

An L Investigation

Blood Money

How This Book Works

This book is an interactive presentation of materials and information. If you see an image, it is hyperlinked so you can click and visit the source where it came from. Throughout, there are images that will link you to videos, articles, images, etc., to supplement the statements and arguments being made. There are footnotes at the bottom of each page as well for every source.

This is a story that I've tried (and failed) to convey several times, and the culmination of a significant amount of research. I hope you enjoy it, and I hope it brings to light some information and connections in one of the darkest periods of American history.

- L

Introduction

Just about all that can be said has been said about Covid-19 by now. Day after day, an endless stream of propaganda from the media creeps into our lives, whether we like it or not. Whether you catch an occasional news clip or video parroting the same underlying ideas, or whether a friend or family member of yours has been coerced into acting as an ambassador for the messaging—it's everywhere, and it's unavoidable. The titan that is the mainstream media designates anyone suggesting individual liberties *still matter*—even in a pandemic—is brainwashed and a threat to humanity. Therefore, many of us became public enemy #1 last year, and we weren't aware of it at the time.

It was a slow creep. We all knew it was happening well before Covid, but a set of scenarios lined themselves up all-too-perfectly to create the new landscape we now have to navigate. It's tricky, and treacherous. A false move can land you in the ambiguous zone of “cancelled,” fired, jailed, and the list goes on.

Brainwashing is easier to do than a lot of people realize. We've learned that over the past year. People want leaders, people want something to emulate. All good stories need a hero and a villain. When the people that get to write the stories that are largely in the public eye don't care to represent reality, the heroes and villains aren't accurate either.

Anyone who is anyone in the legacy media seized the opportunity that Covid-19 gave them, and began writing op-eds, appearing on talk shows and news programs, and seeking attention on social media platforms. They berated President Trump and those who

support him. They made heroes out of scientists twisting narrative for political power. They created living folk heroes out of corrupt politicians by conflating their public feuds with President Trump with actual leadership and competence.

One of the biggest propped-up media heroes of 2020 is Andrew Cuomo, 56th governor of New York, lauded¹ as the “Trump Whisperer,” among other ridiculous things, for the duration of the year. After years of trying and failing to take down President Trump, Andrew Cuomo emerged as a person who could potentially stand up to him... if he got a little bit of help, of course. Which he did.

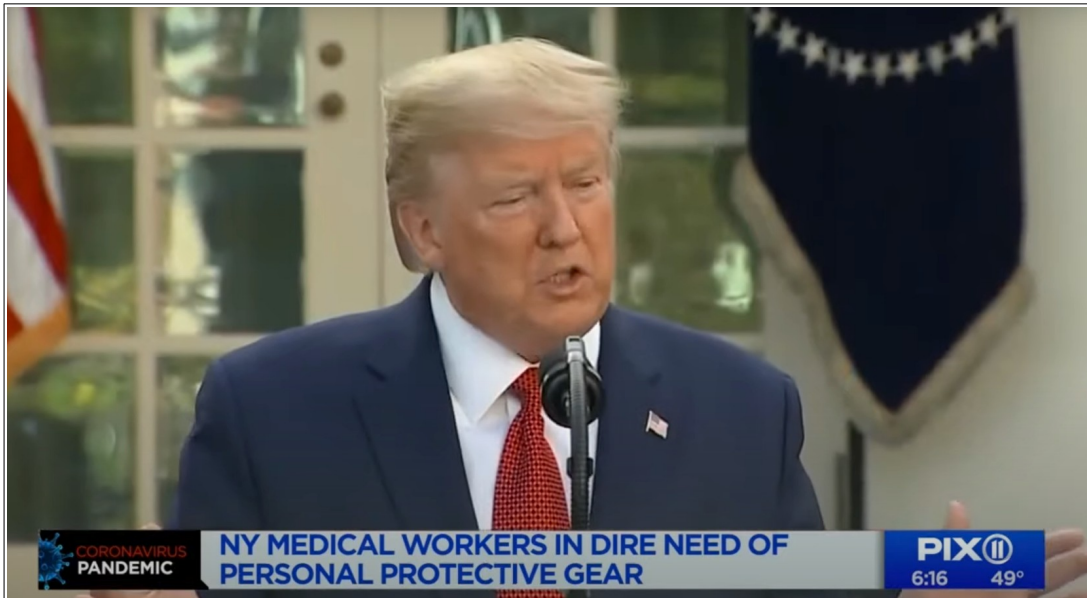
Cuomo Emerges as ‘Trump Whisperer’ During Coronavirus Crisis

Using flattery and indirect attacks, Gov. Andrew Cuomo has nurtured a working relationship with President Trump.

It doesn’t really matter that prior to the media latching onto him as their chosen adversary for Trump he was generally quite unpopular. He was chosen, and he was lifted up and avoided major scrutiny when he deserved it the most.

In the example above, the *New York Times* moons over Governor Cuomo NOT criticizing President Trump for suggesting the massive spike in PPE usage was abnormal (even within the context of a viral outbreak) and could be a sign of theft of those items.

1 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200403093105/https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/03/nyregion/cuomo-trump-coronavirus.html>



Video – Trump Concerned About PPE

Appearing on Cuomo Prime Time, a show on CNN named for and hosted by Andrew Cuomo’s younger brother Chris Cuomo, Governor Cuomo was asked his thoughts on President Trump insinuating equipment was going out the back door. Governor Cuomo replied, “It’s a very vague thing. It went out the back door? I don’t know what that means.”

In the *Times* article, Governor Cuomo’s response to his brother is painted as an artful balance between being tough and being diplomatic so he can remain in President Trump’s good graces. The author of the article seems to believe President Trump might withdraw federal Coronavirus funding for New York should he be publicly challenged. Therefore, by that insane line of reasoning, Andrew Cuomo is a selfless hero trying to protect his New York residents, even if it meant kissing up to President Trump.

In reality, Governor Cuomo’s artful dodge from criticizing President Trump was likely due to the fact that he’d made the exact² same statement three weeks prior on March 6th.

² https://web.archive.org/web/20200307114723if_/https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/06/people-are-stealing-face-masks-from-local-hospitals-gov-cuomo-says.html

“Not just people taking a couple [PPE supplies] or three, I mean just actual thefts of those products,” Cuomo said at a press conference in Albany. “I’ve asked the state police to do an investigation, look at places that are selling masks, medical equipment, protective wear, feeding the anxiety.”

The Media Wrap Smear. This is a prime example of the double standards the mainstream media has for President Trump and anyone who supports him, compared to their standards (or lack thereof) for anyone else. As reports of PPE theft from hospitals and doctor’s offices popped up around the country, the *New York Times* and a cadre of other news outlets went on the defensive:

- Deborah Levine, a propagandist for *The Washington Post*, wrote an article³ titled, “No, Mr. President, Healthcare Workers Aren’t Stealing Masks. You Failed Them.”
- Left-wing Twitter talking heads parroted⁴ the same sentiments.
- Joe Biden called it “reckless and ignorant,” much to the joy of the Huffington Post⁵.
- Progressive news outlet⁶ *The Ring of Fire* published a lengthy video in which the presenter laments about the president’s statement.

Death By MSM. In a crucial time when PPE theft **mattered**, the ones with the ability to raise awareness and do something about it did the exact opposite. They ignored the problem with deadly consequences and instead fought for clicks and views by bashing President Trump.

Perhaps if they’d taken two minutes to do a simple web search, they would find:

3 <https://archive.ph/S3duq>

4 <https://www.breitbart.com/the-media/2020/03/30/reports-mask-theft-not-controversial-trump-brought-up/>

5 https://www.huffpost.com/entry/biden-trump-face-masks-reckless_n_5e81618fc5b6256a7a2d1f11

6 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7zvu-JpD5lo&ab_channel=TheRingofFire

- *Modern Healthcare* reported⁷ on March 3rd that an infectious disease physician in Boston said her hospital in Boston was targeted for PPE theft.
- In California, hospital workers said people were “running into hospitals and stealing masks and hand sanitizers, or ripping them off the walls.” It was such a problem that SLO county put out a public notice⁸ pleading for people to stop.
- The *South Florida Sun Sentinel* reported⁹ a physician’s assistant stole enough PPE for it to be classified as a felony.
- In the Cuomo brothers’ own back yard, a New York woman was arrested¹⁰ on April 1, 2020, for stealing medical supplies and shipping them to other people.

Instead, Blue Anon (as they are now rightly called) whipped up another reactionary media frenzy¹¹ to distract and divide Americans. In hindsight, it would be interesting to try to figure out how many people may have died due to lack of PPE in those larger cities, and if they might not have if the media had done its job.

Alas, instead the media and attention seekers got their Trump hate porn clicks... and accomplished nothing useful all in one go. Such is the life of the legacy media. Informing the public is out... it’s all about the Google AdSense revenue, baby!

What is Blue Anon? As a side note, if you weren’t aware, “Blue Anon” is a term created in early March 2021 to describe, “A loosely organized network of Democrat voters, politicians and media

7 https://web.archive.org/web/20200429093656if_/https://www.modernhealthcare.com/providers/hospitals-struggle-properly-prepare-coronavirus

8 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200319101913/https://www.sanluisobispo.com/news/health-and-medicine/article241307676.html>

9 <https://www.sun-sentinel.com/coronavirus/fl-ne-hospital-theft-ppe-arrest-20200405-7y2acr2hprfcvdpdnafivputnza-story.html>

10 <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/crime/hospital-worker-33-is-arrested-for-stealing-a-box-of-masks-from-work-and-shipping-them-to-other-people/ar-BB122fec>

11 <https://www.breitbart.com/the-media/2020/03/30/reports-mask-theft-not-controversial-trump-brought-up/>

personalities who spread left-wing conspiracy theories such as the Russia Hoax, Jussie Smollett hoax, Ukraine hoax, Covington Kids hoax, and Brett Kavanaugh hoax. Blue Anon adherents fervently believe that right-wing extremists are going to storm Capitol Hill any day now and "remove" lawmakers from office.”

TOP DEFINITION 🐦 f 🗨

Blue Anon

A loosely organized network of Democrat voters, politicians and media personalities who spread left-wing conspiracy theories such as the Russia Hoax, [Jussie Smollett](#) hoax, Ukraine hoax, Covington Kids hoax, and Brett Kavanaugh hoax. Blue Anon adherents fervently believe that right-wing extremists are going to [storm Capitol Hill](#) any day now and "remove" [lawmakers](#) from office.

Everyone knows that Trump was a Russian plant!

Bro? Do you have any proof?
Yes! An [unnamed](#) source was [quoted in the paper!](#)
Sounds like another Blue Anon...

by [artymcfee](#) March 07, 2021

The term gained a lot of attention when it was first added¹² to Urban Dictionary on March 7th. It was then subsequently removed, and then added back again. Despite being a meme on a satirical dictionary website, Blue Anon is real and should be referred to as such.

A Media-Created Monster. For Andrew Cuomo, blind and unwavering support from the mainstream media, a sense of accessibility fostered by silly interviews with his brother, the antics of Blue Anon, and a Stockholm Syndrome sort of adoration that came from his captive audience, all combined to create perfect conditions for a looming disaster involving Governor Cuomo to come to fruition without many noticing. Publicly, if you spoke out against him in any way, you would be excoriated. Cuomo was the Democratic golden boy, and he was untouchable—even while he was quietly setting up New York to fail.

Operation Mockingbird 2020. Katrina vanden Heuvel, a WaPo propagandist with TDS, wrote¹³ a starry-eyed op-ed titled, “Can Andrew Cuomo become FDR?” All the while, Cuomo was lining the pockets of donor groups and lobbyists, signing legislation that gave

12 <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Blue%20Anon>

13 <https://archive.is/vjllq#selection-951.0-951.28>

immunity to hospital executive from civil and criminal liability. But hey, at least he stood up to Orange Man!

In this montage of clips put together by Newsbusters, media talking heads fawn over Governor Cuomo in a comical fashion. You'll see Brian Stelter, Chris Hayes, Rachel Maddow, Lester Holt, Chris Cuomo, and many more, heaping on the praise with a shovel.



Video – MSM Praising Cuomo

If you're like me, you might be asking why on Earth Chris Cuomo could team up with his politician brother to bolster their narratives. The stakes are at an all-time high to be honest and report truths, and instead CNN abandoned the last shreds of any integrity they had in favor of their newfound sky-high ratings.

The Cuomo Brothers Propaganda Power Hour

It's not the first time they'd ever appeared together while both on the job, but when it happened before people were a lot more critical. In 2013, CNN and the Cuomo brothers got backlash¹⁴ when Chris interviewed¹⁵ Andrew after a Metro-North train derailed and killed four people.



Video – Chris Cuomo Defends Interview

Some did defend¹⁶ him however, such as Greta Van Susteren from Fox News and *The Daily Beast*¹⁷.

14 <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2013/12/chris-cuomo-interview-brother-andrew-cuomo.html>

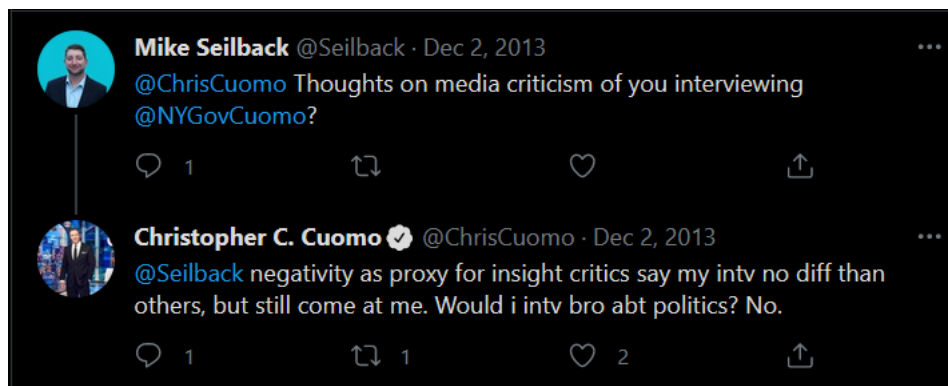
15 https://www.huffpost.com/entry/chris-cuomo-andrew-cuomo-interview_n_4371574

16 <https://web.archive.org/web/20131205092725/http://gretawire.foxnewsinsider.com/2013/12/02/i-dont-have-any-problem-with-cnns-cuomo-interviewing-his-brother-ny-governor-cumo-about-the-train-crash-some-do-but-i-dont/>

17 <https://www.thedailybeast.com/chris-cuomo-defends-his-cnn-interview-with-his-brother-gov-andrew-cuomo>

Chris’s response was extremely dismissive and overlooked crucial details about his brother’s authority¹⁸ over the MTA, which is a state agency. Governor Cuomo appointed its chairman, CEO, and five of nineteen board members—so when Chris said it wasn’t about politics or his brother’s career, he was either being ignorant or evasive. Despite Chris disclosing their familial relationship, it did nothing to negate the actual conflict of interest either.

In a similar situation in 2012, Brian Stelter himself wrote¹⁹ about a conflict of interest with Greg Kelly interviewing his father, who was Police Commissioner.



Fredo Responds. When asked on Twitter his thoughts on the criticism, Chris said he wouldn’t interview his brother about politics. For years after, CNN didn’t allow the Cuomos to appear in interviews together. From what I could find, that was the only prior instance, and it was mild enough of an interaction. However, Chris insisted repeatedly that he wouldn’t have done it if it were a conflict of interest or about Governor Cuomo’s political career.

So when the duo first landed on the screen together in 2020, all of those platitudes went out the window. And when Americans ate up their antics onscreen together and *Cuomo Prime Time*’s ratings **doubled** last year, I imagine CEO Jeff Zucker somewhere shrugged his shoulders and said, “fuck it.”

18 <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2013/12/chris-cuomo-interview-brother-andrew-cuomo.html>

19 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200529044254/https://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/27/nyregion/greg-kelly-of-fox-tv-not-shy-on-being-ny-police-leaders-son.html>

Money talks, as always. Chris hosted Andrew on his show at least nine times between March 19 and June 24 in 2020 because of it.

But unlike Chris's insistence that their interview in 2013 was no different than it would have been for someone else, their screen time was vastly different in 2020. Their interactions were a bizarre blend of gleaming praise for the Governor from his brother, convincing the viewer that they were just two fun brothers trying to save America, and... prop comedy. I wish I were kidding on that last one.

Ask yourself... could we have survived 2020 without seeing *this*?



Video – Chris and Andrew Cuomo Prop Comedy

And modern journalists have the audacity to wonder why more and more Americans don't take the MSM seriously and complain when they are told as much by people who see through it. Baffling.

Emotional Manipulation. It's not just CNN and the Cuomos ignoring their prior commitments to not letting it happen again, it's also that very few media outlets even paused to consider how

inappropriate their on-screen antics were. Instead, Chris joined his brother in attaining MSM folk hero status:

- The Associated Press (the outlet with the power to declare the president whenever they want to, apparently) reported²⁰ that their “teasing big brother-little brother dynamic often enlivens their appearances together. The governor called him his best friend.”
- Vanity Fair published²¹ an article claiming their antics were great entertainment, “whether out of the need for distractions, heroes, or points of clarification.”

Those are just two quick examples, but there are far more.

Finally, in the middle of 2020, CNN expressed a small amount of self-awareness and had Chris mention that it was, in fact, not normal for a politician and a news anchor with a familial relationship to appear together on TV as much as they did.



Video – Praising Cuomo on Show & Appealing to Emotions

20 <https://web.archive.org/web/20210302200651/https://apnews.com/article/27e09f3eed851d38a6d75cd094996d1>

21 <https://archive.is/d8Juf#selection-665.145-665.222>

Chris says it would never be “seen as” fair. But in the next sentence, he makes an emotional appeal to the audience. An audience of isolated and lonely people, prone to being manipulated emotionally to excuse and overlook the issue. The most honest thing Chris says is that he’d never be objective. But nobody seemed to notice or care that he wasn’t... until now.

Chris Crosses the Line. Another red flag in their increasing comfort of Governor Cuomo appearing on *Cuomo Prime Time* was the moment Chris popped in as a guest on Governor Cuomo’s official press briefing on April 2, 2020. Prior to that moment, you could make the argument that television, even the news, is a form of entertainment and in that setting neither Governor Cuomo nor Chris Cuomo have any obligation to be anything other than just that: entertaining.

With the roles reversed, however, Governor Cuomo *is* required to be more than entertainment. Chris Cuomo showing up as a sort of guest star, wearing his show’s branded hat no less, for an official state Coronavirus briefing crossed a line. Again, nobody seemed to notice or care.



Video – Press Briefing

A Family Affair. Propped up by the mainstream media as the one man who could handle President Trump, Governor Cuomo's meteoric rise in popularity led to Chris Cuomo's subsequent spike in media ratings, which would ultimately lead to Chris's wife capitalizing off general public interest about their family while he was sick with Covid-19.

Reliable Sources With Brian Stelter covered the Cuomo brothers with much praise, leading me to believe that Stelter is even more of a hack than we already believed he is.

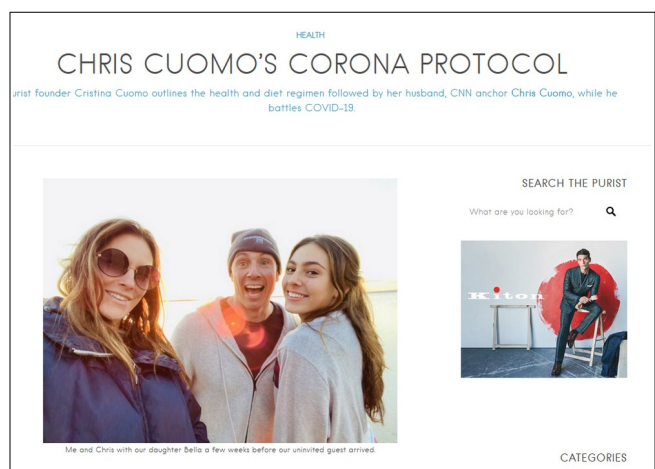
"The beast comes at night"

CNN's **Chris Cuomo** has become the most visible face of the coronavirus in the United States by giving daily updates about his condition on TV, social media and, on Thursday, at his brother's New York state press briefing.

Cuomo Quarantine

Chris appeared in the New York State press briefing with Governor Cuomo while he was supposedly quarantined in his basement and battling Covid. Cuomo and his wife, like many other wealthy New Yorkers, lived in their Hamptons home and enjoyed a significantly higher level of personal autonomy than those who couldn't afford to leave Manhattan.

Adventures in Quarantining. So in his \$2.9 million Southampton home's basement, Chris portrayed himself as somewhat of a warrior and warned others to heed his brother's words and pay attention to the daily briefs. For some, it was compelling and encouraged them to take the virus more seriously. With the audience's growing sense of camaraderie with the Cuomos came a natural rise in public interest about their families. Chris frequently mentioned his wife, Cristina, whom he was quarantined from in the basement.



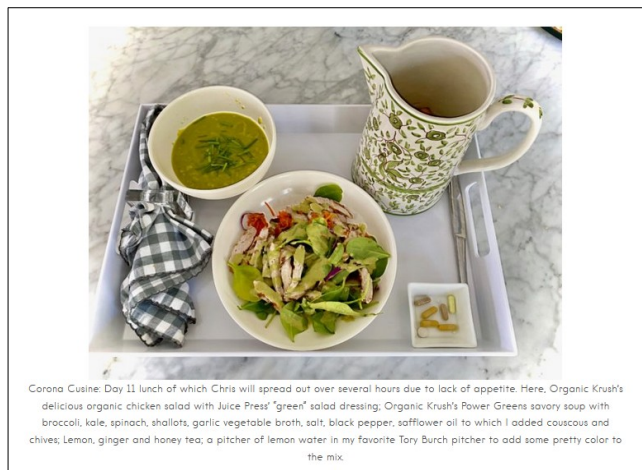
Cristina has a website called The Purist where she seems to emulate a sort of Gwyneth Paltrow-esque, Goop-ish lifestyle.

Cristina Cuomo's Alternative Medicine. In a post in April of 2020 titled "Chris Cuomo's Corona Protocol," it reads: Purist founder Cristina Cuomo outlines the health and diet regimen followed by her husband, CNN anchor Chris Cuomo, while he battles COVID-19²²."

22 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200407023057/https://thepuristonline.com/2020/04/chris-cuomos-corona-protocol/>

The post reads like an Instagram influencer fever dream, mentioning Light Harmonics energy medicine, plugging a \$6000 Sunlighten sauna, a long list of supplements, items from Tapovana, Juice Press, Organic Kush, and Honest Plate. It reads like a really expensive ad, down to the promo code listed after the detox juice she says is helping Chris fight off and recover from Covid-19.

It's ironic both Chris and Andrew repeatedly insulted President Trump for suggesting alternative therapeutics and methods to fight Covid-19... all the while Cristina is telling people who might be curious to learn about her husband's bout with illness that she helped him get better by serving him boutique brand supplements and juices that her good friends just so happen to be the owners of—and with a promo code to boot!



Special Guest Jeffrey Sachs. In a particularly interesting twist of fate, Cristina mentions she and Chris got help from their friends - while they were both sick with the virus. In a humble brag-style name dropping section of her post²³, she mentions that none other than Jeffrey Sachs was one of the people who bought groceries and dropped off supplies for them.

23 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200407023057/https://thepuristonline.com/2020/04/chris-cuomos-corona-protocol/>



CHRIS' CORONA FOOD + DRINK DIET made with ❤️ by me and friends like Karina Srb, Marcy Warren, Carol Reed, Roxine Brown, Southeast Indian cuisine chef Corey De Rosa of [Tapovana](#), and dropped-off cure-alls like the ones sent by Erika Karsh, owner of [Juice Press](#) (Use code PURISTJP to get 10% off your next Juice Press order online!), and finally, the team at [Organic Krush](#) in Amagansett. My order of [Honest Plate](#) prepared cuisine got my kids through the week. Also, thank you to those who shopped for groceries and household items we ran out of—Helen Cleland, Don Lemon and Tim Malone, Lisa and John Haley, Gigi Howard, Robert Fowler, Eden Williams, Maria Cuomo Cole, and Jeffrey Sachs. And thanks to the friends who came with feel-good humor, like Chris Henchy and Brooke Shields with a rendition of John Cusack singing Peter Gabriel's "In Your Eyes" from *Say Anything*, and Jordan and Heather Turkewitz for the blow-up rubber nurse doll. (She deflated quickly, reflecting the mood of the times.) I am most grateful for the outpouring of love, which helped lift all of our spirits too! And, TY to my sister Andrea for taking care of our parents because I can't help right now. #Foreverfriends

Sachs & Daszak. If you watched the first episode of this series, you'll know Jeffrey Sachs is a close colleague of Peter Daszak—the man at the center of the Covid-19 origin story controversy. He was run off Twitter a couple of years ago for defending Huawei fiercely to the general public—until someone found out he had a major conflict of interest due to his involvement with the company. He also designed the SDGs for the United Nations and Agenda 2030... and is a peer and friend of George Soros.

How are Chris Cuomo and his wife on such good terms with Jeffrey Sachs? So much so that he's dropping off groceries for them while they're sick? What are the odds?

Chris Caught. So everything was going well for the Cuomos, until a fellow resident in the area caught Chris out and about on Easter Sunday. The man knew Chris was still Covid positive, as he'd been seeing him frequently on TV alongside his brother. Chris was spotting checking out an undeveloped property he'd purchased in East Hampton.

At that time, all non-essential construction had been halted, which means there was no good reason to visit the property, especially in

violation of orders to quarantine while sick. The man called Chris out, rightfully so, and the interaction caused a fair amount of buzz in the media for a couple of days.

In response to the negative attention he was getting (for once), Chris went on his SiriusXM radio show and lamented that he no longer liked what he did for a living because he couldn't tell the "jackass, loser, fat-tire biker" to "go to hell" or "shut your mouth."

■ ENTERTAINMENT

Chris Cuomo And George Stephanopoulos Break Quarantine, Expose Public To Coronavirus

Governor Andrew Cuomo is silent after his brother, CNN host Chris Cuomo, breaks coronavirus quarantine and goes off on a rant about being confronted.

Video – Chris Cuomo Bitches About Average People Calling Him Out

In the midst of the Covid outbreak in New York going downhill fast, the death toll starting to climb rapidly, and thousands losing their jobs and financial security, Chris Cuomo decided that being able to tell people to go to hell mattered "more to me than making millions of dollars a year."

Read the room, big guy. That doesn't make you cool, that makes you an insecure jackass.

Lockdown Lunacy. New Yorkers with significantly less personal wealth were shuddered up inside their cramped apartments for weeks on end—due to Governor Cuomo's orders—unable to leave or earn an income. Chris Cuomo and a legion of other wealthy New Yorkers

fled the locked down streets of Manhattan and flocked²⁴ to their homes in the suburbs. Simultaneously, they brought the virus with them into smaller cities and towns, some of them admitting to doing so knowingly.

Along the way, the elites bought out all the small grocery stores in those areas, leading to a lack of supplies and food scarcity for locals who lived in the area year-round during the down time. Supermarkets were not supplied like they would be in tourist season, and they were caught complete unprepared.

Hamptons Raided. An owner of a small grocery store in the Hamptons spoke to the *New York Post* recounting²⁵ the time a person came into his shop at the onset of Covid in the area and spent over \$8,000, stripping his shelves bare of many essential items. Socialite Jean Shafiroff lamented that she was forced to cook at home and was spending \$300 to \$1000 a day for groceries and supplies... and that she bought her local drugstore's entire supply of... dental floss: "I even bought the drugstore out of all its dental floss. I wanted to make sure I had enough, along with extra toothbrushes, soap, toothpaste and body lotions," she said. "If I have to be quarantined, I better look nice."

The Cuomo Social Circle. Those are the same kind of people that Chris Cuomo and his wife surround themselves with and see eye-to-eye with on things. And despite Andrew Cuomo playing up their humble roots to seem likable by his voter base, he's not that dissimilar either. He's had several public

I did not recognize in Ghislaine Maxwell the young woman her friends had described to me—the racy, glamorous social flibbertigibbet whom George Hamilton had escorted to the Ever Ready Derby in England and skied with in Aspen, who had attended the Kerry Kennedy-Andrew Cuomo wedding, and who had once instructed her father's pilot to put his helicopter into a free-fall to scare her fellow passenger.

24 <https://nypost.com/2020/03/19/we-should-blow-up-the-bridges-coronavirus-leads-to-class-warfare-in-hamptons/>

25 <https://nypost.com/2020/03/18/chic-hamptons-food-stores-ransacked-by-the-wealthy-amid-coronavirus-pandemic/>

relationships with high-profile women. He was married for 15 years to Kerry Kennedy, the daughter of Robert F. Kennedy—Ghislaine Maxwell attended²⁶ their wedding, as a side note. After that, he was in a 14-year relationship²⁷ with Sandra Lee, the “Semi-Homemade” Food Network star.

Andrew Cuomo’s brother is worth over \$10 million dollars, and is the kind of person for whom Robert Downey Jr. just so happen to make house visits when he’s sick. Andrew Cuomo’s familial circle, friend circle, and those of his previous relationships, are all interconnected to the rich, famous, and influential.

However, the most powerful and influential people Andrew Cuomo surrounds himself with are those that are in his political circle—a circle that operates on a low-profile, is notoriously cutthroat, and runs like a machine.

26 <https://archive.vanityfair.com/article/1992/3/the-sinking-of-captain-bob>

27 <https://www.nickiswift.com/203749/this-is-why-andrew-cuomo-and-sandra-lee-broke-up/>

Trump vs. Cuomo: The Battle for Primetime Ratings

From the onset of Covid-19, Cuomo strategically poised himself as a sort of antithesis to President Trump, an opportunity the mainstream media quickly latched onto and turned into the latest spectacle to boost their ratings. Due to that glowing initial treatment by the media, Governor Cuomo enjoyed months and months of being able to make appointments and legislative decisions that otherwise might have faced criticism and scrutinization.

That boost in his popularity was good for Governor Cuomo, and it made for entertaining television, but it created a monster. After years of insisting that “the walls were closing in on Trump” the rabid establishment weaponized anything and everything they could pertaining to President Trump’s Covid response. And now, with Andrew Cuomo chosen to set the golden standard, they fought to keep public perception that way. And unfortunately, it was largely successful.

Streaming Superstar. Last April, Syracuse dot com reported²⁸ that in a six day period, Governor Cuomo amassed 4.7 million views across internet streams alone, via Facebook, Twitter, and Periscope. That number did not include cable TV ratings. He was a natural born star! Or so they wanted everyone to believe.

28 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200401044235/https://www.syracuse.com/coronavirus/2020/03/digital-views-for-cuomos-daily-coronavirus-briefings-near-1m-a-day.html>

The only person beating Governor Cuomo was President Trump, but unlike Cuomo, the mainstream media was not on his side. So they began to conspire to hide him from the public rather openly. Despite this and their efforts, he was still ahead by a long shot. So they doubled down on their efforts.

The Media Hit Piece. In a piece²⁹ for the *New York Times* titled, “Trump’s Briefings Are a Ratings Hit. Should Networks Cover Them Live?” Michael Grynbaum says President Trump’s Covid briefings were a ratings hit, which could be a dangerous thing. His briefings averaged 8.5 million viewers on cable networks at that time, and even more on streaming platforms—and those numbers were continuing to rise. On one Monday night, he had 12.2 million viewers—rivaling NFL football ratings.

He goes on to opine about how journalists struggle with how to broadcast President Trump’s remarks to the nation without being able to supplement them live.

“I would stop putting those briefings on live TV — not out of spite, but because it’s misinformation,” the MSNBC host Rachel Maddow declared to her viewers. The same Maddow that mooned over Governor Cuomo, calling him a national leader. It is unclear at that point how much primetime media figures were aware how unfit to be the national face for Covid efforts Cuomo was. They either didn’t know, or they didn’t care.

Ted Koppel claimed, “The question, clearly, is whether his status as president of the United States obliges us to broadcast his every briefing live. No. No more so than you at *The Times* should be obliged to provide your readers with a daily, verbatim account.”

29 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200403074206/https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/25/business/media/trump-coronavirus-briefings-ratings.html>

It's dangerous for the mainstream media to allow you to hear the words of your president without their spin. So they opted out of allowing it to happen at all.

Media Defends Cuomo From Trump. The article continues: "Mr. Trump has also used national TV appearances to spread incendiary and unproven accusations. At a Fox News town hall on Tuesday, he read aloud a critical headline about Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York that had been published by a fringe right-wing conspiracy theory site, *The Gateway Pundit*." Clearly, criticizing Governor Cuomo was a cardinal sin for them.

The White House was critical of these decisions at the time, especially after CNN and MSNBC cut away from the final portion of one of President Trump's briefings. Judd Deere, spokesman for the White House, called the move "pretty disgraceful."

CNN responded that the network "will make our own editorial decisions," and MSNBC said it had cut away "because the information no longer appeared to be valuable to the important ongoing discussion around public health."

Bizarre that these media outlets were absolutely certain of President Trump's value to the general public, but were incapable of calling out Governor Cuomo or their colleague Chris Cuomo for the inappropriate nature of their media escapades, the gross incompetence of Andrew to protect New York's elderly, the absolutely evil nature of Cuomo's staff covering up thousands of nursing home deaths for political gain, or any of the other numerous shortcomings. Not even a passing mention.

Instead, they covered it up until they no longer could. Now the same people that appeared on television to moon over Governor Cuomo are the same pretending to be shocked at his misdeeds. It's pathetic.

The Mainstream Media Includes Conservative Media

Before recent “Me Too” allegations piled up against Cuomo, which the mainstream media used as a scapegoat, some of the only places you’d read criticism on the Governor’s performance were either right wing or far-left and progressive sites. Right-wing coverage of Cuomo has been mediocre at best. The legacy media on both sides of the fence exist to appeal to their viewers’ egos and emotions, get their clicks and views, and go home rich and happy. I am becoming increasingly disgusted with conservative outlets and reporters, not that I was terribly pleased with them to begin with.

Progressives Stepping Up. I don’t agree with aiming for a single-payer healthcare plans for the United States, but Progressives do. They are very critical of Cuomo’s Medicaid policies—which come into play big time with Covid, as it mostly affects the elderly and those in long-term care facilities. The epicenter of the scandal. I’ve genuinely read more compelling Cuomo pieces from *Jacobin* than from Fox News, Newsmax, and the rest of them combined.

Regardless, I haven’t seen or read anything that has pulled together the whole picture, which is why I endeavored to do this in the first place. What Andrew Cuomo and his legion of sycophants and donors have done to the state of New York is nothing less than a crime against humanity. They attempted to orchestrate a massive cash grab,

and instead left untold thousands vulnerable and unable to protect themselves from a death they did not deserve.

Furthermore, the media outlets and organizations that lauded Cuomo as a hero when it was obvious it was untrue, and the people surrounding him that orchestrated their sloppy cover-up, are all complicit as far as I am concerned.

This is one of the most horrific examples of incompetence, bad faith, negligence, and manslaughter for political gain I've ever seen.

In Summary (So Far)

Up until now we have covered quite extensively the media's role in shaping a positive public opinion about Governor Cuomo while simultaneously conspiring to silence and slander President Trump at every turn. Even when President Trump said things that were entirely true, such as the PPE theft, they lied and twisted the narrative anyways.

They also ignored the flagrantly improper nature of Governor Cuomo appearing alongside his brother on his CNN primetime show... and Chris Cuomo making a personal appearance during official NY state press briefings. While Governor Cuomo locked down the state of New York and forced people into economic hardship and devastating conditions that wreaked havoc on their mental health, his Covid-positive brother flouted restrictions in his exclusive Hamptons neighborhood. Meanwhile, Chris Cuomo's wife used that fame to sell detox teas and meal kits, and received house visits from Jeffrey Sachs for grocery deliveries.

We're going to narrow our focus now onto the state of New York's medical budgets and legislation, Andrew Cuomo's staff and committee appointees, the already-present Medicaid budget deficit and the plan to curb spending on long-term care residents, and the tangled, corrupt web he wove around himself to secure political leverage, favor, and funding from hospital and nursing home

executives and powerful lobbying groups. It's a lot to take in, but we'll take it one thing at a time. It's about to get messy.

Cuomo's Blood Money

blood money

n.

1. Money paid by a killer as compensation to the next of kin of a murder victim.
2. Money gained at the cost of another's life or livelihood.

Before Covid-19 began, Andrew Cuomo's 2020 spending plan was a hot topic for discussion in the state of New York, because his current State Medicaid plan was pushing New York into a financial deficit that showed no signs of slowing down. "The remarkable thing about the state's multi-billion-dollar Medicaid crisis is that it is almost entirely the result of the Cuomo administration's own actions," wrote³⁰ Bill Hammond for *Empire Center*.

What is Medicaid? Medicaid is a joint federal-state program administered in New York by the State Department of Health. The federal government pays for at least half of program costs, and states are responsible for the remainder. New York mandates that local governments (New York City and the 57 other counties) pay for a fixed portion, averaging approximately 10% of the total program costs.

In a span of four years, wherein there was no economic downturn or drastic changes in policy to use as a scapegoat, the problem lies in a spike in spending, not a shortfall in revenue.

30 <https://www.empirecenter.org/publications/cuomos-self-inflicted-crisis/>

Under the Affordable Care Act, New York saw a drastic increase in enrollees, bringing the total up to approximately 6 million people—a little less than one-third of the state’s population.

Medicaid comprises³¹ more than 1 out of every 3 dollars spent by the State’s budget every fiscal year, approaching a total of \$80 billion annually in 2020. If done *correctly*³², Medicaid programs can help cut costs across the board for medical expenses. The caveat being the word “correctly.” Governor Cuomo’s Medicaid financial woes have been snowballing for years. He has not been managing the budget correctly at all.

Bad Before It Began. In mid December 2019, Governor Cuomo made news for starting out 2020 with a \$6.1 billion³³ budget gap—the largest since 2011-2012—caused largely by rising Medicaid costs. Experts estimated that if spending trends for the state continued, the deficit would rise to \$8.5 billion by 2023, \$3.9 billion of which would be Medicaid-related.

The year’s increases resulted from the \$15-an-hour minimum-wage increase for health-care workers, weak spending caps, political deals made by Cuomo for the 2018 election, a hike in reimbursement rates for hospitals and nursing homes, and more.

Minimum Wage. In 2016, Cuomo and his State legislature enacted a multi-year increase³⁴ in the state minimum wage from \$9/hour to as high as \$15/hour in New York City and downstate suburbs, and \$12.50 in upstate New York. The cost of those higher wages was grossly underestimated, and has been far higher than projected—by 28% or more (\$1.5 billion).

31 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200325155404/https://cbcny.org/research/overdue-bills>

32 <https://web.archive.org/web/20201116203457/https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-medicaid-redesign-efforts-saving-taxpayers-billions#close>

33 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200101031618/https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-12-13/cuomo-runs-up-6-1-billion-n-y-deficit-despite-strong-economy>

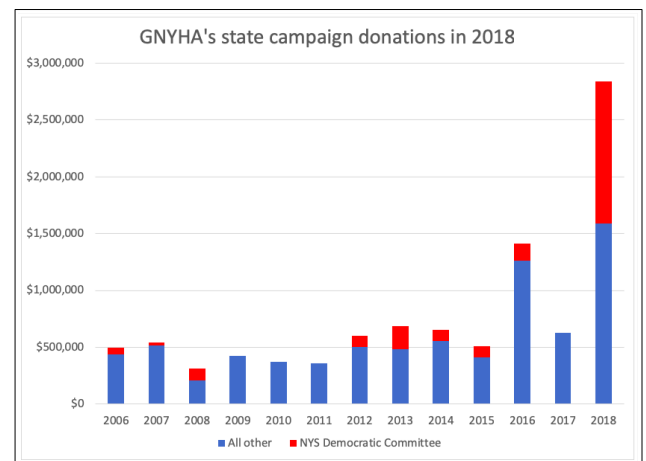
34 <https://web.archive.org/web/20201125033024/http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/30/nyregion/governor-voices-confidence-on-reaching-state-budget-deal-with-wage-increase.html>

Weakened Spending Caps. Initially, Governor Cuomo capped State Medicaid spending to the 10-year average of the medical inflation rate, which was effective at first. However, Cuomo began making loopholes³⁵ for the caps, including for the aforementioned minimum wage hike, which increased spending at unsustainable rates.

Political Deals. In 2018, when Governor Cuomo was challenged by Progressive candidate Cynthia Nixon, he spent significantly more for his re-election campaign than he'd ever done before. It proved effective—he won by a massive margin—but those who contributed to that victory didn't do it for nothing. Two of the largest contributors³⁶ were from 1199SEIU³⁷, a very influential labor union with contracts with 48 hospitals³⁸ in New York, and the union's lobbying ally, The Greater New York Hospital Association.

CLIENT NAME	COMPENSATION & EXPENSES
1199 SEIU LABOR MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES, INC., HEALTHCARE EDUCATION PROJECT	\$3,635,901
GREATER NEW YORK HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION, INC.	\$2,287,383

The **GNHYA** opposes the New York Health Act, which would establish a single-payer health care system in the state, so it had deep pockets for those who will keep it the way it is. Governor Cuomo is their guy. They keep him in office. He keeps them rich.



35 <https://web.archive.org/web/20191017181957/https://www.empirecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Busting-the-Cap-Final.pdf>

36 <https://www.empirecenter.org/publications/who-benefited-from-medicaid-hikes/>

37 <https://jcope.ny.gov/news/jcope-releases-2018-mid-year-lobbying-data>

38 <https://www.empirecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Spreadsheet.pdf>

In fact, I would estimate that as long as the **GNYHA** and union groups have any say in the matter, even Progressives like AOC would back off her “Medicare for All” platform if their leaders began campaigning against her. But more on all of this in a minute.

Medicaid Rates Increased. On October 31, 2018, Governor Cuomo authorized increased rates of reimbursement³⁹ for long-term care facilities and hospitals⁴⁰. In a notice published with very little pomp and circumstance the DoS describes a 2 percent increase in the operating component of Medicaid’s hospital inpatient rates, and a 1.5 percent increase in the operating component of nursing home rates.

Sixteen years before, in 2002, Andrew Cuomo learned not to go against the hospital unions. He spoke out against then-governor Republican George Pataki⁴¹ negotiating a multi billion-dollar health care plan that increased salaries for the 1199SEIU behind closed doors⁴². Then-union leader, Dennis Rivera, publicly berated Cuomo for not supporting it, and Pataki would go on to win the gubernatorial race handily. The hospital and nursing home unions and their lobbyist groups are the real kingmakers in New York. It has been that way for years.

Cuomo’s catering paid off politically, if not financially, and he received 1199SEIU’s endorsement for re-election on February 22, 2018.

1199SEIU ENDORSES CUOMO FOR RE-ELECTION

February 22, 2018

New York, NY – 1199 SEIU today enthusiastically endorsed Governor Andrew M. Cuomo for re-election citing the Governor’s leadership in protecting working families, and his commitment to strengthening worker protections even as President Trump and Washington Republicans are waging an unprecedented war on worker rights and healthcare access.

39 <https://www.empirecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Summary.pdf>

40 <https://docs.dos.ny.gov/info/register/2018/oct31/misc.pdf>

41 https://web.archive.org/web/20200325150836if_/https://nypost.com/2002/01/16/the-750m-handshake-gov-gives-health-workers-a-boot/

42 <https://web.archive.org/web/20150527212149/http://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/19/nyregion/union-chief-assails-cuomo-and-mccall.html>

Smoke & Mirrors. Governor Cuomo has a history of using slight-of-hand style tricks to make his budgets appear healthier than they are. Part of his plan to cover the rate increase in 2018 involved a three-month pressure campaign⁴³ to receive \$2 billion from the sale of Fidelis Care, a nonprofit Catholic Church health organization, that included overt and implied threats to seize the funds, block the sale or both. The Catholic organization found itself without many allies in Albany, and Cuomo eventually won out⁴⁴.

Whereas a press release⁴⁵ at the time said the \$2 billion would go into a “Health Care Shortfall Fund,” where it would be used “to ensure the continued availability and expansion of funding for quality health services to New York State residents and to mitigate risks associated with the loss of federal funds,” the actual budget legislation called it a “Health Care Transformation Fund.”

Looking into the budget proposal for 2018, in section FFF, it states: the funds “shall be available for transfer to any other fund of of the state as authorized and directed by the director of the budget”—in other words, at the discretion of a gubernatorial appointee.

4. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, moneys of the health care transformation fund shall be available for transfer to any other fund of the state as authorized and directed by the director of the budget to support health care delivery, including for capital investment, debt retirement or restructuring, housing and other social determinants of health, or transitional operating support to health care providers.

This is not the first and will not be the last time we see Cuomo amending budget proposals to reflect legislation that benefits his own office or his union and lobby funders—even at the detriment of his precious Medicaid program. This campaign was financed, yet again, by SE1199 and the **GNYHA**.

43 <https://archive.is/MvfvFV>

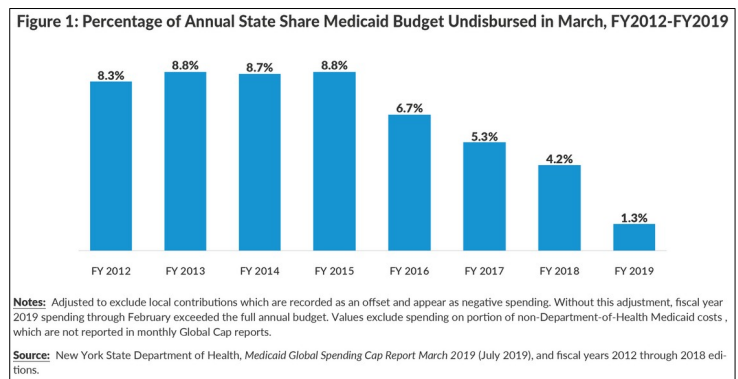
44 <https://www.empirecenter.org/publications/a-troubling-deal-on-fidelis/>

45 <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-highlights-fy-2019-budget>

Where that money actually ended up is unclear, as Governor Cuomo’s Medicaid deficit snowball kept growing, and none of his plans to make it stop seemed to have an impact.

Smoke & Mirrors Deferred Again. In March 2019, the State deferred a payment of \$1.7 billion until April 1—the beginning of the next fiscal year. This is not a one-time anomaly that happened in a vacuum. According to CBCNY, “the State deferred payments in previous years to remain within budgeted spending levels, but the magnitude of the latest occurrence is unprecedented and obscures the State’s fiscal standing and outlook.”

Typically, the amount of undispersed funds in the last month of the FY should be as close to 8.33% as possible (which would equal 1/12 of the year’s funds). Starting in FY 2016, that remaining budget amount declined, and by FY 2019 only 1.3% of the year’s funds remained by March.



The deferrals and shifting of funds means that current financial plans do not account for or reflect the true costs of Medicaid for New York. If it did, it would substantially increase the state’s budget gaps.

Why Is This Happening? Most of these issues should have been foreseeable. For all the talking and performative capitulating Governor Cuomo does in the public eye about the Medicaid budgets, his private behavior is substantially different. But he knew this was coming—the minimum wage was enacted in 2016, HE created the loopholes in his spending caps to circumvent them, and he was the one who enacted the rate increase in 2018, so he should have known what would happen afterward.

The one financial factor that seems to have genuinely caught Andrew Cuomo and the State by surprise is the exploding costs of long-term care—especially in the form of non-medical “personal care” provided to people with disabilities in their homes⁴⁶.

Is Cuomo a Progressive? Governor Cuomo repeatedly touts himself as a Progressive Democrat, although most Progressives would vehemently disagree. In 2018, New York saw six⁴⁷ New York Senate incumbents⁴⁸ ousted and replaced by actual leftists, Progressives, and Democratic Socialists. Governor Cuomo up against Cynthia Nixon, but he beat her handily. He dismissed her celebrity campaign as “some Twittersphere dialogue where I tweet you, you tweet me and between the two of us we think we have a wave. Not even a ripple⁴⁹.”

(Don’t) Tax The Rich. In January 2017, Cuomo unveiled that year’s budget proposal, and during the press briefing stated⁵⁰: “We do not cut taxes for millionaires. We do cut taxes for the middle class.” This was in a pre-Ocasio-Cortez New York City, without rabid Progressives flying “Eat the Rich!” banners at events and other such Socialist messaging. See her \$58 “Tax The Rich” sweatshirt.



46 <https://www.empirecenter.org/publications/cuomos-self-inflicted-crisis/>

47 <https://web.archive.org/web/20210202204324/https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/13/nyregion/state-senate-election-results-idc-klein.html>

48 <https://web.archive.org/web/20201207145435/https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/08/nyregion/breakaway-group-in-new-york-senate-becomes-an-island-of-power.html>

49 <https://web.archive.org/web/20210202204309/https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/14/nyregion/andrew-cuomo-victory-election-nixon.html>

50 <https://web.archive.org/web/20210202204305/https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/17/nyregion/andrew-cuomo-new-york-state-budget.html>

As more actual Progressives moved into seats in New York, Governor Cuomo seemed to double down on his (at least public-facing) statements about not cutting taxes for the rich, but in February of 2019, he said something quite different. Even with the new blood in New York’s government that would publicly chastise him for it. Facing another bombshell blow⁵¹ to his budget—this time a \$2.3 billion loss in state income tax revenues—Cuomo said, “I don’t believe raising taxes on the rich. That would be the worst thing to do. You would just expand the shortfall. God forbid if the rich leave.” In the same meeting he claimed one percent of top income earners provide 46% of the State income tax revenue.

Wealthy people are leaving New York in droves, and even more have since then. Cuomo’s budget woes keep getting worse and worse. He knows if he makes a mistake that can be weaponized, by either side of the political aisle, his office is toast. Therefore, his answer is typically more backroom deals. Cuomo has more effectively consolidated and wielded power in Albany than any recent governor. And there has been very little anyone else can do about it.

Cuomo's plan to tilt Albany's balance of power

By LIZ BENJAMIN | 02/23/2015 05:20 AM EST

Keep in mind, everything mentioned thus far pertaining to his budgets and politics has not included Covid yet. This is how out of control it was before a pandemic blindsided the United States and set up its epicenter in New York early on. If you think Cuomo was out of control before he was lauded in the media for a year and could do no wrong, just wait a bit longer, it’s going to get worse.

51 <https://nypost.com/2019/02/04/cuomo-announces-income-tax-revenues-have-dropped-by-2-3b/>

Cuomo's Kryptonite. This is an area where Governor Cuomo is the most vulnerable. Over the last ten years, he fortified his place in Albany, consolidated power, surrounded himself with aides and secretaries that are militantly in lockstep with him, and he has made the position of governor of New York a powerhouse. If he loses it, it's over.

How Can He Fix It? When facing gaps in the budget this substantial, there are two main options, which are not mutually exclusive:

1. **Reduce spending for Medicaid.** However, required cuts alone may not be achievable without negatively affecting patient care and ability to deliver services. Nonetheless, whatever avenues that can be taken to reduce per-enrollee spending should be explored and enacted wherever permitted.
2. **Reduce planned spending for other services:** As gutting Medicaid is neither wise nor feasible for Governor Cuomo, the State should explore other spending reductions to cover the rest of the gap. Cutting inefficient programs, re-assessing budgets for non-essential projects, and a combination of other options together could help achieve the goal.

Fake Budgets, Fake News. Since 2016, per-enrollee costs have increased dramatically, despite program enrollment remaining fairly flat. From FY 2016-2018, costs per enrollee rose by nearly 16%, from \$9,973 to \$11,529. To calculate FY 2019 per-enrollee spending, that deferred \$1.7 billion payment should be added back to its appropriate due date. When you do that, costs rose from FY 2018-2019 another 8% to \$12,506. By deferring the payment, the reported cost per enrollee was listed at \$12,224.

Table 1: New York State Medicaid Enrollment, Total Spending, and Per-Enrollee Spending, FY2011-FY2019

	Enrollment		Total Spending		Per-Enrollee Spending	
	Count	% Change	Dollars (in millions)	% Change	Dollars	% Change
FY 2011	4,697,484		\$53,717		\$11,435	
FY 2012	4,857,979	3%	\$54,434	1%	\$11,205	-2%
FY 2013	5,068,593	4%	\$52,856	-3%	\$10,428	-7%
FY 2014	5,296,127	4%	\$54,784	4%	\$10,344	-1%
FY 2015	5,872,561	11%	\$60,572	11%	\$10,314	0%
FY 2016	6,167,739	5%	\$61,508	2%	\$9,973	-3%
FY 2017	6,037,415	-2%	\$65,481	6%	\$10,846	9%
FY 2018	6,016,046	0%	\$69,358	6%	\$11,529	6%
FY 2019 (reported)	6,040,923	0%	\$73,846	6%	\$12,224	6%
FY 2019 (re-based)	6,040,923	0%	\$75,546	9%	\$12,506	8%

Notes: Values for total spending for fiscal year 2011 through 2019 are actual reported disbursements. Fiscal year 2019 values for re-based spending are adjusted to include \$1.7 billion in deferred State share payments. An upward adjustment of \$1.4 billion to the State share of spending in fiscal year 2019 reported spending is also made to account for fringe benefit costs of mental hygiene agencies which were subject to an accounting change effective in fiscal year 2019.

Sources: New York State Division of the Budget, *Enacted Budget Financial Plan for FY 2020* (May 2019), and fiscal year 2012 through 2019 editions; and New York State Department of Health, "Medicaid Program Enrollment by Month: Beginning 2009" (accessed August 1, 2019), <https://health.data.ny.gov/Health/Medicaid-Program-Enrollment-by-Month-Beginning-2009/m4hz-kzn3>.

Medicaid Redesign Team II. Cuomo set a vague but ambitious goal to achieve \$2.5 billion⁵² in State Medicaid savings in FY 21 by focusing on “issues associated with long-term care” because “enrollment and spending in managed long-term care has accelerated dramatically over the last three years.” Even after Covid began, that goal did not change, and in fact he doubled down on it. There were other options to lessen the deficit, but he continued to focus on the financial burden driven by the elderly and assisted living facilities.

Governor Cuomo and his administration stalled on presenting any detailed solutions for Medicaid budget problems before January 29, 2020, when those with major roles within the NY State Medicaid program testified during a joint Senate/Assembly budget hearing. In typical Cuomo fashion, he announced⁵³ a rebuilt Medicaid Redesign Team would submit findings and recommendations by April 1 for the Fiscal Year 2021 Enacted Budget. The MRT II team is chock full of hospital and nursing home executives, associates with the 1199SEIU union, and the **GNYHA**. As always.

52 https://web.archive.org/web/20200214083414/https://health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/mrt2/index.htm#close

53 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200331215817/https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-members-medicaid-redesign-team-ii>

REFORMING OUR MEDICAID SYSTEM FOR THE FUTURE

In 2011, Governor Cuomo created the Medicaid Redesign Team - or MRT - after unsustainable Medicaid spending contributed to a \$10 billion budget deficit. The MRT developed a series of recommendations to immediately lower costs and revamp and improve the program. Today, 95 percent of New Yorkers now have health insurance and 6 million New Yorkers are covered under Medicaid.

Although the State shoulders more than the \$20 billion cost of Medicaid, local governments are responsible for determining eligibility and administering certain programs. Because local governments are no longer responsible for the cost of their programs, there is no financial incentive to control costs and localities have failed to adequately monitor their programs, leading to overspending. Other factors, such as the cost of managed long term care, the \$15 minimum wage, increasing enrollment and support to distressed hospitals, have also contributed to the increasing costs of the Medicaid program.

This year, the Governor will address the Medicaid shortfall with a new Medicaid Redesign Team - or MRT II - co-chaired by Michael Dowling, president and chief executive officer of Northwell Health, and labor leader Dennis Rivera. The MRT II will reform the State's Medicaid program, preserve benefits and find \$2.5 billion in savings. The MRT II will work to find industry efficiencies or additional industry revenue with zero impact to beneficiaries and report its findings in time for the April 1st budget deadline. Additionally, the Governor will empower the Medicaid Inspector General to root out waste, fraud and abuse in the Medicaid system. The state will commit to paying the entire increase in Medicaid costs for local governments as long as the local governments stay within the 2 percent property tax cap and control Medicaid costs to 3 percent growth per year - Medicaid growth for 2021 is projected to be 3.0 percent, allowing localities to increase without cutting State funding. Any local government that does not stay within those limits will be required to pay the total spending growth.

Medicaid Redesign Team II

Members of Cuomo Medicaid Redesign Team include⁵⁴:

- Michael Dowling⁵⁵: President and CEO of Northwell Health; board member of the **GNYHA**; and board member of the Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS)
- Dennis Rivera⁵⁶: Former chair of 1199SEIU Healthcare—the same union boss that publicly berated Cuomo for going against him in 2002; partner with the **GNYHA**
- Steven Corwin⁵⁷: President and CEO of New York Presbyterian; past chair of HANYS; past chair of **GNYHA**
- Howard Zucker⁵⁸: Commissioner of Health for New York State

As always, Cuomo stacked the deck with the most influential and powerful people that he could—people that he has consolidated power with, worked hand-in-hand to crush political opponents, and benefitted each other financially and politically whenever possible.

Cuomo's Safety Net. Included in the fine print⁵⁹ of Cuomo's Medicaid reform proposal as well: local governments must contain their Medicaid costs to 3% per year, or else it will have to cover the total cost of spending growth. 3% was the already-projected increase

54 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200331215817/https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-members-medicare-redesign-team-ii>

55 <https://web.archive.org/web/20210217094039/https://www.northwell.edu/about/leadership/michael-dowling>

56 <https://www.worldcongress.com/speakerBio.cfm?speakerID=1883&confcode=NW700>

57 <https://www.nyp.org/governance-leadership/senior-leadership>

58 <https://www.health.ny.gov/commissioner/bio/>

59 <https://www.budget.ny.gov/pubs/press/2020/pr-eBudgetfy21.html>

in spending, which would all but ensure the end of the FY would see local governments sending funds back to Albany—for a program mandated at the state level, no less.

The Elderly Elephant In The Room. New York’s total over-65 population climbed by over 24% in the last 10 years—a major unforeseen contributor to Cuomo’s Medicaid budget crisis. Elderly patients in long-term care facilities were a large portion of the reason why costs were continuing to skyrocket, aside from Cuomo’s own self-inflicted spikes in the budget gap. Of the \$6 billion plus budget gap, half of it was solely due to Medicaid—a majority of that half relating to the much higher costs of long-term facility care, which had increased by nearly 25% in the previous four years.

The estimated costs per resident being tossed around in the budget discussions⁶⁰ in late 2019 and early 2020 seem quite ominous now. Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz said the average costs in 2019 for his county were \$3,572 for a child, \$9,876 for an adult, and \$18,583 for a senior citizen. After the Affordable Care Act passed, Poloncarz said the number of people on Medicaid in his county alone climbed from 231,000 to nearly 290,000.

Then Came Covid-19

Prior to Covid-19, media coverage on Andrew Cuomo was fair. Fair enough at least. Most articles spoke about him with a begrudging level of admiration at his ability to crush opponents and bend legislature to his will, but it was dissected and written about quite thoroughly.

Post-Covid, pre-scandal, the reporting on Governor Cuomo reached a sickening level, as was discussed at the beginning of this report

60 https://buffalonews.com/news/local/the-medicaid-muddle-cuomos-budget-proposal-creates-worry-and-confusion/article_eae699e0-1fa3-590e-97e6-b84f0dcb9fa2.html

briefly. The ethics of his antics with his brother were ignored (or raved about), his actions were seen as heroic and bold, and his perceived ability to “handle” President Trump was everything the media had ever wanted in a protagonist. Sure, they’d propped up plenty of adversaries to President Trump in the past, but all of them would eventually fold.

I mention this again, because as we start dissecting Cuomo’s behavior during Covid, I can’t help but wonder if perhaps the reporting on him had been a little more discerning, and if the media machine hadn’t made criticizing him a near-impossibility without being swarmed by their legion of empty-headed bluechecks and talking heads... could this have been stopped sooner?

The absolute level of insanity and derangement of the mainstream media and the resulting brainwashing of the homestuck citizens of the United States should be considered a crime in itself. Even now, I know that by publishing this I am putting a target on my back, even though I have gone to painstaking lengths to verify and source this information to a level I’ve not done before.

At any rate, let’s dig in.

The Cuomo Story. Perhaps the most disturbing thing about this past year when it comes to Cuomo is that while he initiated a massacre of elderly and long-term care residents in the state, he was simultaneously writing his own reflective memoir about it—and he seemingly had no qualms with making himself out to be a hero.

One of the things Cuomo was repeatedly praised for in 2020 was his ability to negotiate and “get the best of” President Trump (in the media’s eyes at least).

Cuomo & Trump. In the first article⁶¹ I started this report with, published by the *New York Times* on April, 3, 2020, the author compares the two: “Mr. Trump and Mr. Cuomo have known each other for decades and share similar histories and traits: Both are Queens natives, sons of powerful fathers, with a need to prove themselves. Both are known as brash and demanding bosses, and both like the spotlight.”

““They’re both combative egomaniacs,” said Mike Murphy, a veteran Republican strategist and a Trump critic. “But Cuomo has the advantage of being the highly competent combative egomaniac.””

They *almost* get it. Whereas with President Trump, you never had to guess what he was doing behind the scenes, with Cuomo you got all the outward-facing bravado while behind closed doors deals were being made and legislation was being signed that would doom thousands upon thousands of New Yorkers to death. In fact, the legislation and amendment to the year’s budget that we’re about to cover had already happened by the time this article was written. And yet, no mention of it was to be found anywhere. It’s a human interest piece, not an information one.

A lot of “journalism” in the age of Covid became just insanely biased opinion writing. It’s not a shock that people stopped reading it and media outlets had to lay off droves of writers. In the middle of unknowns and looming threats nobody knew anything about, they weren’t covering it. Not really.

First Case. According to Cuomo’s book, the first recorded case in the state of New York was on March 1. And while I find that to be mathematically impossible, that really was the point in which

61 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200403093105/https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/03/nyregion/cuomo-trump-coronavirus.html>

politicians decided to fire up their media teams and start grandstanding for the general public to prove they were going to help fix things. Cuomo was no different.

When my cellphone rang late on March 1, I hadn't turned it off, but I didn't get to it in time. Moments later, the landline rang. It was Melissa DeRosa, secretary to the governor and my top aide. Brilliant, tough, indefatigable, and widely respected, she is the quarterback on my team and is responsible for managing all the pieces.

"Governor, I'm sorry to stalk you with the multiple calls, but we just received a confirmation from Wadsworth." This was the New York State Department of Health's lab in Albany. "New York has its first case of coronavirus—a health-care worker who just returned to New York City from Iran. We believe the incident is isolated. I have Dr. Zucker on the other line. Can I conference him in?"

Just days before on February 26, Cuomo made the understatement of the year⁶², "It is highly probable that we will have people in New York State who test positive."

By March 16, Cuomo had honed his skill at making the media and general public alike fall for his emotionally-vulnerable shtick. In a conference call, a *New York Times* article titled, "Andrew Cuomo Is the Control Freak We Need Right Now" reported him saying, "A crisis shows you a person's soul. It shows you what they're made of. The weaknesses explode and the strengths are, uh, emboldened."

THE MEDIA EQUATION

Andrew Cuomo Is the Control Freak We Need Right Now

In ordinary times, Mr. Cuomo's relentlessness and bullying drive New Yorkers crazy. In the age of the coronavirus, they soothe our battered nerves.

Blame Game. The mainstream media quickly made President Trump into Public Enemy #1 about anything and everything that went wrong in 2020, despite the initial casual response being largely due to the very same experts that the media would later praise for their shining brilliance. How President Trump was supposed to

62 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200524160515/https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/26/nyregion/coronavirus-new-york-cuomo.html?smid=tw-nytimes&smtyp=cur>

know, given the “expert’s” advice, what was going to happen is beyond me.

He mandated airport screenings⁶³ on January 17th and suspended entry to the United States from immigrants that might be carrying Covid by January 31⁶⁴. If “listen to the experts” for the mainstream media means Dr. Fauci, then Dr. Fauci said⁶⁵ on January 21, “This is not a major threat to the people of the United States and this is not something that the citizens of the United States should be worried about right now.”



**Video – Dr. Fauci on February 29, 2020:
“No Need to Change Lifestyle Yet”**

At the very end of February, Dr. Fauci insisted on USA Today, “That right now there is no need anything that you are doing on a day by day basis. Right now the risk is still low.”

63 <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p0117-coronavirus-screening.html>

64 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200211045655/https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-suspension-entry-immigrants-nonimmigrants-persons-pose-risk-transmitting-2019-novel-coronavirus/>

65 <https://saraacarter.com/jan-flashback-dr-fauci-said-coronavirus-is-not-a-major-threat-to-the-people-of-the-united-states/>

Health & Fitness

Flu Bigger Threat To NYC Than Coronavirus, Experts Say

There have been 8,602 cases of the flu in NYC in the past week, while there has never been a confirmed case of the new coronavirus.



Adam Nichols, Patch Staff

Posted Fri, Feb 7, 2020 at 2:23 pm ET

Article after article⁶⁶ in January and a large portion of February repeatedly insisted that flu was the bigger threat—something that President Trump also said, and was later relentlessly bashed for.

Worth mentioning, when the initial outbreak began in China and spread to the United States and around the world, the mainstream media and the Democrats were trying to impeach President Trump—the trial began on January 16, 2020⁶⁷. President Trump mandated airport screenings the next day. January 21st brought the first known case to the US. January 23 the Democrat House Managers presented their opening arguments for impeachment, which lasted nine hours. They weren't concerned with Covid whatsoever.

On January 31, President Trump ceased flights between the US and China, despite being told it was racist and xenophobic. On February 4, 2020, President Trump spoke about Coronavirus during his State of the Union speech—which Nancy Pelosi ripped up. At that point in time, most politicians hadn't even spoken about it publicly or acknowledged its existence. They say to trust the science and trust the experts, but the science and the experts dragged their feet until the 11th hour.

66 https://web.archive.org/web/20200211083730if_/https://www.healthline.com/health-news/dont-freak-out-about-the-coronavirus-just-yet

67 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YERX6ko7GZs&ab_channel=SenatorTedCruz

A Quick Timeline of Statements and Articles:

- **January 21, 2020⁶⁸ – Dr. Fauci:** “This is not a major threat to the people in the United States and it is not something that the citizens of the United States right now should be worried about.”
- **January 24, 2020⁶⁹ – Kaiser Health News:** “Something Far Deadlier Than The Wuhan Virus Lurks Near You” (Referring to seasonal flu.)
- **January 27, 2020⁷⁰ – Dr. Oxiris Barbot (NYC Health Commissioner):** People “who had recently traveled from Wuhan were not being urged to self-quarantine or avoid large public gatherings.” “There is no reason not to take the subway, not to take the bus, not to go out to your favorite restaurant, and certainly not to miss the parade next Sunday.”
- **January 29, 2020⁷¹ – Wired:** “We should deescalate the war on coronavirus.” See below as well.

Then there are the demands for action—any action—to show that something is being done. The border health checks that have been introduced around the globe have at best a 20 percent chance of detecting an infected person. Face masks make little difference to the chances of picking up the infection in ordinary social interaction: the virus is so small that it goes through the fabric or round the edges.

- **February 3, 2020⁷² – The Washington Post:** “Why we should be wary of the aggressive government response to coronavirus”
- **February 3, 2020 – Dr. Oxiris Barbot:** “We are encouraging New Yorkers to go about their everyday lives and suggest practicing everyday precautions that we do through the flu season.”
- **February 5, 2020⁷³ – The New York Times:** Who Says It’s Not Safe to Travel to China? The coronavirus travel ban is unjust and doesn’t work anyway.” “The coronavirus outbreak

68 <https://saraacarter.com/jan-flashback-dr-fauci-said-coronavirus-is-not-a-major-threat-to-the-people-of-the-united-states/>

69 <https://khn.org/news/flu-far-deadlier-than-wuhan-virus/>

70 <https://archive.is/PmiXi>

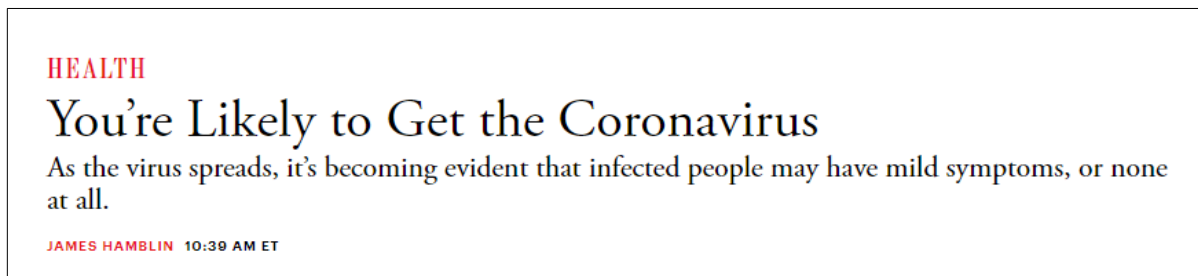
71 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200130002952/https://www.wired.com/story/opinion-we-should-deescalate-the-war-on-the-coronavirus/>

72 <https://archive.is/TbpvY>

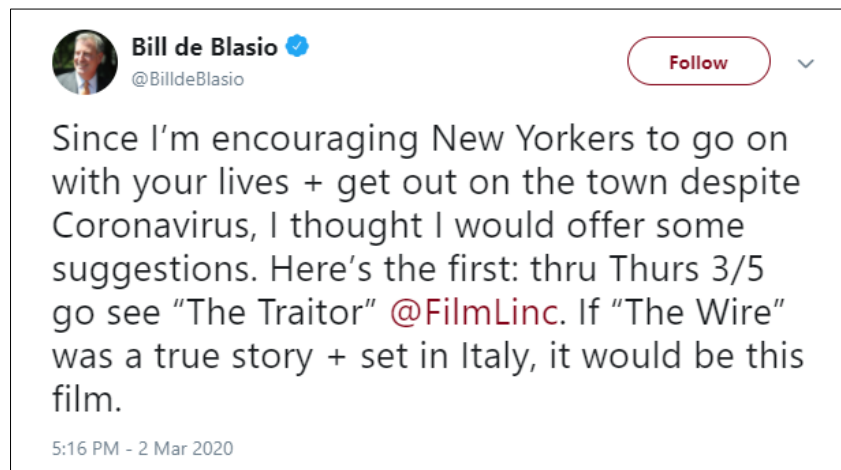
73 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200205205003/https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/opinion/china-travel-coronavirus.html>

seems defined by two opposing forces: the astonishing efficiency with which the travel industry connects the world and a political moment dominated by xenophobic rhetoric and the building of walls.”

- **February 24, 2020 – The Atlantic:** “Most cases are not life threatening.” “If we’re putting all our hopes in a vaccine as being the answer, we’re in trouble.”



- **February 24, 2020⁷⁴ – Nancy Pelosi:** Urged people to visit San Francisco’s Chinatown. "That’s what we’re trying to do today is to say everything is fine here. Come because precautions have been taken. The city is on top of the situation."
- **March 2, 2020 – Bill de Blasio:** “...I’m encouraging New Yorkers to go on with your lives + get out on the town despite Coronavirus...”



- **March 2, 2020⁷⁵ – Andrew Cuomo:** “[T]he general risk remains low in New York.” “No reason for anxiety.”

74 <https://sharylattkisson.com/2021/03/a-year-ago-top-officials-urged-people-to-congregate-in-crowds-not-wear-masks/>

75 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200306010731/https://www.axios.com/new-york-first-coronavirus-case-cuomo-risk-low-7eafa8d9-5148-4fbc-93ae-42affa09c313.html>

- **March 6, 2020⁷⁶ - U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams:** “What we want most of America to know is that you're not at high risk for getting coronavirus, and if you do get it you are likely to recover. Ninety-eight, 99 percent of people are going to fully recover.”
- **March 8, 2020⁷⁷ – Dr. Anthony Fauci:** “There’s no reason to be walking around with a mask.”
- **March 8, 2020⁷⁸ – CDC and WHO:** “The virus is still much less widespread than annual flu epidemics, which cause up to 5 million severe cases around the world and up to 650,000 deaths annually, according to the WHO.”
- **March 19, 2020⁷⁹ – WHO:** “Wearing medical masks when not indicated may result in unnecessary costs and procurement burdens and create a false sense of security that can lead to the neglect of other essential measures, such as hand hygiene practices. Further, using a mask incorrectly may hamper its effectiveness in reducing the risk of transmission.”

Wearing a medical mask is one of the prevention measures that can limit the spread of certain respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. However, the **use of a mask alone is insufficient** to provide an adequate level of protection, and other measures should also be adopted. If masks are used, they must be combined with hand hygiene and other IPC measures to prevent human-to-human transmission of COVID-19. WHO has developed guidance for home care¹ and health care settings² on IPC strategies for use when COVID-19 is suspected.

- **March 20, 2020⁸⁰ – New York Times:** "Is Our Fight Against Coronavirus Worse Than the Disease?" “...as much as 99% of active cases in the general population are ‘mild’ and do not

76 <https://www.foxnews.com/media/risk-of-coronavirus-remains-low-most-people-will-not-need-hospitalization>

77 <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-factcheck-fauci-outdated-video-masks/fact-checkoutdated-video-of-fauci-saying-theres-no-reason-to-be-walking-around-with-a-mask-idUSKBN26T2TR>

78 <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/fauci-says-anything-is-possible-when-asked-about-widespread-coronavirus-quarantine>

79 https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331493/WHO-2019-nCoV-IPC_Masks-2020.2-eng.pdf?sequence=14&isAllowed=y

80 <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/14/health/coronavirus-elderly-protection.html>

require specific medical treatment. The small percentage of cases that do require such services are highly concentrated among those age 60 and older, and further so the older people are.”

- **March 23, 2020⁸¹ – Andrew Cuomo:** “Many people will get the virus, but few will be truly endangered. Hold both of those facts in your hands: Many will get it, up to 80 percent may get it, but few are truly endangered and we know who they are.”
- **March 24, 2020⁸² – Andrew Cuomo:** “It is about the vulnerable. It's not about 95% of us. It's about a few percent who are vulnerable. That's all this is about. Bring down that anxiety, bring down that fear, bring down that paranoia.”
- **March 27, 2020⁸³ – Dr. Peter Hotez:** “Historically travel bans tend not to work very well, they tend to be counter productive.”
- **March 31, 2020⁸⁴ – The New York Times:** “Both the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have repeatedly said that ordinary citizens do not need to wear masks unless they are sick and coughing.”

“You don’t want to take masks away from the health care providers who are in a real and present danger of getting infected,” Dr. Fauci, a member of the task force, said on CNN on Tuesday morning.

81 <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/video-audio-photos-rush-transcript-amid-ongoing-covid-19-pandemic-governor-cuomo-announces-0>

82 <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/video-audio-photos-rush-transcript-governor-cuomo-new-york-love-wins-and-it-will-win-again>

83 <https://news.grabien.com/story-flashback-nyc-health-commissioner-urged-new-yorkers-gather-p>

84 <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/31/health/cdc-masks-coronavirus.html>



Video - Bill Maher Calls Out “Fear Porn”

The video above features Bill Maher blasting the mainstream media for peddling fear porn, such as the headline from the *New York Times*, “Braced For Apocalyptic Surge, New York Avoids Worst, So Far.” In an article where everything was going much better than expected—the media was still ready to spin Americans into a panicked state.

In another headline containing the phrase “It’s Terrifying,” Maher reveals that the quote came from an event planner in California... not an expert or someone with scientific credentials.

Even Fauci, “the expert” played up and down the severity of Covid, depending on who his audience was. In a congressional testimony⁸⁵

85 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2DekzGCJhJw>

he said Covid “is 10 times more lethal than the seasonal flu,” which would be around 1%. In an academic paper⁸⁶, that most Americans wouldn’t read, he wrote, “[T]he case fatality rate may be considerably less than 1%. This suggests that the overall clinical consequences of COVID-19 may ultimately be more akin to those of a severe seasonal influenza.”

With all of those quotes, context is key. Usually following anything meant to ease the minds of their audience, Cuomo/Fauci/etc., would say something along the lines of, “but it could get worse at any time.” Which, yeah, of course it could. Playing all angles so you can’t be proven wrong isn’t exactly expert leadership, here though.

86 https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMe2002387?fbclid=IwAR3psHRYCZL1uIMKU2cJuSrpcc7SCs7kAljffDCmXqG_bOjcWd2Li-xXZHs

Back to Cuomo

The public-facing Andrew Cuomo spoke plainly about Covid, and even a bit harshly at times—something that would be admirable if it were someone else—but behind closed doors Cuomo’s Medicaid team was still working on how to solve their massive deficit they headed into 2020 with. They were also writing some crucial amendments to their FY 2020 budget proposal.

Despite everything going on, Cuomo and the MRT moved forward with plans to slash the budget.

On March 19, 2020, the MRT team submitted their executive summary⁸⁷ of proposals: \$200 million was slated to be cut from Consumer Directed Personal Assistance, which allows elderly or disabled New Yorkers to hire their own home care assistants⁸⁸. But the biggest savings come from across-the-board cuts to health care providers, including \$400 million from the state’s hospitals.

By that point in time, one in five⁸⁹ New Yorkers had either had their hours cut back drastically or had lost their jobs. Over 13% of New Yorkers are healthcare workers. Not only did Cuomo decide to move forward with slashing the State Medicaid budget to ribbons during a

87 https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/mrt2/docs/2020-03-19_executive_summary_of_proposals.pdf

88 <https://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/ny-oped-the-worst-time-to-slash-medicaid-20200326-mw6avzcvjgpzl3pn24me5ba3a-story.html>

89 http://maristpoll.marist.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/NPR_PBS-NewsHour_Marist-Poll_USA-NOS-and-Tables_2003151338.pdf

pandemic, he was also ensuring that even more residents would be forced out of work.

On March 22, Governor Cuomo said⁹⁰ he had “never seen such volume” of unemployment claims. At yet, because he’d dragged his feet for four years on closing his widening budget gap, he had to force it on New York in 2020—possibly the worst time imagineable.

Furthermore, Cuomo began demanding New York acquire 110,000 hospital beds (at the time it had around 53,000), but had previously cut the budget to lose 20,000 beds over time⁹¹. Cuomo, through the years, had let his **GNYHA** friends dictate his decisions, and in many cases they’d argued aggressively to close them⁹². For example, in 2013 Stephen Berger (part of Cuomo’s first MRT) wrote an article for the *New York Post* titled⁹³, “Why NYC Needs Hospitals to Close.” They’d closed a Long Island hospital in 2014⁹⁴, to much protest at the time.

Plain and simple, Cuomo and his legion of healthcare executives had stripped New York of surge capacity, should it be needed, and only had themselves to blame. I’m certainly not suggesting government spending on Medicaid shouldn’t be examined and trimmed whenever possible, but for all the complaining Governor Cuomo did about the United States Federal Government not being prepared or able to help, neither was he.

Being the governor of the fourth largest state in the country means you need to be prepared for anything, especially if you’ve been in office for a decade. Even IF the Federal Government needed to aid

90 <https://wnbf.com/new-york-new-unemployment-claims-unprecedented/>

91 <https://nypost.com/2020/03/17/new-york-has-thrown-away-20000-hospital-beds-complicating-coronavirus-fight/>

92 <https://archive.is/1oEg5>

93 <https://nypost.com/2013/09/09/why-nyc-needs-hospitals-to-close/>

94 <https://web.archive.org/web/0/https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/23/nyregion/the-end-for-long-island-college-hospital.html>

more states, New York had a \$70 billion a year Medicaid budget. Surely Federal resources would be needed in poorer states more?

Cuomo Denies Federal Aid. The kicker—on March 18, 2020, Senator Chuck Schumer announced⁹⁵ he and a bipartisan group had secured over \$6 billion in additional federal funds for New York to aid with Covid efforts, including funds meant specifically to help costs for seniors and those in long-term care facilities. Funds which Governor Cuomo said he had no plans to accept, because a stipulation⁹⁶ to receiving those funds is the state could not cut Medicaid funds for the year.

Cuomo had no plans to abandon his Medicaid budget cuts to accept the \$6.7 billion in emergency money that would offset health care costs. “I say to Sen. Schumer, it would be nice if he passed a piece of legislation that actually helped the state of New York,” Cuomo said.

Schumer responded, “We agreed that there is significant money for New York in the bills we passed, but that much more is needed and we will continue to work together to make that happen, and to fix New York State’s (emergency Medicaid) issue as well.”

But Cuomo wouldn’t hear it.

“We can't do a budget without changes to Medicaid,” Cuomo told reporters, hinting⁹⁷ that he would stick with the plan to trim \$2.5 billion from the state Medicaid program, even if it cost New York federal aid.

Take a minute to appreciate just how cruel the course is that Cuomo was willing to take. It would mean ramming through \$2.5 billion in

95 <https://www.schumer.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/after-schumers-successful-push-to-include-ny-specific-measures-into-first-of-its-kind-coronavirus-bill-senate-passes-fmap-legislation-unlocking-over-6-billion-for-nys-the-most-of-any-state-and-millions-for-counties-to-support-nys-fight-to-contain-coronavirus-spread-and-cover-mounting-local-costs>

96 <https://www.nydailynews.com/coronavirus/ny-coronavirus-cuomo-schumer-spar-over-federal-funds-20200329-ow4kf63xxfgcvm2tky7j2a6lxe-story.html>

97 <https://www.cityandstateny.com/articles/politics/new-york-state/cuomos-medicaid-dilemma.html>

cuts to the health care system that millions of the hardest-hit New Yorkers needed most to get them through the world’s worst health care crisis in a century, while simultaneously depriving the same system of nearly \$7 billion in federal aid. Not because the Medicaid budget was actually “out of control” like Cuomo insisted it was—but because he’d pilfered it for years, moved money from year to year to hide his deficits, and he decided 2020 was the year to play by the straight and narrow.

O'Mara, Palmesano, and Friend
urge Governor to accept federal
aid and not pass Medicaid costs to
counties: NYS can use \$5.2B from
federal stimulus package

March 30, 2020 | ISSUE: 2020-2021 NEW YORK STATE BUDGET

This is simply how Andrew Cuomo operates. Once his mind is made up, it’s made up. Even if other Democrats pleaded for him to change his mind, which many did. Once Cuomo’s lobbyist and executive entourage tell him what to do, he does it. This is not anything new, but during the Covid outbreak in New York, it was a remarkably cold way to go about it. Of all the times to be lenient with your medical budget, it would have been 2020.

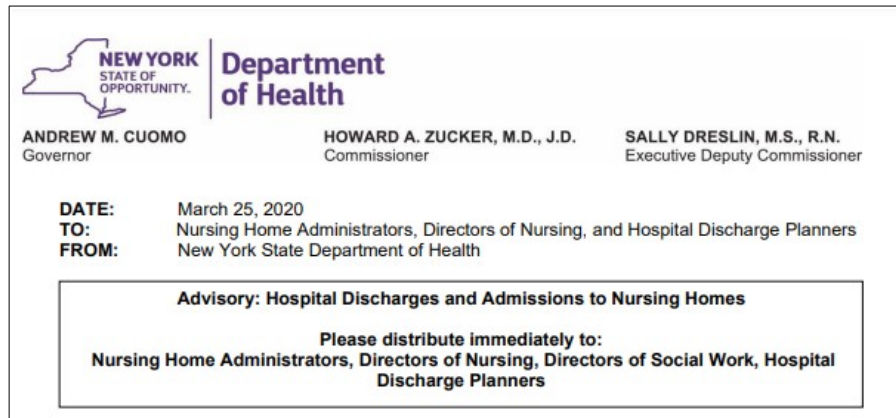
The Death Sentence. Another thing Cuomo had made his mind up about: He needed 110,000 hospital beds and 37,000 ICU units and ventilators⁹⁸. And he would do anything it took to get them. He also sought to clear out hospitals of patients that didn’t need to be there to make room for a potential surge of sick patients. So, on March 25, 2020, Cuomo signed the now-infamous order⁹⁹ alongside the NY

98 <https://archive.is/BCGNH>

99 https://web.archive.org/web/20200328184542/https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/03/doh_covid19-_nhadmissionsreadmissions_-032520.pdf

Dept. Of Health, mandating that Covid positive patients could not be turned away from nursing homes.

The advisory, signed by Andrew Cuomo, Howard Zucker, and Sally Dreslin, addresses “Hospital Discharges and Admissions to Nursing Homes.”



The statement claims that the urgent need to expand hospital capacity resulted in the directive, issued to clarify expectations for nursing homes (NHs) receiving residents returning from hospitalization and for NHs accepting new admissions.

No resident shall be denied re-admission or admission to the NH solely based on a confirmed or suspected diagnosis of COVID-19. NHs are prohibited from requiring a hospitalized resident who is determined medically stable to be tested for COVID-19 prior to admission or readmission.

And below, residents cannot be denied re-admission or admission to a nursing home based on a confirmed or suspected diagnosis of Covid-19. If a resident is determined to be “medically stable,” a nursing home cannot require them to be tested for Covid-19 prior to admission or re-admission.

Read that again.

They have to take residents in, even if they have or are thought to have Covid. Not only that, they cannot even test them for the virus before allowing them in.

Absolutely beyond evil.

It's not like at this point Cuomo, Zucker, or Dreslin, (the signatories on the directive) didn't know that elderly and those with comorbidities were the most vulnerable. The day before the directive was signed, he said exactly that:

"Eighty percent are going to self-resolve. Twenty percent are going to need hospitals. It's not about that. It's about a very small group of people in this population who are the most vulnerable. They are older, they have compromised immune systems, they are HIV positive, or they have emphysema, or they have an underlying heart condition, or they have bad asthma, or they're recovering from cancer. Those are the people who are going to be vulnerable to the mortality of this disease, and it is only 1% or 2% of the population. But then why all of this? Because it's 1% or 2% of the population. It's lives, it's grandmothers and grandfathers and sisters and brothers.

“It's about a very small group of people in this population who are most vulnerable. They are older, they have compromised immune systems [...] it's grandmothers and grandfathers.”

Matilda's Law. This directly opposed his executive order¹⁰⁰ Cuomo made on March 22, 2020, called “Matilda's Law.” An order he named after his own mother.

“I call it Matilda's Law. My mother's name is Matilda. Everybody's mother, father, sister, friend in a vulnerable population—this is about protecting them. What you do highly, highly affects their health and wellbeing,” signed Governor Cuomo.

100 <https://www.rochesterfirst.com/coronavirus/matildas-law-know-the-ny-rules-to-stay-safe/>

"Matilda's Law" includes the following rules for vulnerable populations:

- Remain indoors;
- Can go outside for solitary exercise;
- Pre-screen all visitors and aides by taking their temperature and seeing if person is exhibiting other flu-like symptoms;
- Do not visit households with multiple people;
- Wear a mask when in the company of others;
- To the greatest extent possible, everyone in the presence of vulnerable people should wear a mask;
- Always stay at least six feet away from individuals; and
- Do not take public transportation unless urgent and absolutely necessary.

Matilda's Law says vulnerable populations should screen visitors and aides for fevers and flu-like symptoms, as well as a list of other things that make perfect sense for the elderly. So why, then, did his order three days later strip nursing home residents of those protections?

Cuomo Protects His Funders. Then it got worse. In the middle of everything going on, Cuomo's MRT team proposed amendments to his FY 2021 Enacted Budget that not only included the cuts to Medicaid spending, but also added in highly concerning protections for hospital and nursing home executives from civil and criminal liability. It is standard and fair to protect health care workers from liability while treating patients for a novel virus, which is what the amendment was presented as. But the inclusion of those not working within the medical facilities was not done on accident.

53 (f) a health care facility administrator, executive, supervisor, board
54 member, trustee or other person responsible for directing, supervising

S. 7506--B 347 A. 9506--B

1 or managing a health care facility and its personnel or other individual
2 in a comparable role.

Furthermore, the amendment doesn't include only those diagnosed with Covid-19 in medical facilities. It also includes those who seek care at any health care facility for the duration of the Covid-19 emergency declaration. The amendment was signed on April 2,

2020, but included a clause that it was “deemed to have been in full force and effect on or after March 7, 2020.” So those civil and criminal protections were retroactive for the majority of March as well.

§ 3082. Limitation of liability. 1. Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, except as provided in subdivision two of this section, any health care facility or health care professional shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, for any harm or damages alleged to have been sustained as a result of an act or omission in the course of arranging for or providing health care services, if:

On the same day, the **GNYHA** announced on their website their victory, stating the “**GNYHA** drafted and aggressively advocated for this legislation.”

News

GNYHA Secures Immunity for Hospitals and Workers from Liability in Connection with COVID-19

April 2, 2020

Immunity. However, immunity for doctors and nurses had already been secured on March 23, 2020, with and Executive Order and Disaster Emergency Declaration¹⁰¹. It wasn’t until the passage of the amended annual budget that immunities were extended also to any “healthcare facility administrator, executive, supervisor, board member, trustee or other person responsible for directing, supervising or managing a healthcare facility and its personnel or other individual in a comparable role”.

101 <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/no-20210-continuing-temporary-suspension-and-modification-laws-relating-disaster-emergency>

- Subdivision (2) of section 6527, Section 6545, and Subdivision (1) of Section 6909 of the Education Law, to the extent necessary to provide that all physicians, physician assistants, specialist assistants, nurse practitioners, licensed registered professional nurses and licensed practical nurses shall be immune from civil liability for any injury or death alleged to have been sustained directly as a result of an act or omission by such medical professional in the course of providing medical services in support of the State's response to the COVID-19 outbreak, unless it is established that such injury or death was caused by the gross negligence of such medical professional;

Hydroxychloroquine. It also barred hydroxychloroquine from being dispensed without FDA approval or usage in a clinical trial—limiting it to a single fourteen day prescription without refills.

- No pharmacist shall dispense hydroxychloroquine or chloroquine except when written as prescribed for an FDA-approved indication; or as part of a state approved clinical trial related to COVID-19 for a patient who has tested positive for COVID-19, with such test result documented as part of the prescription. No other experimental or prophylactic use shall be permitted, and any permitted prescription is limited to one fourteen day prescription with no refills.

Hydroxychloroquine trials halted around the world after a study published in the Lancet concluded that usage of the drug had no benefit and would actually increase the likelihood of death. However, that study was retracted¹⁰² on June 4, 2020, because the data in the study was not able to be independently verified.



Retraction—Hydroxychloroquine or chloroquine with or without a macrolide for treatment of COVID-19: a multinational registry analysis

Published Online
June 4, 2020
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)31324-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)31324-6)

After publication of our Lancet Article,³ several concerns were raised with respect to the veracity of the data and analyses conducted by Surgisphere Corporation and its founder and our co-author, Sapan Desai, in our publication. We launched an independent third-party peer review of Surgisphere with the consent of Sapan Desai to evaluate the origination of the database elements, to confirm the completeness of the database, and to replicate the analyses presented in the paper.

Our independent peer reviewers informed us that

We all entered this collaboration to contribute in good faith and at a time of great need during the COVID-19 pandemic. We deeply apologise to you, the editors, and the journal readership for any embarrassment or inconvenience that this may have caused.

MRM reports personal fees from Abbott, Medtronic, Janssen, Roivant, Triple Gene, Mesoblast, Baim Institute for Clinical Research, Portola, Bayer, NupulseCV, FineHeart, and Leviticus. FR has been paid for time spent as a committee member for clinical trials, advisory boards, other forms of consulting, and lectures or presentations; these payments were made directly

102 <https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S0140-6736%2820%2931324-6>

Criminal Liability. As of May 25, 2020, New York and New Jersey were the only two states out of nineteen offering some form of immunity for hospitals and nursing homes that covered criminal liability¹⁰³ and negligence, found in an analysis by Nina Kohn, a Syracuse University law professor.

Cuomo’s senior advisor, Rich Azzopardi¹⁰⁴, said, “This law was intended to increase capacity and provide quality care, and any suggestion otherwise is simply outrageous.”

But in Kohns report, 16 of the 19 states offering immunity extended liability protections to individual workers within facilities and to nursing home facilities as a whole. New York explicitly extended that immunity to company executives and corporate board members—an expansion that would make it difficult for medical staff and frontline workers in those facilities to speak up about malpractice they might witness from executive leadership.

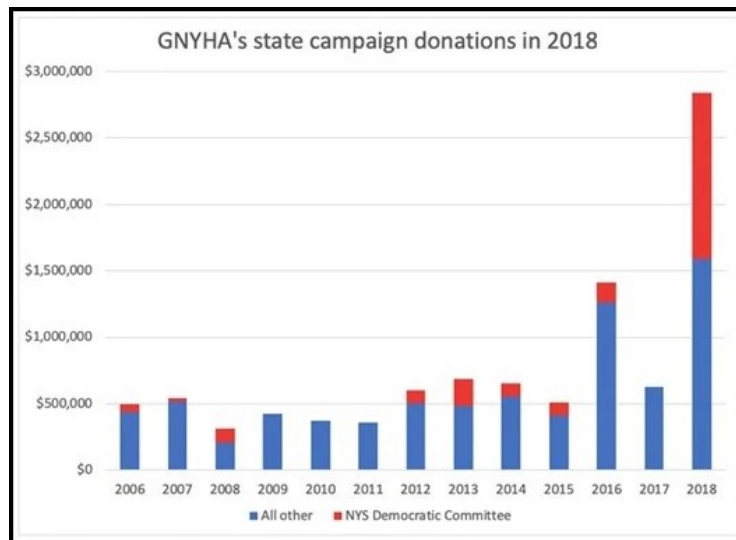
It also could potentially reduce the legal rights of contract workers—which medical personnel in operating rooms and janitorial staff in medical facilities usually are. Michael Duff¹⁰⁵, a leading expert on workplace law, says, “Ordinarily, employees of the institutions would be unable to sue because of workers’ compensation exclusive remedy rule. But independent contractors aren’t bound by that rule. They could sue but now because of this immunity they cannot.”

103 <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6927790-Kohn-Roberts-Chart-05-25-20.html>

104 <https://jacobinmag.com/2020/05/andrew-cuomo-immunity-nursing-home-lobbyists-coronavirus-covid>

105 <http://www.uwyo.edu/law/directory/mike-duff.html>

Remember that massive donation¹⁰⁶ the **GNYHA**¹⁰⁷ made to Cuomo in 2018? The one that allowed him to crush Cynthia Nixon as other Democrats were ousted? In that same year, the in-house lobbyist for the **GNYHA**, David Rich, donated¹⁰⁸ significant amounts of funds to Cuomo as well. And lastly, a long list of hospitals and nursing homes within that same network¹⁰⁹ donated as well. It can easily be assumed that the specific verbiage, which does not exist in immunity clauses in other states, was written very purposefully.



By May 11, 2020, at least 28,100 residents and workers died¹¹⁰ of Covid in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, and had infected an additional 153,000 in 7,700 facilities.

An analysis¹¹¹ found that “of the ten states with the highest fatality rates, eight have corporate immunity and represent 93 percent of all fatalities, or 63,187 deaths.” The report also says the data show that “states with corporate immunity saw more than 3 times the absolute

106 <https://apelbaum.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/campaign-spending-by-the-gnha-association.jpg>

107 [https://www.followthemoney.org/show-me?dt=1&y=2018,2017,2016,2015&f-fc=2,3&pt-eid=4904&d-et=3&d-cci=66#\[{1}gro=d-id](https://www.followthemoney.org/show-me?dt=1&y=2018,2017,2016,2015&f-fc=2,3&pt-eid=4904&d-et=3&d-cci=66#[{1}gro=d-id)

108 <https://web.archive.org/web/20210202204313/https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/26/nyregion/new-york-lobbying.html>

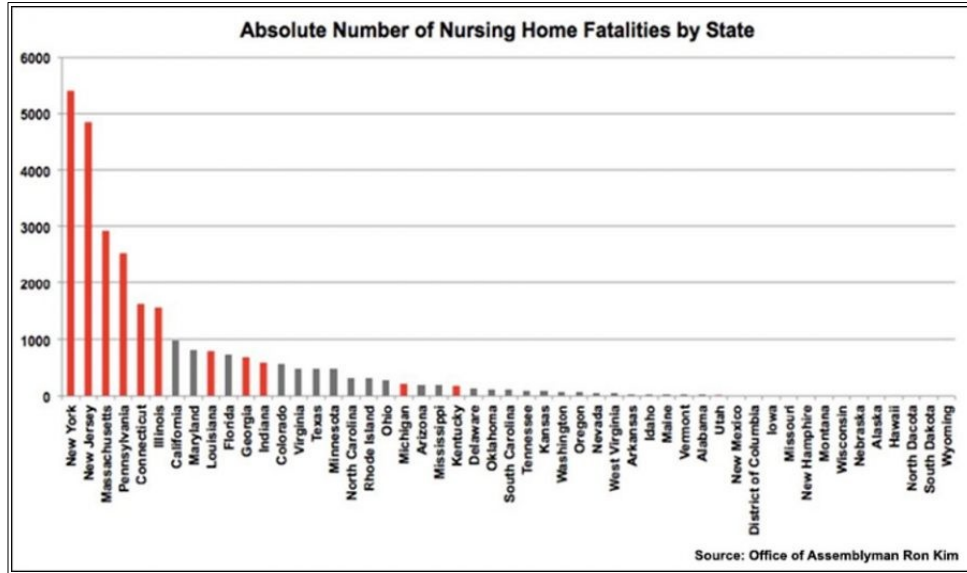
109 [https://www.followthemoney.org/show-me?dt=1&y=2018&f-fc=2,3&c-t-eid=6466806&d-et=3&d-cci=66#\[%7B1%7Cgro=d-id](https://www.followthemoney.org/show-me?dt=1&y=2018&f-fc=2,3&c-t-eid=6466806&d-et=3&d-cci=66#[%7B1%7Cgro=d-id)

110 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200509093048/https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/05/09/us/coronavirus-cases-nursing-homes-us.html>

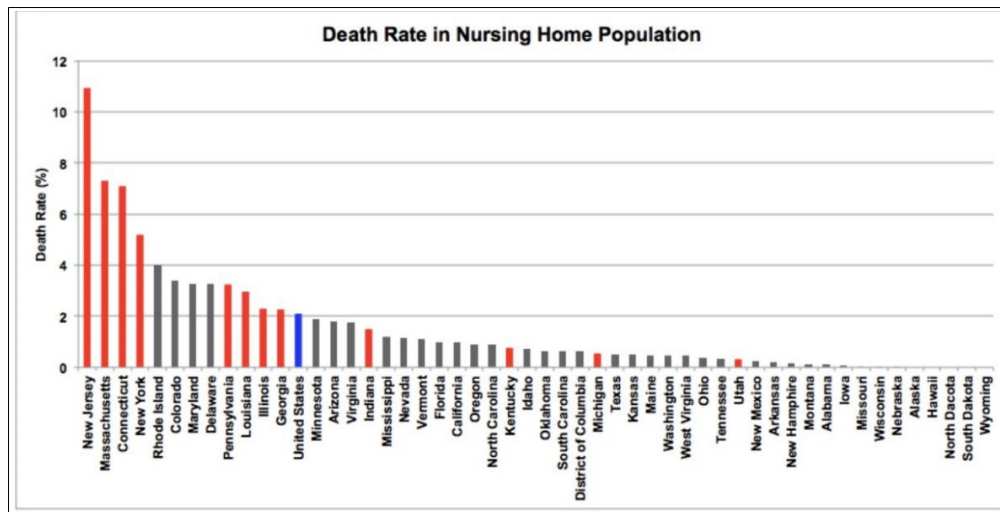
111 https://www.dropbox.com/s/4cnp9drx3vf17lk/2020_RK_ImmunityKills%20Report%20DRAFT%20TWO%20Final.pdf?dl=0

number of fatalities than states without such immunity. The average rate of death per state is 7.5 times higher in states with corporate immunity than states with no immunity for corporations.”

New York also had the highest numbers by far at that time.



And the fourth highest death rate.



In Cuomo’s book, he addresses the nursing home deaths under the May 10th section. He writes, “By early spring, Republicans needed an offense to distract from thenarrative of their botched federal response—and they needed it badly. So they decided to attack Democratic governors and blame them for nursing home deaths.” He

goes on to lament how awful it would feel to hear a loved one's life was lost "because of a government blunder."

The entire episode was truly despicable. Imagine having lost a loved one in a nursing home. You are already questioning yourself about whether you should have removed them and then you hear their life was lost because of a government blunder. I have talked to many people who have lost loved ones in nursing homes, and I could see the agony on their faces and hear it in their voices. It's not so much that they were looking to blame anyone, they just needed to know what happened.

Storybook Narratives. I suppose that would be awful, but if it were true, family members have the right to know, yes? But Cuomo doesn't linger on that thought much longer. He then writes, "New York State never demanded or directed that any nursing home accept a COVID-positive patient. The Federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services guidance was that a nursing home should continue to accept patients from hospitals where COVID-19 was present, and not discriminate against a COVID-positive person. The state followed the guidance, stating that nursing homes should not reject a patient 'solely on the basis' of COVID status."

I fail to see the difference between the two, but it seems to be good enough for Cuomo. He continues on with his next rationale:

The context here is very important. Early on in the crisis, our main fear was that the hospitals would be overwhelmed, and collapse. All health professionals agreed that if that situation developed, we would need to free up hospital beds for people with critical needs. As it turned out, our successful efforts to reduce the viral transmission rate and create additional beds meant we were never in that dire situation. The state always had additional beds available all across the state. Therefore, the critics' premise that we "forced" nursing homes to take COVID-positive people is patently false and illogical because we always had alternative available beds throughout the state. We never "needed" nursing home beds.

Again, his argument still doesn't mean anything. They needed the beds, even if there were others available already, so patients were still moved into nursing homes. It doesn't matter if there were always enough beds. Covid patients were moved from hospitals into nursing homes.

This is the absolute absurdity of Governor Cuomo writing his victory book when the victory was nowhere near won yet—nor would it ever be. His book came out on October 13, 2020. A new report¹¹² proving him to be a liar came out in 2021 titled, “Over 9,000 Virus Patients Sent Into Nursing Homes.” The report says 9,056 recovering Coronavirus patients in New York State were released from hospitals into nursing homes early in the pandemic. The number is 40% higher than previously released by the State health department.

Zero Transparency. Last May, when reporters reached out to inquire how many Covid-19 patients were discharged under the order, the New York Department of Health declined¹¹³ to respond, saying their data was incomplete.

“It was the single dumbest decision anyone could make if they wanted to kill people,” Daniel Arbeeney said of the directive, which prompted him to pull his 88-year-old father out of a Brooklyn nursing home where more than 50 people have died. His father later died of COVID-19 at home. “This isn’t rocket science,” Arbeeney said. “We knew the most vulnerable -- the elderly and compromised -- are in nursing homes and rehab centers.”

In May last year, after reversing¹¹⁴ the order, Cuomo deflected: “Any nursing home could just say, ‘I can’t handle a COVID person in my facility.’” Nowhere in the March 25 order did it specify that was the case, and up until the reversal, no such provision had been spoken about publicly either.

112 <https://apnews.com/article/new-york-andrew-cuomo-us-news-coronavirus-pandemic-nursing-homes-512cae0abb55a55f375b3192f2cdd6b5>

113 <https://apnews.com/article/5ebc0ad45b73a899efa81f098330204c>

114 <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/no-20230-continuing-temporary-suspension-and-modification-laws-relating-disaster-emergency>

An Obligation to Receive Patients. Many nursing homes felt obligated and were subsequently overwhelmed. Gurwin Jewish received 58 Covid patients from hospitals shortly following the directive. In the end, 47 Gurwin residents died from the virus. CEO Stuart Almer said the State order, “put staff and residents at great risk. We can’t draw a straight line from bringing in someone positive to someone catching the disease, but we’re talking about elderly, fragile and vulnerable residents.”

Cuomo Ally Chimes In. Northwell Health responded positively, and said three of its medical centers were so overtaxed at one point they had to put some ICU patients in hallways. To relieve pressure, the company eventually sent more than 1,700 COVID-19 patients to nursing homes. Keep in mind, though, that the CEO of Northwell Health, Michael Dowling, is a board member of the **GNYHA** as well as a member of Governor Cuomo’s **MRT**.

Howard Zucker, whose name also was signed to the March 25 directive, said, ““At least 98% of nursing home facilities in the state had COVID in their facility before their first admission or readmission, and as we’ve seen across the nation, the major driver of infections appears to be from asymptomatic staff through no fault of their own.”

It begs the question, then, why Zucker’s Department of Health seems to be stuck in a constant state of tallying up data and unwilling to disclose any of it.

In Cuomo’s book, he whines that “the facts totally defeated the Republican claim [that his directive was a driving factor in the mass deaths in nursing homes]” and brags about New York having the fourth lowest percentage of deaths in the nation. The book came out, of course, long before all the lies about the numbers were uncovered.

The facts totally defeated the Republican claim. Interestingly, this was not even a New York–specific issue. Quite the opposite. New York was number forty-six out of fifty in the nation when it came to percentage of deaths in nursing homes. There were only four states with a lower percentage of nursing home deaths, and New York had a much worse situation to manage. But this was all politics. No one wanted to hear the facts.

On January 19, 2021, the official number of nursing home deaths, according to the New York Department of Health tally, was 8,505. Later that day, Cuomo’s administration confirmed an allegation that the number was actually 12,743—immediately placing New York’s nursing home death rate as one of the highest, unlike Cuomo’s claims in his book.

As it turns out, if residents did not die within their nursing homes because they’d been sent back to the hospital, their deaths had not been counted initially as a nursing home death—despite contracting the virus in their facility, and only being sent to the hospital because they were dying.

The early directives issued would come back to haunt tallies later—including one on March 21, 2020, which stated¹¹⁵ testing of residents and healthcare workers “with suspect COVID-19 is no longer necessary and should not delay additional infection control actions.”

When nursing homes were questioned weeks and months later, because they did not know who had died positive for Covid and who had not, the reported numbers were skewed. In many instances, when Covid was not confirmed, nursing homes didn’t report the deaths as a possible or probable case—likely to lessen the pressure from family of residents and inquiring media members. Repeatedly, in article after article, nursing homes decline to answer questions—

115 https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/03/22-doh_covid19_nh_alf_ilitest_032120.pdf

even denying¹¹⁶ information requested from family members of those who died in their facility.

It was not until an explosive report¹¹⁷ was published from New York Attorney General Letitia James’s office that the scale of the nursing home scandal would start to materialize.

Total Deaths Reported to OAG (incl. residents sent to hospitals) vs. Publicized by DOH

Facility Deaths Reported to OAG	1,914
Total Deaths Publicized by DOH	1,229
Difference	(685)
Over/Under Percentage	-55.74%

Deaths were grossly under-reported by the Department of Health—by approximately 50%. The report found that many nursing homes failed to isolate Covid positive patients, didn’t screen or test employees, demanded sick employees continued to work, failed to train employees on infection protocol, and failed to provide PPE.

In one nursing home, positive and negative residents were treated solely with Tylenol and without isolation or respiratory care. In another, whenever an inspector would show up to ensure safety protocol was in place, staff on duty would stage PPE and proper bins to appear as if they were following safety guidelines, but had not been prior to then.

Some facilities would have as few as one nurse on duty per 120 residents.

James nails the deadly combination of the March 21 order that largely paused downstate testing, combined with the March 25 order

116 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200515104250/https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/nyregion/new-york-nursing-homes-coronavirus-deaths.html>

117 <https://web.archive.org/web/20210128150508/https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2021-nursinghomesreport-final.pdf>

that both required nursing homes takes in residents who were Covid positive or not required by the order to be tested, greatly obscured the data.

Simultaneously, the protective legislation provided a loophole for immunity within the small exception window—and facilities were making decisions that were detrimental to residents for financial motives, not out of necessity or inability to do anything different.

"[Immunity] shall not apply if the harm or damages were caused by an act or omission constituting willful or intentional criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or intentional infliction of harm. . . *provided, however, that acts, omissions or decisions resulting from a resource or staffing shortage* [emphasis added] shall not be considered to be willful or intentional criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or intentional infliction of harm."⁵⁵

After a shocking admission from Cuomo's top aide, Melissa DeRosa, that the administration hid nursing home numbers for political reasons, matters only get worse. On August 20, the Senate and Assembly sent letters to the Department of Health with follow up questions to a previous testimony seeking additional information.

Cuomo's administration responded in September requesting to pause the inquiry. DeRosa said¹¹⁸: "The letter comes in at the end of August and right around the same time, President Trump turns this into a giant political football. [...] He directs the Department of Justice to do an investigation into us. [...] And basically, we froze, because then we were in a position where we weren't sure if what we were going to give to the Department of Justice or what we give to you guys, what we start saying was going to be used against us while we weren't sure if there was going to be an investigation."

118 <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/statement-secretary-governor-melissa-derosa-0>

Melissa DeRosa

Melissa is often described as Cuomo’s right hand. She joined¹¹⁹ the Cuomo administration as his chief of staff¹²⁰ in 2013. She is credited¹²¹ with “being the force behind several of the governor’s key legislative victories such as paid family leave, \$15 minimum wage, IVF/egg freezing insurance coverage requirement, and free college tuition.”

She is the daughter of a prominent Albany lobbyist, Georgio DeRosa, who is a senior partner at Bolton-St. John’s. Her older sister, Jessica, and her younger brother, Joseph, also work at Bolton-St. Johns with her father. Her husband, Matt Wing, is a former press secretary to Cuomo and now serves as a senior communications executive with Uber, formerly working for the rideshare company in a lobbyist capacity¹²². Her mother-in-law¹²³, Audrey Strauss, is the US Attorney for New York’s Southern District.

Before joining state government¹²⁴, DeRosa first worked in politics as an intern for the political director of the New York State A.F.L.-C.I.O., she was also the director of communications and legislation

119 <https://web.archive.org/web/20130316091312/http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/16/nyregion/cuomo-hires-melissa-derosa-from-attorney-generals-staff.html>

120 <https://web.archive.org/web/20130527102653/http://www.governor.ny.gov/press/03152013-melissa-derosa>

121 <https://web.archive.org/web/20190528113141/https://www.lohud.com/story/news/2019/05/28/andrew-cuomo-melissa-derosa-unapologetically-fierce/1132974001/>

122 <https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/albany/story/2017/04/war-of-words-continues-over-derosa-appointment-111356>

123 <https://nypost.com/2021/02/13/cuomo-aide-melissa-derosa-is-related-to-top-fed-prosecutor/>

124 <https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/exclusive-cuomo-appoints-female-secretary-governor-article-1.3065631?cid=bitly>

for Cordo and Company, an Albany lobbying firm., she was the New York State director of Organizing for America—Barack Obama's national political action organization, and worked for a prominent Albany lobbying firm—also Bolton-St. Johns¹²⁵—as a political consultant from 2005 to 2006.

Melissa is ambitious, well-connected, and catches the occasional bit of bad press for making shrewd public comments, such as the time she called Cynthia Nixon, Cuomo’s challenger in 2018, “unhinged” on Twitter.



Melissa is a lot like her boss in a lot of ways, which is probably why she’s been able to work with him for as long as she has. As Governor Cuomo’s public image improved drastically in early 2020 and more people tuned in to watch his daily briefings or his antics with his brother, Melissa was usually somewhere to be found nearby—either sitting beside Cuomo behind a table in a panel discussion, travelling around New York for media events, or spotted trailing behind him, stony-faced with her eyes on her phone.

Melissa grew in popularity, albeit not as widely as her boss, but more people were taking notice of her than had previously. The same confidence that Cuomo projected, she did as well. Flattering articles about her began appearing in *The New York Times*, and as Covid took off in New York, suddenly she was everywhere—quietly, but she was there.

125 <https://apelbaum.files.wordpress.com/2020/06/melissa-derosa-linkedin.jpg>

Who Can Say ‘No’ to Cuomo? His Top Aide, Melissa DeRosa

Many unfamiliar with state politics have wondered about the steady, steely presence six feet from the governor’s elbow during his popular daily briefings. Here’s an introduction.

She had a reputation for being thoroughly prepared for anything, if not a bit of a stickler for the rules—even ones that might seem like overdoing it. For example, when DeRosa’s now-husband proposed to her, she publicly disclosed¹²⁶ the engagement ring as a gift in her 2016 state financial disclosure. Friends said she was being cautious to avoid anything that could look like a potential conflict since Uber had business before the State and Wing wasn’t yet a family member.

As secretary to the governor, she is the most powerful appointed official in the state, so being cautious wasn’t necessarily a bad thing, but at other times DeRosa and Cuomo’s office were dismissive of actual questions about ethics concerns.

Her appointment in 2017 raised questions about potential conflicts arising from her father’s lobbying. Common Cause, an advocacy group for good government, released a statement¹²⁷ at the time, advising that Ms. DeRosa recuse herself from any issue involving her father or family.

No conflicts have been made public since her appointment. Susan Lerner spoke up again in 2020 in an email: “As the governor further consolidates power in this crisis [Covid-19], Common Cause/NY’s

126 <https://web.archive.org/web/20170529104313/http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/derosa-publicly-disclosed-engagement-ring-gift-article-1.3202371>

127 <https://web.archive.org/web/20210324013432/https://www.nytimes.com/article/who-is-melissa-derosa.html>

concerns about staff conflicts of interest have only intensified. Who is meeting with whom? Who’s getting contracts and who’s not?”

Ms. DeRosa dismissed the queries, “I don’t get to decide for family what their jobs are, and they don’t get to decide for me what my job is. I do my best to live up to the highest ethical standards and be transparent as possible, and I think that is all you can ask.”

As more and more of the truth comes out, however, it seems DeRosa’s bravado about being a stickler for the rules may be just that—bravado.

It’s not as if the inquiries made by Common Cause are unfounded—her father, brother, and sister all work for the same lobby group, Bolton-St. Johns, that she used to—one that often works in conjunction with the **GNYHA**. As you’ll recall, the GNYHA donates major money to Governor Cuomo and usually has at least several appointees onto his committees and task forces. But the GNYHA isn’t the only group donating to Cuomo—Bolton-St. Johns *also* contributed handsomely to Cuomo’s campaigns in 2010, 2014, and 2018.

BOLTON-ST JOHNS												Non-Individual									
General Data												Lobbying									
As a contributor												Associated filers		Relationships							
Overview												1		2		3		4		next	
Industry	Candidate	Election Status	Status of Candidate	Specific Party	General Party	Election Jurisdiction	Election Year	Election Type	Office Sought	Incumbency Status	# of Records	Total \$									
Candidates	CUOMO, ANDREW M	WON-GENERAL	WON	DEMOCRATIC	DEMOCRATIC	NY	2018	STANDARD	GOVERNOR	INCUMBENT	5	\$40,000									
Party Committees	CUOMO, ANDREW M & HOCHUL, KATHLEEN COURTNEY (KATHY)	WON-GENERAL	WON	DEMOCRATIC	DEMOCRATIC	NY	2014	STANDARD	GOVERNOR / LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR	INCUMBENT	7	\$30,000									
Ballot Measure Committees	KLEIN, JEFFREY D	WON-GENERAL	WON	DEMOCRATIC	DEMOCRATIC	NY	2014	STANDARD	SENATE DISTRICT 034	INCUMBENT	5	\$17,500									
Independent Spenders	CUOMO, ANDREW M & DUFFY, ROBERT J	WON-GENERAL	WON	DEMOCRATIC	DEMOCRATIC	NY	2010	STANDARD	GOVERNOR / LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR	OPEN	3	\$13,500									
Office Holders																					

Giorgio DeRosa. Melissa’s father in particular has drawn a lot of attention, largely due to the fact that the lobbying firm he works for is described as a “government relations powerhouse” that has had its hand in a significant portion of New York’s major legislation.

Giorgio DeRosa

Derosa@boltonstjohns.com

Considered “one of the best lobbyists in town,” by the Albany Times Union, Giorgio DeRosa is a partner at Bolton-St. Johns and the firm’s chief Albany lobbyist.



Giorgio opened the Albany office of Bolton-St. Johns in 1996, elevating the firm from its New York City roots to a government relations powerhouse that has been consistently ranked among the top five lobbying firms in New York State. He has grown the firm from three employees to over thirty, and expanded operations with a Western New York office located in Buffalo, providing coverage throughout the state.

As a lobbyist, Giorgio has serviced clients in nearly every sector of the economy, developing and executing strategies on a diverse range of issues such as labor, technology, telecommunications, energy, gaming, Native American affairs, development, insurance and education, among others. With 30 years of experience, he has extensive knowledge of the legislative process and what it means to New York State clients.

He has worked on several successful procurement projects, including the New York State Medical Marijuana Program, the Department of Corrections Inmate Telephone System, the Upstate casino expansion, the New York State Prescription Drug Program, valued at \$1 billion per year, and the New York State Mental Health Contract, valued at \$120 million per year. He also spearheaded efforts leading to the deregulation of the cellular telephone industry, secured \$20 million for a soccer stadium in Rochester, and \$8 million for a project with the



He has a very impressive resume: “He has worked on several successful procurement projects, including the New York State Medical Marijuana Program, the Department of Corrections Inmate Telephone System, the Upstate casino expansion, the New York State Prescription Drug Program, valued at \$1 billion per year, and the New York State Mental Health Contract, valued at \$120 million per year. He also spearheaded efforts leading to the deregulation of the cellular telephone industry, secured \$20 million for a soccer stadium in Rochester, and \$8 million for a project with the New York Botanical Gardens.”

It is interesting that Giorgio DeRosa has lobbied for a \$1 billion dollar a year prescription drug program in the State of New York, considering his daughter Melissa, according to her own press release, “led the office’s effort to negotiate and pass the country’s most aggressive prescription drug reform package, I-STOP (Internet System for Tracking Over-Prescribing Act).

MELISSA DEROSA

First woman to serve as Secretary to the Governor



Melissa DeRosa, an Albany native, was exposed to politics early through her father, whom she shadowed, at age eight, when he was working for the Public Employees Federation, a public sector union. While at Albany Academy for Girls, in eighth grade, DeRosa and a fellow classmate, Elise Stefanik, now a New York Congresswoman, lobbied administrators to install a snack machine to bring in revenue. At 16, she interned for the political director of the New York State AFL-CIO, and at 19 for then U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton’s political action committee.

Before joining the Governor’s Office, DeRosa worked in the Attorney General’s Office as Deputy Chief of Staff and as Acting Chief

of Staff. Ms. DeRosa led the office’s effort to negotiate and pass the country’s most aggressive prescription drug reform package, I-STOP (Internet System for Tracking Over-Prescribing Act). Prior to working for the Attorney General, DeRosa served as New York State Director of Organizing for America (OFA), President Obama’s national political action organization, and worked on a number of political and policy campaigns.

Melissa seems to confuse activism with politics quite a bit—at least when it’s convenient for her. On the next page you’ll see Melissa insisting that New Yorkers mask up again—being sure to include the Marxist Black Lives Matter fists on her mask. Optics, I presume.



She also appeared on Times Square billboards in 2018 for a “Superwoman” campaign launched by Rebecca Minkoff¹²⁸ after she joined¹²⁹ the “MeToo” movement, “revealing how she was harassed on her to the top as an Albany lobbyist.”

In an article in *Jezebel* of all places, titled, “When a Public Official Sells Feminism, Who Is Being Empowered?” Ellie Shechet explores the odd juxtaposition of a woman who claims to be so principled with the reality that a person who allows herself to be slapped on a billboard for performance activism isn’t really doing much for the feminism movement.

128 <https://web.archive.org/web/20200606182758/https://www.rebeccaminkoff.com/blogs/editorials/rm-superwomen>

129 <https://web.archive.org/web/20201125152055/https://nypost.com/2018/02/26/top-cuomo-aide-lands-her-own-times-square-billboard/>

METRO

f t f e r

Top Cuomo aide lands her own Times Square billboard

By Kirstan Conley and Carl Campanile February 26, 2018 | 1:50am



Melissa DeRosa is featured in a women's march campaign billboard in Times Square.
Erik Thomas

“The women’s movement has experienced a thrilling resurgence in the time since Donald Trump was elected president, and along with it, the less thrilling phenomenon of commercial feminism. This is a messy state of affairs as it is, but when public officials are involved in packaging empowerment as a product to be consumed, the intended message can get even more garbled,” says the article.

It goes on:

““Having state officials featured in ads turns policy meetings into ethical minefields,” Jeff Trexler, attorney and associate director of the Fashion Law Institute at Fordham University, told Jezebel.

“I’ve never heard of anything like this before,” said Blair Horner, executive director of the New York Public Interest Research Group. As a rule of thumb, he said, public officials “are not supposed to be advertising products for businesses,” but he emphasized that DeRosa’s participation in the campaign appeared to exist in an ethical gray area, and that it would be best practice—though not required—for her to clear it with the Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE).”

Ethical gray area? That’s Cuomo and DeRosa’s specialty!

Despite insisting again and again that the GNYHA, Bolton-St. Johns, Melissa DeRosa, and the people surrounding Cuomo are nothing but colleagues and the standard business practice around Albany, the facts are very clear:

- Melissa DeRosa is a very powerful woman, with a lot of powerful connections, and there’s a reason why Cuomo keeps her around.
- Cuomo’s verbiage that protected nursing home and hospital executives from criminal liability was intentional, and unlike the verbiage in any other protective legislation for any other states.
- Cuomo has repeatedly circumvented other elected officials to get his way. And he is continuing to do so. Executives are the ones calling the shots, not the State. It goes along the same pattern that had existed within the Cuomo administration for years.
- This trend is also reflected in the development of regional vaccination hubs and networks for distribution of the Covid-19 vaccine in lieu of vaccination plans previously created by the State Department of Health in the last few years that would coordinate with local health departments. Instead, Cuomo

formed a state task force that determined how distribution would take place. Regardless of your opinion on the vaccine, that choice is highly unusual.

HEALTH CARE

Health care executives involved in vaccine planning have close ties to Cuomo

This isn't the first time the governor has turned to or listened to old friends and allies.

By REBECCA C. LEWIS | FEBRUARY 2, 2021

- DeRosa admitted their team hid the nursing home numbers from public scrutiny for political gain. This is not up for debate. She admitted it was because she knew President Trump would come down on them for it. Ethics for DeRosa extend as far as is convenient for her.
- If the mainstream media hadn't latched onto Cuomo as "America's Governor" and steered public conversation about him away from criticism for the entirety of 2020. If they had not, perhaps things would be very different now. We'll never know.
- Cuomo was so upside down on his Medicaid spending because he'd repeatedly used those fund to benefit his executive masters that he decided 2020, the year when it might have been okay to let the budget go, was the year to weaponize his own mistakes against President Trump and refuse federal funds over it.
- Andrew Cuomo's brother is a mouthpiece for his administration, and that media corruption is only a symptom of the rancid disease that is liberal politics in today's America.

In Closing

Around the same time as the New York nursing home death numbers were starting to fall apart, Chris Cuomo made the news again for defying his brother's orders—this time he was formally scolded¹³⁰ by his New York City apartment building management for not wearing a mask, as was required.

Management sent him a letter, saying he had been warned repeatedly and if he didn't adhere to the rules he would face a fine. Just one week before, he'd been in the news questioning why President Trump wasn't ashamed for "giving Melania and Barron Covid."

We learned today that Trump's teenage son had COVID," Cuomo said¹³¹, "Good news. They say he was asymptomatic and is now negative. But here is why I bring it up. How can Trump keep holding potential super spreader events that will sicken other folks and maybe their kids after what his own family has been through?"

Just another instance of the media playing the smoke and mirrors game to his their own hypocrisy and corruption.

130 <https://nypost.com/2020/10/21/chris-cuomo-scolded-for-not-wearing-a-mask-in-his-apartment-building/>

131 <https://www.newsweek.com/chris-cuomo-trump-melania-barron-covid-1539651>

Cuomo’s book has aged like curdled milk. Cuomo’s last word on the matter in his book is not a heartfelt statement to family that lost loved ones, but a jab at Ron Desantis in Florida:

express blessing of the DeSantis administration. Florida was having the problem we prepared for but which we avoided. Their hospitals were over capacity, and they had no choice but to send seniors back to nursing homes. They did not reduce the viral transmission rate the way New York State did, nor did they build the alternative additional beds we did. For New York, it was a worst-case-scenario plan that never materialized. For Florida, it was reality. Unsurprisingly, neither Donald Trump nor Fox News maligns Republican governor DeSantis for actually doing what they incorrectly accused New York of doing.

The level of sociopathic a person would have to be to write about that is insanely high. But also, given more time has passed and the truth on Cuomo’s administration has come out, Desantis is finally getting the recognition he deserves and Cuomo is circling the drain.

#	USA State	Total Cases	New Cases	Total Deaths	New Deaths	Total Recovered	Active Cases	Tot Cases/ 1M pop	Deaths/ 1M pop	Total Tests	Tests/ 1M pop	Population
	USA Total	30,624,156	+47,058	556,628	+681	22,914,110	7,153,418	92,519	1,682	391,968,186	1,184,184	
1	California	3,647,225	+1,429	57,462	+95	1,925,272	1,664,491	92,306	1,454	52,525,010	1,329,336	39,512,223
2	Texas	2,761,354		47,674		2,607,316	106,364	95,233	1,644	24,891,879	858,463	28,995,881
3	Florida	2,016,513	+5,302	32,840	+48	1,403,686	579,987	93,889	1,529	24,669,860	1,148,625	21,477,737
4	New York	1,848,593	+5,962	49,746	+16	1,002,785	796,062	95,026	2,557	43,094,389	2,215,244	19,453,561

Florida has 2 million more people than New York, has had 150,000 more cases than New York, but 17,000 fewer deaths and 1,000 less deaths per 1 million residents than New York. Florida also lifted restrictions in 2020 and Desantis allowed his state’s economy to bounce back and for healthy individuals to make educated decisions about what is best for them without the need for government mandates.

Florida did a one month lockdown on April 1, 2020, and Desantis refused¹³² to do it again. And for the rest of the year, he was

132 <https://news.yahoo.com/rep-matt-gaetz-gov-desantis-102015135.html>

criticized relentlessly by the media. But ultimately, it is Desantis who is vindicated, not Cuomo. After all... Florida is doing very well. New York is not. And it's only getting worse the more information comes out.

In early 2020, Cuomo imposed strict lockdown policies—many of which are still in place—and became the media's golden boy because of it. “The governor of New York's morning news conferences have become part of the country's new daily rhythm,” the *Washington Post's* Style section gushed¹³³ in March 2020. “He's the strongman who can admit he's wrong. He speaks fluently about the facts. He worries about his mother, and by extension, yours, too.”

A Wall Street Journal article¹³⁴ titled “Vindication For Ron DeSantis” details how Florida has the largest population over 65 aside from Maine, so naturally one might assume it would have the highest death rate. But like I showed above, it does not.

Florida's death rate among seniors is about 20% lower than California's and 50% lower than New York's, based on CDC¹³⁵ data.

Chris Cuomo had been very vocal about his disapproval of DeSantis's performance last year. “DeSantis in Florida let everybody go crazy over spring break,” he said last June, “He then exported all that virus back to wherever—wherever they wanted to go, OK?”

But Florida's infection rate would stay on par with or better than other states still in strict lockdown.

When Florida saw a rise in cases in June last year, Dr. Fauci was quick to jump on the bandwagon. “Despite the guidelines and the

133 https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/andrew-cuomo-during-the-covid-19-crisis-is-the-same-as-ever-with-one-big-difference-people-like-him/2020/03/28/11a89a0a-6fd7-11ea-b148-e4ce3fbd85b5_story.html

134 <https://archive.is/UKd1N>

135 <https://archive.is/o/UKd1N/https://data.cdc.gov/NCHS/Provisional-COVID-19-Death-Counts-by-Sex-Age-and-S/9bhg-hcku/data>

recommendations to open up carefully and prudently, some states skipped over those and just opened up too quickly. Certainly Florida I know, you know, I think jumped over a couple of checkpoints.”

But the rise in cases was no different from anywhere else, and Florida was completely open for business. And by late July, cases fell again.

So in the end, who’s really the winner here? Certainly doesn’t look like it’s Cuomo. Or New York residents.

Looking back at opinion piece Cuomo wrote for the *New York Times* on March 15, 2020, it’s terrifying to read what his proposals were in his open letter¹³⁶ to President Trump—including mandating a federalized shutdown and utilizing the military to operate hospitals: “We believe the use of active duty Army Corps personnel would not violate federal law because this is a national disaster.”

Andrew Cuomo’s governorship has been defined by cruelty that disguised chronic mismanagement. Why was that celebrated for so long?

We’ll continue to explore this, and more, in the next installment!

136 <https://web.archive.org/web/20210225003334/https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/15/opinion/andrew-cuomo-coronavirus-trump.html>

