

Germ Theory

A TRUE UNDERDOG STORY



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In the late 1600s, a Dutch tradesman polished glass in such a way that he obtained unprecedented magnification. This allowed him to see “tiny animals” within the saliva of his healthy mouth. And he was cool with that.

Over the next two centuries, a shift occurred which came to be known as the Industrial Revolution. Humans began to leave their rural homes for cities, taking up difficult jobs that drained all of their energy in exchange for money to buy things to distract themselves from how depleted they had become.

Somehow, they were also cool with that.

During this period, corporations and policy-makers joined forces to allow the toxic byproducts of manufacturing to be dumped into rivers and released into the air. This pollution paired nicely with the waste products of the humans themselves, long before sewage treatment strategies.

By the early 1800s, people openly marveled that fish could even survive in their disgusting waterways—the same water they used for drinking and bathing. Some even began questioning if the rapid rise in human, animal, and plant diseases could be related. Were their new modern ways of living to blame, and if so, were corporations financially liable for the decimation of health?

Suddenly, a new narrative emerged which explained everything and set all of their minds (and corporate balance sheets) at ease. Louis Pasteur-known for taking nature's most perfect food (milk) and heating it until it was no longer...well, natural-contributed to what would soon be known as the Germ Theory of Disease.

Pasteur, apparently having never learned about bacteria in healthy mouths 200 years prior, believed that humans were sterile inside and became ill when microscopic germs invaded. Although his sterile hypothesis was and still is entirely, utterly wrong, the bulk of the Germ Theory is alive and well today. It goes a little something like this...

Inside of every human is an immune system that functions as a tiny, microscopic army. Armies are good, and so is war! Whenever “evil” germs from outside the human body get inside the human body (not to be confused with “good” germs already performing vital roles inside of the human body at all times), the immune system “soldiers” attack and disarm only the evil germs. And by “disarm” I of course mean murder! Kill! Kill! Kill!

And since there are bad germs everywhere, lurking on every surface, this war goes on every minute of every hour of every day. Just like U.S. interventionism! The good guys keep the bad guys in check, and the human host never experiences symptoms of illness.

But then sometimes, the immune system soldiers take naps. The invading germs sneak in quietly as microscopic ninjas and are too powerful to be stopped. Or maybe, through no fault of the human who is a helpless victim and should totally continue picking up fast food for dinner, the immune system army is just too weakened to fight.

Whatever the case, disaster strikes. The germs begin to dominate, growing stronger and stronger, multiplying exponentially while the good soldiers get weaker and weaker. The human host experiences symptoms and becomes drained of energy. Things look bleak. Death should be imminent.

Alas! When all (rational, logical) hope seems lost, the tiny soldiers summon newfound strength! In spite of being far more outnumbered now than they were at the beginning of the battle, they suddenly get better at fighting. It's as if they were Neo from *The Matrix*, with new fighting techniques downloaded into their tiny brains. Now they know kung-fu!

So the silly, stupid, flawed human body (which should have just taken care of the germs from the beginning, duh) becomes the best underdog story of all time. Through means which will forever be a mystery, it has mastered a two-part strategy. Step one: allow the germs to get really comfortable while feeling like utter shit for a period of time. Step two: miraculously spring back to life and win the war!

Or sometimes die. That's how it worked for the entirety of human civilization ever since evolving from monkeys. We'd either live for a hundred years or die randomly during childhood. That is, until the brilliance of modern science discovered petroleum, which could be turned into chemicals and patented as pharmaceuticals!

Now at the onset of symptoms, humans can take drugs that function like a frustrated child at a chessboard, wiping out both sides at once! Kill the bad guys, kill the good guys...just kill everything and start over, with only the minor nuisance of every conceivable side-effect known to mankind, typed out in 6pt font on a small piece of paper folded 16 times and tucked neatly within the prescription drug's packaging.

The End