



Written by [John Stossel](#) on April 12, 2023

You Can't Say That!

Over the past three years, we reporters learned there were certain things that we weren't allowed to say. Not long ago, in fact, my new video may have been censored.

One dangerous idea, we were told, was that COVID might have been created in a lab at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. That seems very possible, since the institute studied coronaviruses in bats, and America's National Institutes of Health gave the lab money to perform "gain-of-function" research, experiments where scientists try to make a virus more virulent or transmissible.

A Washington Post writer worried the lab leak theory "could increase racist attacks against Chinese people and further fuel anti-Asian hate."

The establishment media fell in line, insisting that COVID most likely came from a local market that sold animals.

Left-wing TV mocked the lab theory as a "fringe idea" that came from "a certain corner of the right."

"This coronavirus was not manmade," said MSNBC's Chris Hayes, confidently, "That is *not* a possibility."

Not even a possibility?

Debate about it, we were told, posed a new threat: misinformation.

Facebook banned the lab leak theory, calling it a "false claim."

But now the U.S. Department of Energy says the pandemic most likely came from a lab leak. FBI director Christopher Wray now says the origin of the pandemic is "most likely a potential lab incident in Wuhan."

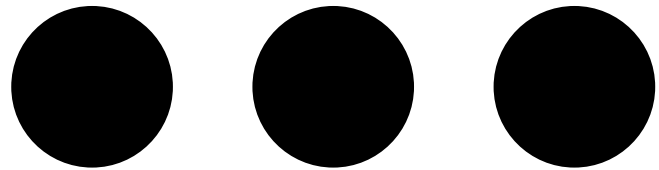
For two years, the most likely explanation was censored.

Do the media gatekeepers apologize for their censorship? No.

The closest to an admission of guilt I found was from Chris Hayes, who eventually said, "There's a kernel of truth to the idea that some folks were too quick to shut down the lab leak theory."

There was more than "a kernel of truth." Again and again, politically correct media silenced people who spoke the truth.

Facebook throttled the reach of science journalist John Tierney's articles simply because he reported, accurately, that requiring masks can hurt kids.



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YouTube suspended Sen. Rand Paul for saying, “Most of the masks you get over the counter don’t work.”

But what they said is true. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated its guidance to say cloth masks are not very effective. And now a big study failed to find evidence that wearing even good masks stops the spread of viruses.

Probably the most blatant censorship was Twitter’s shutting down the New York Post’s reporting about Hunter Biden’s laptop.

Twitter wouldn’t let users decide for themselves. The company just called the Post’s report “potentially harmful” and blocked users from sharing it.

Facebook, as usual, was sneakier, suppressing the story instead of banning it outright. That’s what they do to my climate change reporting.

Today, the media admit the Post story is true. But they don’t admit they were wrong. Now they just say things like, “Nobody cares about Hunter Biden’s laptop.”

Bad as the media are, what’s worse is that government wanted to censor.

Sen. Mark Warner complained, “We’ve done nothing in terms of content regulation!”

Fortunately, his colleagues were not as irresponsible as he; no censorship legislation passed. But government did apply lots of pressure.

The White House asked Facebook to kill what they called “disinformation,” even urging them to censor private WhatsApp messages.

Now that Elon Musk owns Twitter and opened up the company’s internal files, we know that censorship requests came from “every corner” of government, as journalist Matt Taibbi put it.

Even individual politicians tried to censor.

Maine Sen. Angus King’s staff complained about Twitter accounts that they considered “anti-King.” Rep. Adam Schiff’s office asked Twitter to suppress search results.

Fortunately, Twitter refused.

But the sad truth is that lots of government agencies and media tyrants want to limit what you read and hear.

At least now, we can speak the truth:

COVID probably was created in a Chinese lab.

Masks are unlikely to provide much protection and requiring them can harm kids. Hunter Biden did lots of sleazy things.

Self-appointed censors tried to shut us up, but eventually, the truth almost always comes out.

Every Tuesday at [JohnStossel.com](https://www.johnstossel.com), Stossel posts a new video about the battle between government and freedom. He is the author of Give Me a Break: How I Exposed Hucksters, Cheats, and Scam Artists and Became the Scourge of the Liberal Media.

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