

A Study Said Covid Wasn't That Deadly. The Right Seized It. | The New York Times

By Aleszu Bajak and Jeff Howe

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Last month, a group of Stanford University researchers released a remarkable study: Covid-19 infections in Santa Clara, Calif., might well be 85 times higher than official estimates. The fatality rate for coronavirus might be as low as 0.12 percent, the researchers concluded, which would make Covid-19 only as deadly as the seasonal flu.

Within hours, the paper had been leveraged by conservative commentators and activists on social media, forged into ammunition to support the protests against lockdowns and other social mitigation efforts meant to contain the coronavirus and minimize deaths. The right-wing, prospecting for proof that the severity of the pandemic was overblown, had found their science, plain as day.

[...]

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