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[The Censorious Scott Gottlieb Was a Major Influence on Lockdowns \(/archives/featured-articles/2023/january/10/the-censorious-scott-gottlieb-was-a-major-influence-on-lockdowns/\)](/archives/featured-articles/2023/january/10/the-censorious-scott-gottlieb-was-a-major-influence-on-lockdowns/)

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The [latest](https://twitter.com/AlexBerenson/status/1612526697038897167) of the Twitter Files is reported by Alex Berenson, who was granted access to messaging systems from the times before Elon Musk took over. His first round of reporting concerns the role of Scott Gottlieb, who is a perfect example of an influencer who is technically outside of government but might as well be a powerful official within it.

Gottlieb's main gig now is as a [senior fellow](https://www.aei.org/profile/scott-gottlieb/) of the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, DC, but he also serves as a board member of Pfizer. Before joining AEI and Pfizer, he headed the Food and Drug Administration under Trump from 2017 to 2019. Before that, he was at Health and Human Services as a member of its Federal Health IT Policy Committee from 2013 to 2017.

You probably know him from TV because he has been a ubiquitous presence since the beginning of the pandemic lockdowns, defending the government's actions and pushing the vaccines from the company whose board he serves.

In August 2021, he wrote Twitter to complain about a [tweet](https://twitter.com/DrGiroir/status/1431433820054638595) from his successor at the FDA, Brett Giroir. Giroir wrote to report the results of a study in Israel that clearly demonstrated what most anyone could have known even without the study: natural immunity is superior to vaccinated immunity.

Gottlieb complained that the tweet is "corrosive" and might "go viral." Twitter acted by slapping a "misleading" tag on the tweet, one that still remains to this day.

It's now clear [#COVID19](https://twitter.com/hashtag/COVID19?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) natural immunity is superior to [#vaccine](https://twitter.com/hashtag/vaccine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) immunity, by ALOT. There's no science justification for [#vax](https://twitter.com/hashtag/vax?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) proof if a person had prior infection. [@CDCDirector](https://twitter.com/CDCDirector?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [@POTUS](https://twitter.com/POTUS?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) must follow the science. If no previous infection? Get vaccinated! <https://t.co/jFc0yHpF2f>

— Brett Giroir (@DrGiroir) August 28, 2021 https://twitter.com/DrGiroir/status/1431433820054638595?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw

Here is the email:

https://brownstone.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/0e86edd3-0e4f-42e9-b70c-80eb64f632bc_1170x798-800x546.jpeg

Now, one might observe that Gottlieb is merely a private person and that it was certainly his right to object to anyone's opinions. Maybe that's true, except that he served Pfizer at the time and his company enjoyed billions in subsidies to make its product which not only gained a patent but benefitted from product-liability protection that is conventional with such vaccines. In addition, the

product was only distributed thanks to an Emergency Use Authorization that bypassed the usual federal standards.

That aside, he had been massively influential on lockdown policies from the very beginning, urging the Trump administration to be as extreme as possible in its attack on civil liberties and freedoms.

We know this because [Jared Kushner's book \(https://brownstone.org/articles/jared-kushner-and-the-mystery-of-the-first-us-lockdown/\)](https://brownstone.org/articles/jared-kushner-and-the-mystery-of-the-first-us-lockdown/) reports every detail. He led the effort to present the guidelines for lockdowns that occurred on March 16, 2020, and he did it with the help of two tech executives he tapped to hang around the White House. Kushner reports:

As we dealt with the shortage of cotton swabs and other supplies, we faced another problem: the need to develop public health guidelines. Given that people across the country were confused and concerned, Birx and Fauci had been discussing the need for a unified set of federal standards to help Americans understand what they should do to keep themselves safe and slow the spread of the virus. They insisted that these guidelines would help prevent hospitals from becoming overwhelmed. Despite all the talk over the past week, no one had taken steps to produce a document. When Nat Turner flagged the issue, I asked him to coordinate with Derek Lyons to produce a draft and encouraged him to call Dr. Scott Gottlieb, the former head of the FDA and a renowned public health expert. I had been trying to persuade Gottlieb to come back into government for a short-term stint to help us better organize our response and support our effort to develop a vaccine.

When we called Gottlieb, he was grateful that we were preparing guidelines. 'They should go a little bit further than you are comfortable with,' he said. 'When you feel like you are doing more than you should, that is a sign that you are doing them right.'

So here we have a former government official now working as a board member for one of the companies chosen to produce and distribute vaccines who was directly involved and hugely influential in crafting a policy for the Trump administration that ended up not only dooming the Trump presidency but setting the entire country on the course to recession and a public health crisis. Still Pfizer benefited, obviously.

Sure enough, he got his way and the Trump administration issued the draconian guidance: "bars, restaurants, food courts, gyms, and other indoor and outdoor venues where groups of people congregate should be closed."

And why call out Gottlieb alone when many thousands of serious scientists and medical professionals would have strongly advised against locking down?

This is why what Berenson reports here is so significant. Gottlieb was anxious not only to lock down the entire country but also to censor any report on what used to be common-sense observations about natural immunity, even when it comes from credentialed experts and cites peer-reviewed studies.

After his lockdown advocacy, and before his intervention to pull down a tweet celebrating natural immunity, but only after the vaccine came to market, he took to the pages of the Wall Street Journal to say that the CDC had gone too far, especially with its enforcement of social distancing: "The reliance on a flu model caused public-health authorities to underestimate and overestimate Covid in important ways."

The person and role of Gottlieb is a paradigmatic case of why and how unraveling the mysteries of the lockdowns and vaccine mandates is such a complicated undertaking. It's not just about government intervention and it's not just about private corruption. It's about a complicated relationship between the two, involving a range of public and private actors in and out of government who seized control of the policy machinery to achieve private ends at enormous public expense.

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