Twitter Thread by Anosognosiogenesis



Anosognosiogenesis
@pookleblinky

The US immigration act of 1907 signed by Teddy Roosevelt: ableist as hell. https://t.co/ficeXOImo5

> Today's covid denialists are tomorrow's openly eugenicist "these disabled people are a drain on society"
>
> Literally. 13 years after the Spanish flu, the very first people the nazis targeted were disabled people.
>
> What caused a lot of those disabilities, you think?
>
> — Anosognosiogenesis (@pookleblinky) November 29, 2020

One theory for why the Spanish flu was so unusually lethal for young people:

They hadn't lived through the previous flu pandemic of 1889-1890 (https://t.co/OiDZYtdbWx) that killed about 1 million people. And thus had no carryover immunity.

It's suspected that the 1889 pandemic was not influenza, but a coronavirus.

The 1889 virus spread rapidly, killing mostly the elderly.

The 1889 virus was the first truly modern pandemic: people knew about germs, it spread via trains, it spread at the speed of modern transportation and commerce

https://t.co/o8Nn58RCn4

Really read that. The parallels are striking, it was the first pandemic in the age of daily news.

The 1889 pandemic was not particularly deadly, as pandemics can go.

What it was, was contagious as hell. Hundreds of thousands of cases sprouted up everywhere, overnight. Entire cities shut down with everyone sick.

At one point, 25% of London was estimated to be sick with it.

Berlin was hit hard.

Epidemiologists estimate its R0 was 2.1, its fatality rate 0.1-0.28%

Not too infectious, not too deadly.

What it did do was cause extremely high fevers. 42°C fevers, accompanied by crippling fatigue, seizures, heart palpitations, etc.

In 1889, around the world, half of some cities, at all ages, experienced debilitating fevers.

Bear in mind: 42.4°C is where fevers cause lasting neurological damage.

The result was that after 1889, there were a lot more cases of epilepsy, mental disabilities, developmental disabilities, mental illnesses, people who could not find steady employment, people with permanent respiratory problems, etc

14 years later, the 1903 Immigration Act was passed by Roosevelt.

It banned anarchists, prostitutes, beggars, and people with epilepsy.

And then a few years later, he passed the above legislation with even more ableism.

15 years after the 1889 pandemic, there were more people around with epilepsy or developmental disabilities or mental illnesses or such.

The effect of half the population of a city getting a 42°C fever at once.

18 years after that pandemic, US immigration law had responded by veering hard toward eugenics.

And by 1918, pretty much the only people who had not gotten antibodies to whatever that virus was, were under the age of 30.

When the spanish flu hit, it hit children and young adults harder than any other demographic. The people who hadn't lived through the 1889 pandemic.

And, in 1917, Wilson signed a new immigration act with even more provisions against people with epilepsy, developmental disabilities, etc

Basically: 30 years later, the long-term health effects of that not-particularly deadly pandemic were reflected in US immigration policies and eugenicist circles.

A generation later, the aftermath of the 1889 pandemic was still being felt.

Wilson's immigration act was the basis of the 1924 immigration act, which is what th: US used to deny Anne Frank asylum 2 decades later.

Basically: the aftereffects of a pandemic, even if it is not particularly deadly, can last for *decades*.

It can result in ableist, eugenicist legislation decades later.

Survivors can be fucked over, decades later.

Half a century later, those effects might end up killing people in a context no one had foreseen.

With both the 1889 pandemic and the spanish flu, around a decade later is where the harsh attacks on the survivors began.

People who'd survived, but with chronic illness, faced a second epidemic a decade later.

https://t.co/tR494iUOUe

From that article:

Fevers so high your brain you can get lasting brain damage

And once again, you see quinine touted as the pandemic panacea. 30 years later, it'd be touted again.

Half a century later: https://t.co/0VC9MMKE3E in which the US gov infected Guatamalan prisoners and asylum patients with syphilis and tested quinine derivatives

Here's a lancet article discussing "pandemic sequelea," the lingering chronic illnesses survivors are left with: https://t.co/l0CPTNvYiR