

# Leslie Manookian on Joe Rogan's Challenge to Peter Hotez That He Debate RFK Jr. on the Safety of Vaccines

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[My Time with Peter \(Hotez\)](#)

by [Leslie Manookian](#), [Heretic with Leslie Manookian](#)

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In the glorious aftermath of Robert Kennedy Jr. [red-pilling Joe Rogan](#) about vaccines; other toxic but government approved products like glyphosate, atrazine, and PFOAs; and the malfeasance of government agencies, vaccine developer Dr. Peter Hotez seriously miscalculated or suffered an unfortunate lapse of judgement when he accused Kennedy of spreading misinformation. He thus unleashed a storm of criticism he surely never expected. Rogan publicly offered Hotez \$100,000 donated to the charity of his choice if he would come on the show to debate Kennedy. Other onlookers chipped in and the donation promise mounted. Last I looked, the offer stood at \$2.6 million but Hotez is not taking it!

Never before has the refusal of vaccine apologists to debate vaccine critics spoken louder of their ties to big pharma, big media, big government, and big academia.

Observing the last few years, millions have not just awoken to

the reality of conflicts of interest and captured media, industry, and government, but also to true authoritarian censorship. Unfortunately, while millions may be forgiven for believing this is a recent development, the reality is far different.

I've been smeared by media outlets like the New York Times and CBS. Congressman Adam Schiff wrote to big tech and had my movie [The Greater Good](#) and the movies and books of many others removed from big tech platforms. Those of us working on vaccine safety awareness and health freedom issues know this is nothing new and has, instead, been standard practice for decades.

And Peter Hotez has acted as a loyal foot soldier to the big pharma lobby in their condemnable battle against honest citizens who've witnessed vaccine injury close up. His dishonesty is now on full display for all to see – but again, it's not new.

In 2021, Hotez tweeted [false claims](#) about investigative reporter Sharyl Attkisson alleging she had endorsed an article comparing him to Joseph Mengele, placed him in harm's way through "dangerous and hurtful" conduct, and called for his doxing. He even suggested she was connected to white nationalists and was sending him images of Nuremberg. To call Hotez a liar is an understatement. Hotez exhibits a particularity dangerous and pathological behavior in that he is not merely dishonest but a fabricator of falsehoods intended to destroy those with different opinions.

Unfortunately, I have had my own experience with Hotez.

On October 2, 2019, a pediatrician, the Idaho State Health and Welfare epidemiologist, Hotez, and I, were guests on the NPR/Boise Public Radio show [Idaho Matters](#). Some might argue 2019 was a prelude to what was to come in 2020 as the relatively small increase in measles cases was being hyped

worldwide and weaponized against those demanding bodily autonomy and truth in science. Hotez' conduct on the show illustrates perfectly the kind of person we're now seeing unmasked – and it's not a very flattering image.

Hotez employs slurs, ad hominem attacks, and falsehoods to smear his challengers from the vaccine safety awareness community. Again, this kind of treatment is not new. During the radio show, Hotez made the following statements:

- 1) that there is an “aggressive anti-vaccine lobby”
- 2) that I repeated “anti-vaccine tropes”
- 3) that I compared the measles cases in NY to the national population to “deliberately mislead”
- 4) that the concept of health and medical freedom is a “phony concept”
- 5) that I and other parents “download vaccine misinformation” from the internet
- 6) that the “anti-vaccine lobby is a media empire” with over 480 “misinformation websites”
- 7) that parents can't put children in harm's way because of “misinformation”
- 8) that I stated 89,000 vaccine “injuries” have been reported to VAERS after MMR
- 9) that Hotez is going to “correct the misinformation” I gave and give the “real information”

Additionally, Hotez insinuated I was lying when I stated that a local woman developed MS from a vaccine by saying there is no evidence of that. The young woman in question had to leave our community with her three children as she was no longer able to care for her family. She spent time on a neurological

ward at a hospital in Salt Lake City, UT and there were many others suffering neurological complications from flu vaccines.

So, let's address his claims:

1) There is a genuine grassroots effort of vaccine injured families raising awareness about the lack of quality science on vaccines. Specific problems with vaccine safety studies are the lack of genuine placebos (mercury, aluminum or another vaccine is used), short duration (studies can last as few as 3 days), lack of comparison to completely unvaccinated populations, lack of studies evaluating all the combinations in which vaccines are given, lack of studies evaluating health outcomes of the vaccination schedule. There are a couple of studies comparing health outcomes of vaccinated versus unvaccinated children and they overwhelmingly show the health of unvaccinated children is superior. The truth is that big pharma, which includes the vaccine industry, is the largest lobby group in the US shelling out [\\$250 million each year](#), spends [\\$35 billion on ads](#) annually thereby "owning" the media, pays more than [half the drug approvers' salaries](#) at FDA, and controls the medical journals through the purchase of [glossy reprints](#).

2) Everything I stated was based on official data from US agencies or data from peer-reviewed published studies. It's there for anyone to see – you just have to dig a little deeper than the mainstream media. In fact, these days, you may have to employ an independent search engine because [google rigs its results](#) to downplay anything that challenges officialdom. I don't repeat tropes, I know the science and would gladly debate Hotez or any other vaccine pusher about the true science of vaccines, including all we don't know.

3) I did not compare measles cases in NY to the national population. I compared the total amount of measles cases according to CDC to the total US population. To understand how the public has been misled about the dangers of measles, the

cases, and the role of vaccines, check out these articles at [Children's Health Defense](#).

4) Health and medical freedom are not a “phony” concept. Children have been kidnapped by hospitals and CPS for refusing the [Hep B shot at birth](#) or deciding a fever has passed and [there's no need for medical attention](#). There is nothing phony about parents having their children stolen from them because they've done what they think is best for their children. Millions have been injured by vaccines and there is a [mountain of science](#) documenting the risks and shortcomings of vaccines. To suggest otherwise is not only dishonest, it's immoral.

5) All the information I give in all forums is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate and derived from [published peer-reviewed research](#) or US government data. It is not misinformation in any way, shape or form, no matter how often or loudly Hotez or other vaccine industry stakeholders shout about it. (Notice, Hotez and his ilk were calling us misinformation spreaders years ago – it's not a new derision.) Rather, parents like me have advanced degrees and are highly educated. We can read science and discern when we're being misled. We understand when an issue is being whitewashed. We understand experts can be bought and we're smart enough, strong enough, and well-educated enough to call them out – we're just not usually given the chance.

6) The vaccine awareness safety movement is largely not “anti-vaccine”. Rather, it is comprised primarily of ex-vaccinators who've witnessed the dangers of vaccines first hand. Would you call them anti-car seat for wanting safe car seats for their children? If someone chooses to only eat organic food, does that make them anti-food? If someone chooses filtered water based on the science related to a specific filter does that make them anti-water? If someone chooses to live in the countryside does that make them anti-city? This slur has been weaponized to smear and dehumanize individuals and their

choices rather than address the damage sustained by them or their children from government approved products. It's a ridiculous leap that has been normalized and is the go-to rhetoric for dismissing well-educated, well-researched individuals as loony dissenters. Many parents who once enthusiastically embraced vaccinations have now adjusted their posture choosing not to vaccinate and challenging the official narrative, but that results from personal negative experience, not some words they read on the internet.

7) Parents are protecting their children and themselves from the injection of known toxins that can damage the neurological system, the immune system, the gastrointestinal system, and more. Vaccines contain myriad toxins which have never been tested singly or in combination for toxicity, yet they are readily injected into our tiny, newborn babies as though no possible downside exists. This is prima facie not just wrong, but indisputably unethical.

8) I stated correctly that there have been 89,000 reports of adverse reactions to measles vaccines. Hotez' number of 221 is the number who actually received compensation from the impossibly corrupted Vaccine Compensation Program.

But Hotez didn't just tell fibs about me, he told his own. He claimed that Dr. Greg Poland's work shows 2 doses of the measles vaccine causes protection in 97% of recipients. Unfortunately for Hotez, Poland wrote in his January 2014 article [The Re-Emergence of Measles in Developed Countries: Time to Develop the Next-Generation Measles Vaccines?](#):

*"While the current vaccine is acknowledged as a good vaccine, we and others have demonstrated that the immune response to measles vaccine varies substantially in actual field use. Multiple studies demonstrate that 2–10% of those immunized with two doses of measles vaccine fail to develop protective antibody levels, and that immunity can wane over time and result in infection (so-called secondary vaccine failure) when*

*the individual is exposed to measles. For example, during the 1989–1991 U.S. measles outbreaks 20–40% of the individuals affected had been previously immunized with one to two doses of vaccine. In an October 2011 outbreak in Canada, over 50% of the 98 individuals had received two doses of measles vaccine. The [Table](#) shows that this phenomenon continues to play a role in measles outbreaks. Thus, measles outbreaks also occur even among highly vaccinated populations because of primary and secondary vaccine failure, which results in gradually larger pools of susceptible persons and outbreaks once measles is introduced [8]. This leads to a paradoxical situation whereby measles in highly immunized societies occurs primarily among those previously immunized [8].”*

Call me a lay person, but it does not take a scientist to understand words like “primary and secondary vaccine failure” or the “paradoxical situation of highly vaccinated groups being more susceptible.” Hmmm. When have I heard about vaccines undermining the immune system and rendering vaccinees more susceptible to illness?

While it wasn't Hotez who made the absurd claim that vaccines are one of the best tested medicines available, I feel I'd be remiss by not correcting that whopper. The truth is vaccine safety studies do not use genuine placebos, they instead utilize another vaccine or solution containing [mercury or aluminum](#) as the placebo. Absent placebo-controlled studies, it is preposterous to claim that vaccines are well tested and one cannot make any claims about safety or efficacy without a proper placebo-controlled study. NONE. Not to mention that vaccine safety studies evaluate one vaccine but vaccines are administered in groups of as many as 8 doses of vaccines in a day. Nor are the health outcomes of vaccinated compared to those of the unvaccinated. To argue this is robust science is laughable. To understand the shortcomings of vaccine science, watch my movie, [The Greater Good](#).

Hotez has deep [ties to the pharmaceutical industry](#), spent his

career developing vaccines and holds [patents](#) on vaccines, rendering him a seriously conflicted participant in any debate about vaccines. One would never ask someone from the coal industry about the safety of coal-fired power plants but when it comes to vaccine-connected physicians and scientists, we somehow give them a free pass. Perhaps worse still is the glaring lack of disclosure made by media when media presents these so-called experts with vested interests. Nary a word was mentioned about Hotez' background in his introduction on the show.

In addition, Hotez makes disparaging remarks about those who deviate from the official orthodoxy of vaccines dispensed by the pharmaceutical industry and the health agencies that receive vast sums from that industry without any consequence or challenge from the compliant media.

As I wrap things up, let me share one last tidbit which illustrates the type of sick individual Hotez is; I did not have time to mention this during the show, but he has stated that the parents of vaccine injured children "[hate their children and are a hate group.](#)" Seriously.

It beggars belief that Hotez has any credibility as an expert but the pharma-influenced media doesn't bat an eye at such outrageous comments.

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. would do the world a service by debating Hotez but my experience speaks volumes about Hotez' true colors – he's not interested in an exchange of different views, respectable debate, or an examination of the body of science. You can hear it yourself in [the show](#), all he does is disparage me and those who have concerns about the safety of vaccines likely in the hopes that others will dismiss our concerns without further investigation.

Hopefully, his latest antics will undermine any vestigial credibility he may have had.

## [Connect with Leslie Manookian](#)

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*[TCTL editor's note: To keep up with growing amount of money being offered to Peter Hotez (for his favorite charity) for a debate with RFK Jr., see [Joe Rogan's twitter feed](#). TCTL is still suspended from twitter (that happened years ago) but you can view JRE's feed whether you have an account or not.]*