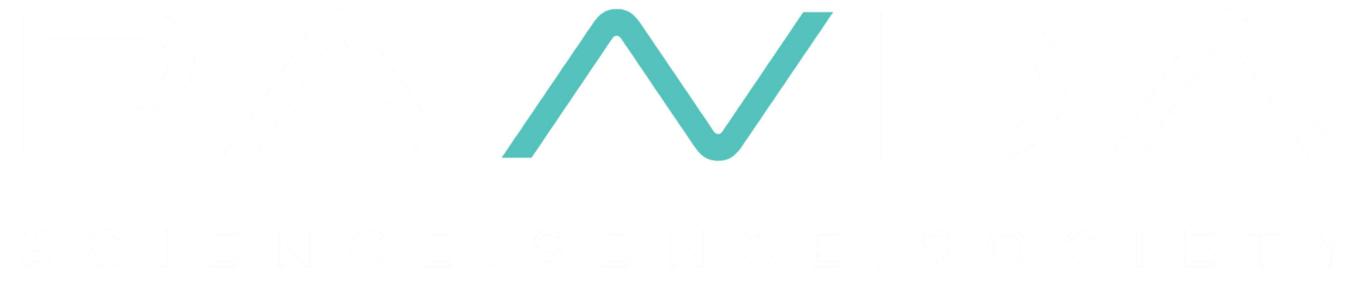
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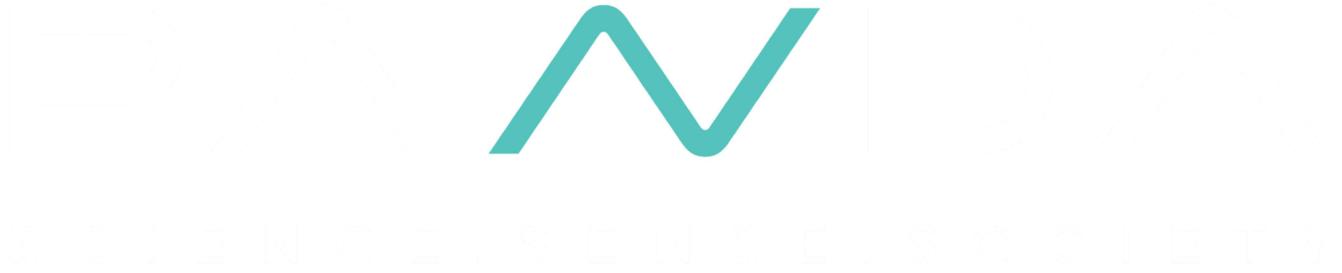
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