Twitter Thread by .



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@marcie_hatter

I’m not a scientist, so obviously do correct me if I’m wrong. (Heck, this is twitter, I don’t need to ask that do I?)

BUT a virus doesn’t mutate in *nothing*, does it, it doesn’t mutate when it’s on the handle of the supermarket door or even in the air you’ve just breathed out.

It mutates *in a host*. And the most sure fire way for a virus to find a wide variety of hosts in which to mutate is to do precious little to control the spread of the virus. To have policies which amount to “take it on the chin”. To have an ‘acceptable’ death level.

To allow the virus to run absolutely rampant through one section of the population (children) because stopping it doing so would mean making a politically unpopular decision (closing the schools).

Seen some people (scientists, I mean, not your uncle Jim) saying this virus is now more transmissible in children and like... what did they THINK would happen if you allow the virus unfettered access to kids?

It adapts! It adapts to its fucking hosts! It becomes better at infecting them! Like, the whole fucking point for a virus is to be able to make copies of itself. It’s actually not that arsed about killing or harming you.

In fact in viruses that kill people very quickly, sometimes the virus mutates to become *less* deadly, because it’s not in the virus’ interest to kill people quickly as it means it can’t spread for as long or as much.

I’ve read people (not scientists) suggesting this will happen with the coronavirus. “Viruses usually become less deadly over time,” and like, yeaaaaaah, that *can* happen with viruses that are *too deadly to be able to spread much*.

That’s my understanding anyway, and I’m sure twitter will be quick enough to correct me if I’m not right. But viruses also do sometimes become even more infectious over time because, well, it’s in a virus’ interest to be infectious.

A virus just wants to make copies of itself. The more the better. It’s mutating all the time, of course, that’s how scientists can track where it comes from. Hats off to those scientists doing all that hard work, btw. <3

And most of the time those mutations won't be particularly meaningful. But a mutation that *gives the virus an advantage*, that helps it (yep you guessed) make more copies of itself, that mutation will become dominant.

So, at the beginning, it looked as if the virus wasn't actually *that* great at making copies of itself in children, at least, not as efficient as it was at making copies of itself in adults.

But what did we do?

Oops! We gave the virus easy access to a pool of the very hosts it needed to get better at infecting.

And you'll never guess what's happened now!

IT FUCKING ADAPTED.

And the government, aided and abetted by *some*, choice, scientists, has allowed this to happen.

And if a fool like me, whose weakest science was biology, who didn't take it any further than GCSE, could see this, why couldn't they?

What an absolute fucking mess. I've said it before and I'll say it again: it didn't have to be like this.

@threadreaderapp could you compile this please so I can share on Facebook with people who don't understand threads?