

The Sad, Unspoken Fallout from the US Shutdown

I think the media needs to get on board with these United States. It appears that most of the major television stations are driven by their owner’s personal political agendas which is a giant failure to these United States.

Here are some of the way’s they and our politicians have failed us:

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Businesses Lost

Businesses lost by demographic group

Losses from February to April 2020

	February	April	Losses	% decrease
Total	15.0m	11.7m	3.3m	22%
Women	5.4m	4.0m	1.3m	25
Men	9.6m	7.7m	2.0m	20
Black	1.1m	637.8k	441.3k	41
Latinx	2.1m	1.4m	658.0k	32
Asian	888.5k	657.9k	230.6k	26
White	10.6m	8.8m	1.8m	17
Immigrant	3.1m	2.0m	1.1m	36
Native born	11.9m	9.7m	2.2m	18

Data: [National Bureau of Economic Research](#); Table: Axios Visuals

Between February and April this year, at least 3.3million businesses have had to shut their doors. Most will not ever open again because, as all small business owners know, it takes money to start a business. And there is none left.

And what do you suppose happened to not only the owners of those businesses, but the employees? Theoretically the employees can file for unemployment, but that's not a bottomless well if businesses are no longer around to pay into that fund.

Also know that business owners, in most cases, generally cannot collect unemployment.

The domino effect here is that many of these owners were probably paying for office space...which means the owners of those buildings are also SOL...as well as for electricity, phone lines, internet service and probably a multitude of supplies used in said business. All of those people are out of luck now too. No more money for them or the business owner.

Here are two articles that validate these numbers:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/05/12/small-business-used-define-americas-economy-pandemic-could-end-that-forever/>

<https://www.axios.com/small-businesses-lost-coronavirus-recession-minorities-22a03253-156f-4397-829d-067940d00300.html>



Unemployment

Unemployment claims passed 40 million by May 28. I read and heard on the news that the actual number of unemployed hit 50,000,000 at its peak but many of those could not file because the online benefits system bit the dust. That number is a combination of the people whose businesses took a huge loss and had to close, as well as those limping along with minimal staff, such as Disneyland. *(Although they just laid off 28,000 people the first of October.)*

My former employer alone had to lay off a third of their staff on the first of June: that was 125 people trying to file for unemployment in San Diego.

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/28/business/unemployment-stock-market-coronavirus.html>

Learn exact stats by exploring the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics site:

<https://www.bls.gov/cps/effects-of-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic.htm>

Homelessness

 By Rob Hayes
Tuesday, July 7, 2020



When businesses close and layoff people, those people no longer have money with which to pay their rent or mortgage. Thus, they get evicted. Yes, there was a freeze on that, but here in Nevada that freeze ended on September 1st. That doesn't mean all those businesses magically



reopened or if they did, had enough money in the bank to bring back every single employee right away. So naturally, there are a lot of people still not working and therefore still not able to pay rent and are being evicted.

The numbers are different in different cities across the United States, but it's still a huge and growing problem that cannot be ignored.

Here's some recent news for Las Vegas Nevada:

<https://www.ktnv.com/news/las-vegas-shelters-prepare-for-possible-wave-of-homelessness-eviction-moratorium-expires-sept-1>

And from Los Angeles:

<https://abc7.com/los-angeles-homeless-crisis-la-homelessness-during-coronavirus-covid-19-and/6305357/>

Transfer of America's Wealth to a Select Few Large Corporations:

I don't think it takes a rocket scientist to figure out that the handful of giant corporations that could still do business from the get-go of the shutdown, have done just fine. Here is the short list:

- Amazon
- Walmart
- Target
- Home Depot
- Lowes

In the meantime, all the small businesses that were ordered to shut down and have everyone "shelter in place," haven't fared so well. Most did not have an online presence, let alone an online "shopping cart," and if they did, it didn't include a door-to-door delivery service. To add insult to injury, their lost customers were forced to turn to the bigger corporations that were already providing all those "convenience" services.

Once the economy is so called "reopened," these small businesses are still going to be fighting two battles:

- First, we have social distancing. That means ***fewer paying customers*** allowed into a store or restaurant.
- Second, with 50 million less people employed, there are 50 million less people spending money with small businesses in their local communities anyway.



- And lastly, quite frankly, people are complacent and very slow to change. Shoppers have had 6 months to get used to running up credit cards by pointing and clicking online and having a product show up on their doorstep in 2-3 days without having to **get dressed** and drive anywhere let alone walking through a parking lot, mall, or store. Yeah, maybe we can call that lazy but it still won't revert back to the "old way" any time soon in order to save all the lost small businesses.

Sources:

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/04/cramer-the-pandemic-led-to-a-great-wealth-transfer.html>

"... in the end, the stimulus package probably won't be enough, for one simple reason," he said. "It's not going to work because of social distancing."

Physical Health/ Immune Systems

The numbers provided by the CDC indicate that the highest number of deaths from the Corona Virus are amongst the obese at 38%.

The most interesting, and horrifically ironic thing about this is that the things that will cause obesity to increase at an astronomical rate and our immune systems to fail at the same rate, are the things that the local state governments had all the control over **and chose to shut down**:

- All public parks (and national parks) were closed down thus discouraging any exercise or fresh air.
- All schools were shut down, so no more playground recess for our kids to get exercise.
- All places of public gathering where people could interact, catch, and power through even a common cold.
- All shopping malls where a lot of people walk at least 2 miles each time they visit. That is called cardiac exercise.
- A few grocery stores stayed open but we were all discouraged even to do our own grocery shopping: Self – quarantine, stay at home, stay safe. So, guess what, no more walking through the store. ***It may not have been a lot of cardio, but it would be better than nothing at all.***

Instead, these types of activities were encouraged by all media outlets through intense advertising as well as our local governments:

- Sit at home and order fast-food for delivery.
- Sit at home and order all your groceries on-line...Walmart has been the most popular place to do this out of the gate because they had this system already in place.



- Sit at home and watch all kinds of TV to stay occupied.
- Sit at home and order all your alcohol on-line: there were so many liquor stores that offered on-line order and delivery incredibly fast it made my head spin!

It came down to this:

Sit at home, eat, get drunk and watch TV to alleviate boredom.

Cost of Food

Now that all these businesses are losing money hand over fist, they needed a way to make enough money to pay the rent on their buildings, buy inventory, and to pay their workers. The only way to do that was to raise prices.

Am I the only one who noticed that our cost of groceries have doubled in the last 6 months? My weekly grocery bill used to be just under \$50 for just my husband and me. Now it's around \$100 every stinking week!

Oh, and this isn't the only way they're picking up a little more revenue. Our local grocery store here in Southern Nevada (*Smith's*) decided they are no longer giving you back change from your dollar if you pay cash: they are stealing our change! I was stunned when they first pulled this one on me.

		3:48 PM
		10020
Order Type:	DINE IN	
Honesty'n Chicken		4.99
American Cheese		0.50
NO Toppings		
SB Drink		1.69
Diet Coke		
MEDIUM COMBO		9.00
Double Cheese		
Medium Fries		
DBS NO Drink		
Coke		
Total Items \$		16.95
Tax		1.00
DINE IN Total		17.95
Cash \$		\$20.00
Change		\$2.05

And fast food, OMG! We would go to McDonalds, Der Wienerschnitzel, or Taco Bell about once or maybe twice a month when we had to go into town for various errands. Not anymore. Our last bill at McDonalds (*around May or so*) was around \$18 for both of us when it used to be just under \$10. And Wienerschnitzel was about the same. Taco Bell used to be a good deal at around \$6, now it's around \$12 - \$14. We finally decided we'd adjust our schedules on errand day and make sure we make it home for lunch.

Again, I'm pretty sure I'm not the only one seeing this and adjusting our spending habits. In addition to not eating out, we cut out everything extra such as snacks, a cute new t-shirt, a new book...anything we deem we can live without just so we can afford the higher cost of groceries. On the upside, we might lose some weight since we cut out snacks.



Nursing Home and Assisted Living Residents



Has anyone talked with any of these residents? My 87-year-old Mom happens to live in a memory care facility, and this is what she thinks:

*“This is all a crock of sh**! I know that I’m dying pretty soon anyway so why am I a prisoner in this place because of a stupid virus? I’d rather be outside or visiting with you, Janet, and the kids, than being stuck inside here with a bunch of strangers who don’t give one damn hoot about me.”*

I’ve been told by one of the med-techs there that the depression rate has gone through the roof and prescriptions for anti-anxiety and depression have doubled.

How can anyone believe that jailing our elderly in the last years of their lives and keeping them from any social interaction with their family and friends is a good thing?

My mom, for one, would rather die surrounded by family and friends than be social isolated the rest of her life.

And yes, Mom’s facility is now treating the residents like prisoners (*for their own good regardless of the increase in medications*) but perhaps worse because they are not allowed to have face-to-face visitors, and there is no end date to this rule other than death. (*I can’t wait to hear what they’re gonna say about visiting with our family members throughout the holidays!*)

Oh wait, yes, you can visit, but it’s a “jail-house” type visit where you get to talk with each other over a phone in the main office, looking through a window, with three employees listening and watching over y’all.

Mental Illness

How can anyone not acknowledge this?

Over 50 million people have been forced into unemployment; many cannot collect unemployment because the online filing system got jammed up right out of the gate; there are very few, if no other jobs out there now so there is little to no hope of ever going back to work; victims of abuse are stuck inside (*shelter in place*) with their abusers, money and employer insurance that would normally cover the cost of medications to keep some mental illnesses under control are gone; and the state politicians have given their citizen **NO ENDGAME PLAN**



OR REALISTIC GOAL, so there is *NO END IN SIGHT* and, worst of all, *NO HOPE FOR A BETTER FUTURE*.

As a result, there are huge up-tics in all things that fall under the “mental illness” umbrella: depression, anxiety, stress, and low self-esteem all of which are known to contribute to an increase in substance abuse and suicide. These mental illnesses are also known to contribute to a decline in physical health and therefore our immune systems. And we all know what that means, right? You will now be even more susceptible to catching and not being able to get over a common cold let alone the coronavirus.

Source:

<https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use/>

Alcoholism/ Substance Abuse

These behaviors are the two most common band aids for most people who are dealing with depression and anxiety. An increase in the number of people turning to these self-destructive behaviors should not come as any great surprise since more people are dealing with one of the biggest, life changing events ever: losing their jobs.

What makes this more lethal is that many people have little to no hope of finding another job any time soon because so many companies went out of business. With no end in sight, many have just lost hope.

Ironically, have you noticed how the cost of alcohol hasn't gone up? But why would it? This is the one category of consumption that has not only *not* been discouraged, but *encouraged*: Have you noticed the increase in radio and TV ads for drinking? Next to Amazon and Netflix, the alcohol industry is the number one consumable that has increased in sales rather than decrease.

Suicide

And with an increase in depression we may see an increase in suicides when those actual numbers start being gathered. So luckily there is a rise in Suicide Awareness and Prevention programs throughout the States.

Source:

<https://www.kxan.com/news/coronavirus/are-suicides-on-the-rise-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

Domestic Violence

An interesting outcome of the “shelter in place” orders is that calls for domestic violence have actually gone down. But don't get too excited; it's not because all of these violent people decided to play nice for a while. No, it's because **the victims no longer have a safe way of**



calling for help when trapped in the home with their abuser. I have been a victim of domestic violence; I know how this helplessness feels: it's very real and very dangerous.

Here is a direct quote from the article linked below:

“The added stress of balancing work, childcare, and children’s education has led to a rise in child abuse. Mandated reporters, such as teachers, child care providers, and clinicians, also have fewer interactions with children and families and fewer opportunities to assess, recognize, and report signs of abuse than they did before the pandemic.”

Source: <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp2024046>

Education



As an educator myself, I know how hard it was to get adults to embrace on-line meetings let alone online learning. No, this technology is not new. Zoom is fairly new, but WebEx has been around almost 20 years. The company I worked for was already hosting online “webinars” back in the year 2000 for employees located in Canada, the UK, and Singapore. I started hosting onboarding meetings shortly after that and the entire company started selling online courseware full-time around

2008. My point being on-line courseware is not new. BUT, even then, the adults were still pushing back.

Here are a couple of articles that support my opinion:

<https://thedailyaztec.com/98532/opinion/online-classes-are-not-effective-in-educating-their-students/>

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/schools-coronavirus-remote-learning-lockdown-tech-11591375078>

So, how can everyone possibly think every single five-year-old, or ten-year-old, or even a 15-year-old is going to embrace the technology? And the parents who used to work for a living but weren't all trained to teach? Or to use a computer?

Well, guess what? Failure rate numbers are starting to show up in obscure news feeds all over the internet. And it's not looking good.

Here's one from Houston:

<https://www.lmtonline.com/news/education/article/texas-school-district-cancel-remote-learning-covid-15603181.php>



Then there are those who are left out altogether due to finances or simply that there is no internet access in their locations.

Source:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2020/09/01/texas-schools-reopening-virtual-learning/>

Education in America has become a giant fail.

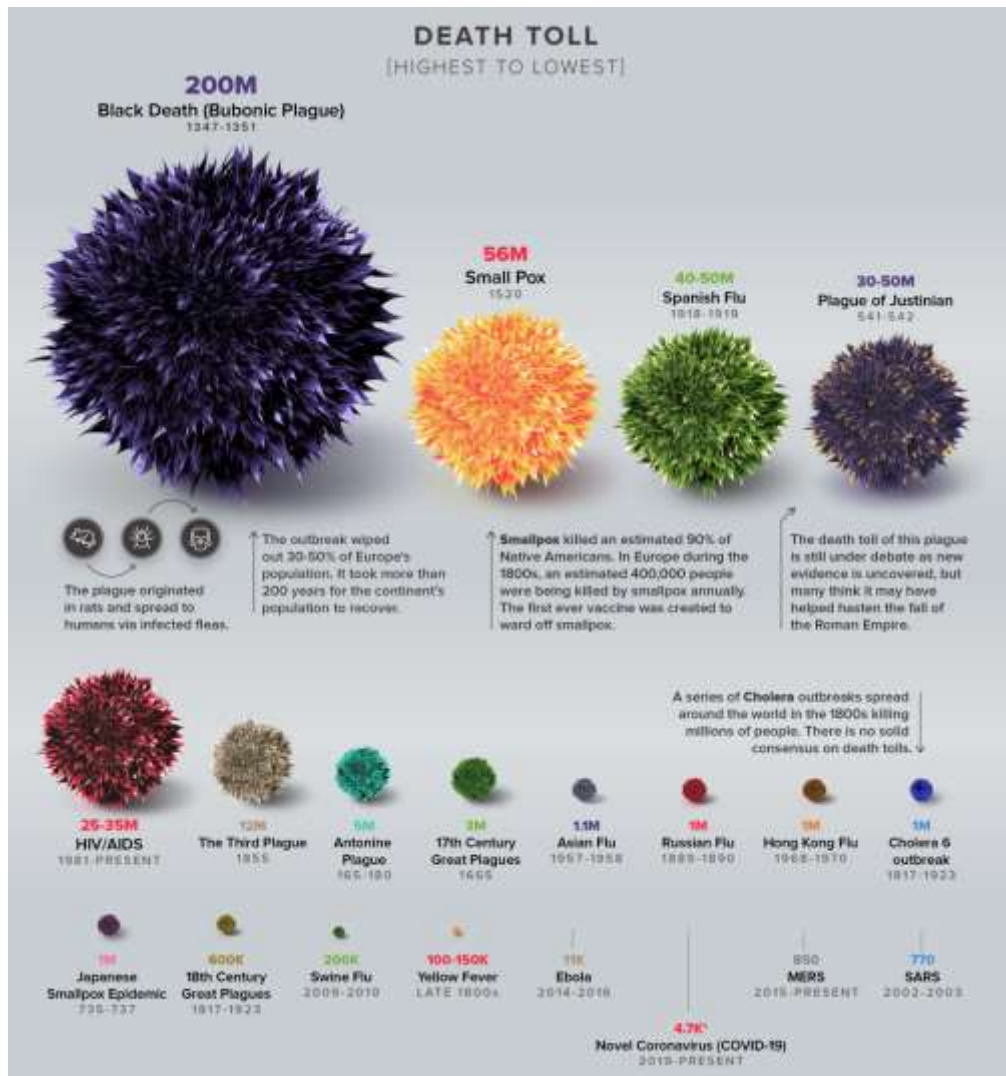
So what does that say for the future generations who we normally would rely on to go to work, pay taxes and put money into the government services on which many people rely? You know, like Medicare and Social Security, our schoolteachers, our public roads and parks, our police and firemen, etc.

These kids may or may not have any skills in 10 – 18 years for which they can be hired for anything other than minimum wage jobs because of a lack of basic education.

None of the state leaders gave this idea any serious, long-term thought before shutting down the schools and making at home, on-line learning, a “mandate.” Zero, Zip, None! As a result, the majority of American children are failing. It’s for this reason I feel that the state politicians have completely failed our future generations and therefore have failed America.



When Has a Virus Ever Caused Entire Businesses and Cities to Shut Down Forever?



The US has experienced several dangerous virus outbreaks that obviously turned into epidemics. There is a ton of information available that talks about each and every one of these virus' but for some reason, the one that most people like to throw around and compare the corona virus with is the 1918 the Spanish Flu. So, I'll run with that one.

You can see how many people died from this one. But the 75-thousand-dollar question is: Was the United States shut down while this ran rampant for a year?

“Schools, theaters, churches, and dance halls in cities across the country were closed. Kansas City banned weddings and funerals if more than 20 people were to be in attendance. New York mandated staggered shifts at factories to reduce rush hour commuter traffic. Seattle’s mayor ordered his constituents to wear face masks. The first



study found a clear correlation between the number of interventions applied and the resulting peak death rate seen. Perhaps more importantly, both studies showed that while interventions effectively mitigated the transmission of influenza virus in 1918, a critical factor in how much death rates were reduced was how soon the measures were put in place.”

This article, published in 2007 with comments by Dr. Fauci, tells the entire story:

<https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/rapid-response-was-crucial-containing-1918-flu-pandemic>

As I read through it though, I didn't see anything about forcing all "less than million-dollar" businesses to shut their doors. Perhaps that is because some of the politicians of that day saw that putting half the country out of work would be an economic disaster. But I'm only guessing.

Then we can also take a look at a more recent outbreak, the Swine Flu. That's the one that hit my family, more specifically my daughter. She lived, but sadly, tens of thousands of people didn't. Did President Obama shut down the country? He declared it a pandemic and a national emergency, but there were no "shelter in place" directives or suggestions. Even when, surprisingly enough VP Biden tried to push all that...nope, nothing And I remember when that flu hit Southern California because I was still driving back and forth to work and hearing about it on the radio so I know there were no such directives.

So yeah, I'd say the answer to my original question is a solid No.

Here are some interesting comparisons between the Swine Flu and the Coronavirus as well as the CDC reactions and handling of it:

<https://www.livescience.com/covid-19-pandemic-vs-swine-flu.html>



The Blame Game

Many Americans were quick to start pointing blame, and of course, since we now have a President that they hate (*not dislike, but hate*), that's exactly where the blame fell. Never mind that (*I don't believe*) any president in US history has ever been a medical doctor nor has been expected to be one in order to become President. But, what it looks like to me is that this is an election year and the haters failed at the "Russian Conspiracy," then the attempted impeachment, so hey, why not see if we can point the finger at that guy and, with the help of the media, make it stick?



An interesting thing to note:

"Another difference (between the handling of the Swine Flu vs. the Corona Virus) is that this is the first pandemic in the era of social media," Strathdee said. The [wealth of misinformation about the disease](#) has spread faster than the virus, she said, as has blame for the virus. "We need to stop thinking like this. We need to unite against the virus."

Source:

<https://www.livescience.com/covid-19-pandemic-vs-swine-flu.html>

The blame game then became the most important thing in this entire country: Each governor has been so caught up in their hate for the president that they completely ignored anything he might have said seriously, and publicly. Ultimately they all decided to handle things their own way rather than actually meet with each other along with medical professionals that work with viruses every day, come up with a comprehensive plan, and then, get this, SHOW A UNITED FRONT. Ha!!!

NOPE, they stuck with their "state's rights" and just started winging it.

And we see how well that worked out, now didn't we?

- Over two hundred thousand US residents have died.
- Our economy is in ruins.
- As Americans, we now are left with all the other problems (*I've listed*) that are eroding away at our beautiful country and the media continues to sweep them under the carpet to focus on their own political agendas.



Why a Complete Economic Shutdown?

We've never done it before, so why did we do it this time?

My thoughts?

- Hate and,
- Politics.

That's it.

How Can We Become the United States of America?

First, I believe that all of our state's governors, senators, representatives, and even down to city mayors, all need to stop focusing on using their position power to push their hate-filled agenda.

Second, these same politicians need to think about Americans and what is good for America as a whole...not just their personal, little fiefdoms. Right now it seems to me like they are all making decisions that might either make them look good or popular and make the President look bad in their political eyes.

Instead, it would be better if these folks who are in a position of such power would get their heads out of their selfish clouds and start making decisions that will help everyone and therefore keep the economy humming along.

Third, get the media on board with these United States. It appears that most of the major television stations are driven by their owner's personal political agendas...again, a giant failure to America. The only people that have any influence over those station owners are the wealthy and politically powerful politicians. Which is why cleaning up the mess they have made, starts with them.

Fourth, as Americans, we can do our own duty to show a united front. We all don't need to agree on everything, we only need to agree that America is still the best country in the world. (*If you don't believe that, feel free to leave any time. I'm sure you'll find some volunteers to help you pack.*) We know that to be true or so many people wouldn't be trying to get in illegally, right? So, our goal is to ensure that this country stays great.



We can begin with our own personal behavior: the simplest one being, if someone doesn't agree with your opinion, shut up and LET IT GO! That's called acting like an adult. Do not call names, do not bully, do not get violent. None of those behaviors will change anyone's mind...who ever told you it would?

Instead, find a compromise, or at least, refocus on what we all have in common:



- We love America! It is the greatest country in the world.
- We all want to earn an honest living so we can have a roof over our heads and food in our bellies.
- We all want the freedom to go to any church we want to...or even not at all. It doesn't matter as long as we all have the freedom to decide.
- We all want access to decent education and health care.
- And we all want to come and go as we like while visiting with family and friends along the way.

We may disagree with how each politician helps us to maintain these freedoms, but that is the beauty of voting. In the meantime, getting caught up in their catfights is useless: they don't care that you had a fight with your neighbor and were calling names and throwing punches. Your governor will still be going on about his or her day and not even give it a thought. BUT you and your neighbors will continue to fight and accomplish absolutely nothing!



The only way we can accomplish anything positive is to act like grownups: Put aside our differences of opinion and work together toward our common interests.

Perhaps then we as a nation can start addressing the issues in this list and make some positive changes for those who are suffering with something other than the virus. Their lives matter too.

If one person reads this and makes a change, I will be happy. And I'll be sure to spread that happiness to another person. Who knows... being nice to each other and working together toward our common goals could catch on and make a difference!

Sincerely,

Jan

