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## **Lawrence Solomon: The fallout of the Nobel scam of 1946**

Lawrence Solomon Feb 10, 2012 – 8:27 PM ET | Last Updated: Feb 10, 2012 9:03 PM ET



***Scientist's radiation cover-up might have cost thousands of lives***

Why do most people today, scientists included, believe that small doses of radiation are harmful to human health when no proof for this theory exists, and when mountains of evidence show the opposite — that small amounts of radiation actually promote health? After years of sleuthing into historical records, a scientist at the University of Massachusetts has found a smoking gun, involving a scientific scam in 1946 at the very highest echelons — the Nobel Prize ceremonies in Stockholm.

In an august Nobel hall one year after the end of the Second World War, the scientific world was knowingly misled by Hermann J. Muller, winner that year of the Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine. This is the verdict from a forensic review entitled *Muller's Nobel Prize Lecture: When Ideology Prevailed Over Science*, just published by the Society of Toxicology in the Oxford University Press's *Toxicological Sciences*. Had Muller spoken the truth and revealed the existence of contradictory research in the world's most prominent scientific gathering, we might today have an entirely different view of radiation and its effects, preventing immense human suffering and the loss of countless lives.

Prior to the Second World War, the world of medicine saw radiation as a life-giving therapy as well as a diagnostic tool: Ordinary X-ray machines were widely used to zap more than two dozen different types of infections, gangrene among them, miraculously eliminating the need to amputate limbs. But science didn't understand how exactly radiation worked its wonders, leading to conjecture that radiation, a known killer at very high doses, might do harm as well as good. One theory that arose held that radiation also killed at low doses, only in smaller proportions. This theory — that there is no safe dose for radiation — became the focus of a hot dispute, with one medical camp accepting it, the other rejecting it, and both investigating it.

Muller was in the ascendant “no safe dose” camp that claimed that there is no threshold below which radiation stops being harmful. As he told the distinguished attendees in

Stockholm in accepting his Nobel Prize, the evidence now leaves “no escape from the conclusion that there is no threshold dose” of radiation. It was a convincing performance in the world’s most prestigious scientific gathering, except Muller himself knew that statement to be unsupportable. The historical evidence, as uncovered by Edward Calabrese, the author of the forensic review, leaves no escape from the conclusion that Muller was engaged in duplicity.

Five weeks before Muller delivered his Nobel acceptance speech, he had received a manuscript from Prof. Curt Stern, a prominent radiation geneticist who had headed a project for the Manhattan Project that had also employed Muller as a consultant. The manuscript confirmed an earlier study that demonstrated a safe dose. Muller responded to Stern in a private letter, saying he had no dispute with the study but felt that its findings were so significant to the debate that the new study needed to be replicated as soon as possible, a major undertaking that would take a year.

Muller then went to Stockholm to accept his Nobel Prize as if the manuscript had never existed. Another several weeks and Muller again wrote Stern, to again impress on him the importance of replicating the manuscript’s findings. As Calabrese’s expose reveals, Muller not only convinced the Nobel Prize assemblage that the science was settled on the danger of low levels of radiation, he also succeeded in marginalizing the Stern manuscript, effectively thwarting important lines of inquiry. Score one giant victory for scientific deception, one giant loss for truth in science.

What harm was done by Muller’s false assertion in Stockholm? Although the scientific world has recently rediscovered the benefits of low levels of radiation in a growing discipline called radiation hormesis — universities now offer courses in hormesis and scientific journals publish an increasing number of hormesis studies — Muller’s role in derailing research over many decades is undeniable. The costs have been incalculable. As good as antibiotics have been, for example, they continue to underperform the pre-Second World War success rate of X-ray therapy in preventing amputations and deaths from gangrene. Studies also show that routine exposure to low levels of radiation act as a tonic, dramatically preventing numerous diseases, including major killers such as heart disease and cancer.

Muller is now dead and buried, along with perhaps thousands, perhaps millions who met an untimely death in part because of him.

*Financial Post*

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To read the expose of Hermann Muller, click [here](#).