

Prox O Authors' Ebola Blueprint

The 2013-14 (I'm not convinced about the 13 part) Ebola event was the first ever Ebola outbreak in West Africa. It was less deadly than previous versions, but more contagious. According to Andersen, Holmes, Rambaut:

[28,646](#) confirmed and suspected cases documented

11,323 recorded deaths

The largest outbreak of Ebola on record - by far.

[The evolution of Ebola virus: Insights from the 2013-2016 epidemic.](#) (Nature paywall: \$32 for a 6-page paper! Sponsored by Wellcome VIZIONS - how does that fit with [Wellcome's policy](#) in support of open and unrestricted access to research literature? You can buy a [whole book](#) on the outbreak by Constantine Nana for \$7-8 - way more insights.)

Authors: **Holmes, E. C.;** Dudas, G.; **Rambaut, A.;** and **Andersen, K. G.**

Pub: **Nature**, October 2016.

First question. What happened to Dudass? (He was doing his doctorate at the time - his [supervisor was](#) ... Andrew Rambaut - guess he got drafted in.)

Second: Where's Wally?

Garry was running a US bioweapons defense lab near the epicentre - great mates with Andersen - so what's Walter Ian Lipkin's connection?

Wally would have loved to be there - *virus hunting* - but he was too busy in China/New York being a global Celebrity Scientist. Someone's gotta do it. You can stare down the barrel of a microscope all you like but it won't be as effective at [bringing society with us](#) as:

- *Contagion* -

[Q&A with a Master Virus Hunter intro:](#) To make the movie *Contagion* (2011), Dr. Lipkin [and his team](#) created an imaginary virus and hued closely both to science and his experience of witnessing pandemics. "Is this fiction? Yes. Is it real? Absolutely," he [wrote](#) in 2011.

So Wally was literally writing the script (more Covid than Ebola - that was *Outbreak*). Behind-the-scenes. Actually in-front-of-the-scenes. But back to the future with Andersen/Garry, Holmes, Rambaut, Dudass's:

- *Ebola Evolution* -

*The 2013–2016 Ebola virus disease (EVD) epidemic in West Africa **appears** to have begun following human contact with an animal (**probably** bat) reservoir of Ebola virus (EBOV) in **December** 2013, in the small village of Meliandou in Guéckédou Prefecture, Guinea.* (authors brackets)

Straight off the *bat*, the authors promulgate/imprint an unsubstantiated origin narrative, citing a paper by Baize et al - *the toddler, the hollow tree, the remote village* of Meliandou, Guinea - it's the pangolin narrative of the day. They are all careful to sneak in the odd *appears* and *may have* but no alternatives are ever presented - it keeps getting repeated and repeated. It's a deliberate, effective process.

As a story, it sounds about right: deadly bat pathogens lurking in the forests of deepest, darkest Africa, inevitably infecting, as Farrar writes in his own VIZIONS project: *a cohort of high risk individuals .. engaging in .. bushmeat hunting .. behaviour.*

Fits the bill of what the public will believe. But is it true?

For a start, *individuals engaging in bushmeat hunting behaviour* has been going on since ... individuals existed. But Ebola has only been around since 1975 - when the US military started conducting bio-defense research in Sierra Leone.

Secondly, the strain of Ebola that sparked the outbreak is 97% identical with the Kikwit-95 strain (97%) from the 95 Zaire outbreak. They're different but related.

Zaire, now Democratic Republic of Congo - as my uncle said - *if a country has got democratic in its name, it's not* - is about 4000km away from Guinea as the bat flies.

Q: How did it travel so far without infecting anyone along the way?

I'm thinking: aeroplane.

Carried in by a scientist courier - for research purposes - to help wage The War on (non-existent) Bioterrorism.

Too far-fetched? Let's see ...

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