

Unmasking Covid, Maxwell's downfall and putting life in focus

Buried in the 10 January 2020 edition of Guardian Weekly was a small but significant story. "Respiratory contagion is not Sars, authorities say" was the headline on a short global report, at the foot of page 7, about a mysterious infection in the central Chinese city of Wuhan.

Two years on, it's fair to say we now know a little more than we did about that mysterious illness. But the broader context of the pandemic can still be tricky to understand. This week, the Guardian's data and visuals teams have collaborated to produce some beautiful graphics and analysis, revealing the pandemic's global impact in a new light. Then, our China affairs correspondent, Vincent Ni, explores why, after two years, the search for Covid's origins remains shrouded in politics and confusion.

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The conviction of Ghislaine Maxwell for sex-trafficking offences concluded one of the most closely followed trials in recent times. Will this draw a line under the case - or will US prosecutors' attention now turn to other known associates of convicted child sex offender Jeffrey Epstein?

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It wouldn't be a new year's edition without pause to reflect on personal goals for the coming months. Johann Hari unpacks the fascinating topic of concentration, asking why so many of us have lost our ability to focus, and if it's too late to do anything about it. Then, if your new year's resolutions are already going to pot, Rebecca Seal has some reassuring advice - just don't worry about it.

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On the cover

Statistics on Covid can be notoriously difficult to interpret, so the Guardian's data and graphics teams joined forces to unmask some of the key global impacts of Covid-19 over the last two years

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Guardian Design



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