Twitter Thread by Tom Zeller Jr.



Tom Zeller Jr.
@tomzellerjr

Thread: A look back at the top 10 most-read @undarkmag stories published in 2020, starting with…

#10: I had not personally heard of the Voynich manuscript — a cryptic, centuries old “text” that still baffles researchers — until super-smart @jillianefoley brought this story idea to us. If you don’t know about this puzzle, prepare to be fascinated: https://t.co/ZNEBudrssi

#9: A riveting review by @Svobodster of @jameshamblin's book "Clean" and our collective obsession with "surface notions of cleanliness."
https://t.co/KR1xW0qt8H

#8: My personal favorite headline of the year, which I continue to argue contains a gift to any budding garage band looking for a name. (You’re welcome). Story by the always excellent @DianeEPeters
https://t.co/6jx7sEptGB

#7: Written all the way back on April 16th, @kategammon’s smart look at the anti-vaxx community’s then-percolating suspicions around the hunt for a Covid-19 vaccine seems eerily prescient as vaccine roll-outs get underway now.
https://t.co/ZzLihsMtaQ

#6: She started writing for us almost three years ago, and since then, @Inkfish has become one of our most reliable and thought-provoking contributors. Here she tackles the science on Covid-19 in breast milk, finding it is “not a fluid to fear.”
https://t.co/SKbk0dAagj

#5: Contributing editor Michael Schulson (not on Twitter) was one of the first journalists to examine the backlash against Stanford's John Ioannidis (also not on Twitter). It’s a measured look at a scientific debate that still ruffles feathers.
https://t.co/U8gNoGY5KB

#4: This October entry from Johannesburg-based journalist @EdStoddardZA proved so popular with readers that we’ve considered establishing a chinchilla vertical at Undark. (Not really.) Good stuff on a pressing issue:
https://t.co/XnPyBckR0V

#3: From our opinion silo: As the full breadth and threat of the Covid-19 pandemic was becoming clear last March, epidemiologist and long-running head of @OSHA_DOL, @drdavidmichaels, took a cudgel to the @GOP and its history of science denialism.
https://t.co/JqjXpqjmLt

#2: The headline on @elaberwarren's highly-trafficked piece from August poses a potent scientific question that continues to puzzle researchers — and one that will surely do so long after Covid-19 is a thing of the past.
https://t.co/NiaXrDO485

And #1: This probing profile of coronavirus specialists who, over the last decades, watched helplessly as research funding went toward other threats is, simply put, a must-read. Story by the very excellent and very Twitter-shy journalist, Charles Schmidt.
https://t.co/Osh0NX7Zkl

PS #1: I'd like to emphasize that this is by no means a list of Undark's "best" work, but rather its most highly trafficked, which is a measure of … something — but as we all know, not everything.

PS #2: I'm both proud of and humbled by the sheer amount of very excellent journalism that our small team — and our vast network of contributors — manages to produce week in and week out.

PS #3: I cannot conjure enough thanks for our brilliant and unflappable deputy editor, @J_Roberts8, nor for our swashbuckling audience engagement editor @frankieschembri, who truly make the Undark world go 'round each day.

PS #4: Endless gratitude to @ashleythesmart who cultivates some of the best opinion pieces you'll read anywhere; @betty_the_nah for keeping our bills (and our writers) paid; and @LucasAndersH who does a little bit of everything at both Undark and its publisher, @KSJatMIT.

PS #5: To our core team of story wizards, including: articles editor @brookeborel, senior editors @Sara_Talpos & Scott Veale; formidable podcast producer @lydiachain; whip-smart production editor @AmandaGrennell; and tireless fact-checkers @mahohnoes & @erikakcarlson: THANK YOU!

PS #6: And finally, special and ultimate gratitude goes to veteran journalist @deborahblum, who came to @KSJatMIT in 2015 and shook things up like a hurricane, turning an already-excellent fellowship program into a world-class incubator of vital science journalism.

PS #7: Her innovations are too many to count (just visit the shiny new https://t.co/mhnYsKXJjH website for a sampling), but giving rise to @undarkmag is one of them.

PS #8: Our modest publication will mark its 5-year anniversary next month. It's non-profit science journalism undertaken very truly in the public interest, with the intersection where science mingles — or collides — with politics, economics, and culture as its special focus.

PS #9: If you haven’t already checked us out, doing so in 2021 would make for a very solid resolution (I say humbly).

https://t.co/Hp0GgmXPSU

PS#10 (and fin!): Happy New Year, and thanks again to everyone who helps to make @undarkmag happen.