

POLITICS & POLICY

Anthony Fauci Has Worn Out His Welcome

By THE EDITORS | April 13, 2021 6:30 AM



Dr. Anthony Fauci attends a Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee hearing to examine the COVID-19 response on Capitol Hill, March 18, 2021. (Anna Moneymaker/Pool via Reuters)

Listen to this article



MORE than a year ago, Americans welcomed Anthony Fauci into their homes as a sober scientist who was helping them make sense of a deadly new virus. But he has worn out that welcome.

It's true that **Fauci** has enjoyed an illustrious career, advising every president since Ronald Reagan and winning the Presidential Medal of Freedom in

2008. There's much to admire in his overall leadership since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, as director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, he has a serious job that's not supposed to involve being a media spokesman so ubiquitous that it's hard to believe he ever turns down any media requests.

As he's maintained a media schedule worthy of a serious presidential candidate or an actor in a new major studio release, Fauci has gradually stopped standing apart from the contentious debate about the pandemic, lockdowns, restrictions, precautions, and what is safe and what is risky. Instead, he has become part of the acrimony, offering murky and sometimes contradictory recommendations. This goes well beyond his **initially discouraging the use of masks** in January and **February** 2020, like most U.S. public health officials, or his mid-March 2020 reassurance: "The guidelines are a 15-day trial guideline to be reconsidering. It isn't that these guidelines are now going to be in effect until July."

MORE IN DR. ANTHONY FAUCI

- **Another Dismal Sunday-Show Circuit for Dr. Fauci**
- **From *Lives of the Saints: The New Class***
- **The Public-Health Establishment Has Lost Credibility**

Fauci doesn't write or establish the quarantine policies being enforced by cities and states; he can only advise other people in and out of government. But his voice carries a lot of weight, and, more or less willingly, he has become the face of America's quarantine policies. Frustratingly, his perspective always seem to be that the right time to open up is another six weeks from now, no matter how low caseloads get or how much the national vaccination program accelerates.

And it's hard to shake the sense that Fauci makes recommendations based on how he thinks people will react. **Fauci admitted in December that he had changed his assessments about herd immunity**, based on what he thought the public could handle hearing. In the pandemic's early days, Fauci tended to cite the same **60 to 70 percent estimate** that **most experts did**, but Fauci gradually boosted it to 85 percent. In an interview with the *New York Times*' Donald McNeil Jr., Fauci "acknowledged that he had slowly but deliberately been moving the goal posts. He is doing so, he said, partly based on new science, and partly on his gut feeling that the country is finally ready to hear what he really thinks."

At the beginning of March, Fauci **forcefully criticized the state of Texas for ending its statewide mask mandate, declaring**, "It's risky and could set us back to a place that's even worse than where we are now . . . and lead to additional surges." And yet, Texas has seen its caseload continue to decline. When asked about the lack of an increase in that state, he **answered**, "You know, there are a lot of things that go into that. I mean, when you say that they've had a lot of the activity on the outside like ball games, I'm not really quite sure. It could be they're doing things outdoors."

Earlier this month, after GOP lawmakers asked Fauci about the risk of outbreaks in migrant detention facilities, he said, "I have nothing to do with the border. . . . Having me down at the border, that's really not what I do." Except Fauci has weighed in on travel restrictions and border closures plenty of times in the past year. It's self-evidently obvious that having lots of migrants of all ages cramped into detention facilities is a formula for a rapid spread of the virus. Fauci just didn't want to criticize the Biden administration, so he dodged the question.

ALSO FROM
THE EDITORS

Biden's Unserious Climate Summit

The Message of the Chauvin Verdict

On Hong Kong, Stay Strong

But perhaps most frustrating is Fauci's recent comments suggesting that getting vaccinated doesn't alter the risk of catching COVID-19 much and can't justify changes in behavior. Fauci said that even though he's vaccinated, he **still won't eat indoors at a restaurant**, go to a movie theater, or "go into an indoor, crowded place where people are not wearing masks." He said he still won't be traveling, either.

Vaccinated people are protected against serious health problems from COVID-19 and we've known for a month that **vaccinated people, if infected, shed dramatically less virus** — perhaps **75 percent** to **90 percent**. If results like that don't make going to a restaurant or movie theater safe, what will? If getting vaccinated doesn't allow you to return to something like normality, what's the point?

We can overlook the Hollywood-style **poolside photo shoot**, or **his unmasking while watching a baseball game**. But Fauci has turned into the perpetually pessimistic, overcautious, position-shifting, administration-pleasing face of the pandemic recovery. At this point, he'd do himself a favor by sitting out the next opportunity to appear on a TV show or podcast and focus on his day job.





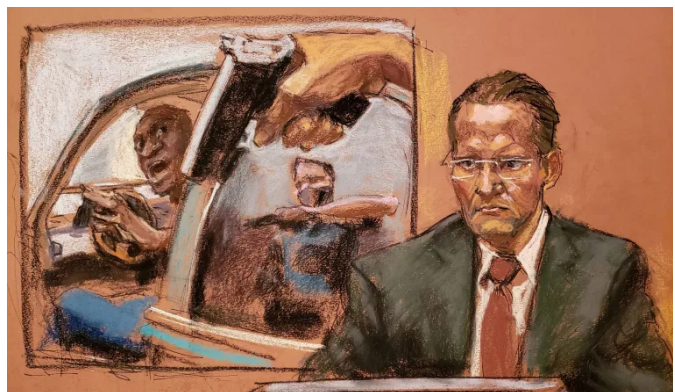
THE EDITORS comprise the senior editorial staff of the NATIONAL REVIEW magazine and website.

RECOMMENDED



Chauvin Defense Expert Destroyed on the Stand

ANDREW C. MCCARTHY



Powerful Evidence That George Floyd Resisted Arrest

ANDREW C. MCCARTHY



Biden Set to Push Critical Race Theory on U.S. Schools

STANLEY KURTZ



Why Not Fewer Voters?

KEVIN D. WILLIAMSON



Never Ask a Question You Don't Need to Ask: Chauvin Lawyer Gets Clobbered by Witness's Gripping Testimony

ANDREW C. MCCARTHY



The Great California Exodus

DAVID L. BAHNSEN

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

Powered by ZergNet



Surprising Things Men Found Attractive 50 Years Ago



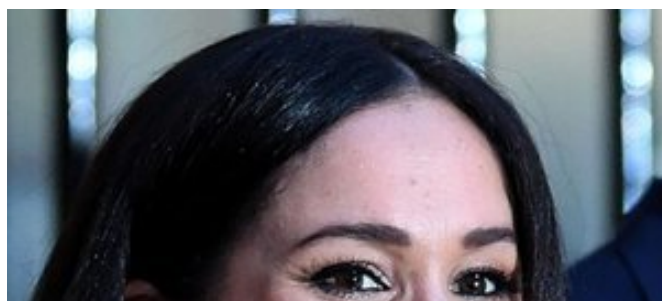
22-Year-Old Mayoral Candidate Joel Odom Found Dead In His Home



Giada's Transformation Left Fans Totally Stunned



The President Pope John Paul Refused To Shake Hands With





Meghan And Harry's Payment For Oprah Talk Turns Heads



Subway Is Disappearing Across America. It's No Secret Why

THE LATEST



CENTCOM Head Claims Afghan Military 'Will Certainly Collapse' without U.S. Aid

ZACHARY EVANS



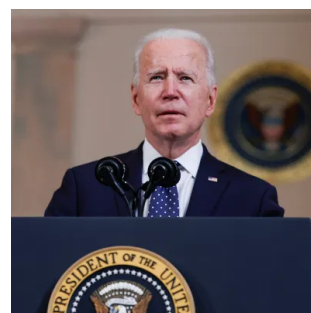
***Politico* Tells Staff to Avoid Referring to Border Situation as a 'Crisis'**

ZACHARY EVANS



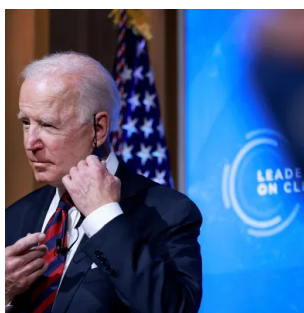
Bill Nelson's Flawed Vision for NASA

WILL RINEHART



Biden Weighs Raising Capital Gains Rate to Over 40 Percent

ZACHARY EVANS



Joe Biden's Climate Denialism

DAVID HARSANYI



Kansas Governor Vetoes Transgender Sports Bill

CAROLINE DOWNEY

