

NOTEWORTHY

A MUSEUM OF DIVERSE INTELLECTUAL PATHOLOGIES

1.02.2021

There is a super interesting 1992 paper of Jacobson/Feinstein [oxygen as a cause of blindness in premature infants: “autopsy” of a decade of errors in clinical epidemiologic research](#) While it is quite obvious to recognize such an epidemic at a late stage (as in the [thalidomide scandal](#)) it needs quite a lot of oversight at the early phase.

it took more than a decade-1942 to 1954-to end an iatrogenic epidemic in which high-dose oxygen therapy led to retrolental fibroplasia (RLF) in premature infants, blinding about 10,000 of them. The autopsy revealed a museum of diverse intellectual pathology. When first noted, RLF was regarded as neither a new disease nor a postnatal effect. In early investigations, the ophthalmologists did not establish explicit criteria for diagnosis and confused RLF with malformations previously seen in full-term infants. Because the patients were not referred until months after birth, the ophthalmologists assumed that the lesion, which resembled an embryologic structure, must have occurred prenatally.

Even with the current COVID-19 [we can see “live on stage” blinded experts](#). Maybe the [“early intubation epidemic”](#) is another example with new data published in the [ERJ](#).