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## COVID-19

History always seems to repeat itself. The Covid-19 pandemic that we are currently facing is quite similar to past pandemics/epidemics such as the Spanish Flu pandemic and smallpox epidemic in the Native American population in the year 1518. The world has not seen such a tremendous and global implication for the past 100 years. The last pandemic that had such a worldwide impact was the Spanish Flu. The Spanish Flu originated from a bird flu virus strain, whereas, the Covid-19 pandemic originated from animals as well, namely the bat and/or the pangolin. The smallpox epidemic also originated from an animal vector but was transmitted to the indigenous population by Christopher Columbus and his crew when he sailed to the Americas. The indigenous population had no form of immunity against these diseases the colonists brought over from Europe. The diseases decimated about 90% of the Native American population. This is like the Covid-19 pandemic because it originated from a specific area in a country and later spread to the rest of the world through traveling. However, this time the spread was much quicker compared to the smallpox epidemic due to more advanced ways of traveling such as airplanes compared to Christopher Columbus's ship. Covid-19 has a 3-4% mortality rate, unlike the past pandemics and epidemics, which had a much higher mortality rate. This could be since there are more modern ways of medicine and advanced hospitals compared to the 1500s or the early 1900s. There are more ways to treat infected patients which increases their survivability rate.

These past pandemics and epidemics are just a reflection of our current pandemic and should serve as a warning to how extreme these pandemics can become if underestimated and disregarded. The world has gone through these tough times before, but there are serious consequences that come with it. There are millions that could die from this pandemic such as the

Spanish Flu that killed 50 million people and infected roughly 500 million people worldwide. Everyone needs to treat this pandemic seriously and take the recommended precautions from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in order to lessen the implications and effects of Covid-19. As of May 18, 2020, there are 4.71 million confirmed cases of Covid-19 and 315K deaths worldwide. This is unrealistic to hear because the Covid-19 pandemic was only around for about half a year and it has done a great amount of damage within this time frame. It is chilling to imagine what these numbers will look like in the upcoming years. Perhaps it will be like the past pandemics, but with greater consequences politically, socially, and economically. These three areas will be impacted the most during this pandemic and will show how everyone copes and works together.

This pandemic is testing political leadership and how they provide to the people during uneasy times. Everyone is impacted during this global pandemic whether it be people losing their jobs or their lives are at risk. The government must provide relief to the people in some way, so chaos does not ensue. Leadership proves to be very important in times like these because it is one of the only ways to combat this pandemic. There must be lockdowns and social distancing implemented within cities so there is less spread of the disease. I believe there could have been earlier lockdowns in America to prevent this disease from spreading so rapidly. America has the highest amount of cases in the world and this just reflects how the government and the people are treating this disease. The government should also implement strict lockdown like those in other countries. A strict lockdown would be no traveling outside or working for a couple of weeks to a month with exceptions to grocery shopping. However, there are people still outside doing their own thing and spreading disease. It is understandable that past pandemics or epidemics happened because they lacked the science, knowledge, and technology we have today. No one understood

what smallpox was or how it was even transmitted/prevented. Theoretically, there should not be pandemics happening in this time and age because of the understanding of preventative measures and transmission routes of diseases. The government needs to follow or implement policies of countries that flattened the curve. Flattening the curve means that there are fewer cases due to preventative measures taken such as social distancing and wearing face masks.

The Covid-19 pandemic has social consequences as well. The social implications are discriminatory and racial acts. Due to this pandemic, there has been an increasing number of discriminatory attacks. This is because media has stigmatized the people in the area where Covid-19 presumably originated from. This has separated people even more and has caused hate towards these stigmatized people. This pandemic increased inequality and xenophobia in the community which is uncalled for. People are supposed to be working together, but instead, some people attack others for something they did not do just because of their race. There have been multiple accounts of attacks happening such as an East Asian student in London that got beat up by a group of men because they blamed him for Covid-19. This is disheartening to hear because people try to blame others when they are feeling frustrated. Another instance is when America's president calls the virus, the Wuhan virus, or the Chinese virus. This is extremely stigmatizing, and this increases the likelihood of discriminatory acts arising. He is a public figure that has a huge amount of influence over the people and how they act. Another example of a social impact is homeless people. They are highly exposed to the virus because they do not have access to running water and safe shelter.

The economic consequence of this pandemic is colossal. The lockdown in America called for only essential workers to be able to work and this caused the unemployment rate to rise to roughly 15%. This hurts America and the people economically for there is no stable flow of

income every month. The government did try to help by passing stimulus packages and extending unemployment benefits for the people. However, this amount of money is not enough for the average person. A \$1,200 check was given to an individual making less than \$75K a year but rent alone could be easily over \$2,000 a month. This one-time check does not suffice since we have been in lockdown for more than a month now. There is also another controversy where people on unemployment are making more money than those who are essential workers risking their lives. This is disconcerting because this would cause essential workers to possibly quit their jobs. America is also digging itself more in debt by passing these gigantic costing bills, which could eventually lead to economic depression. If people are not spending money and there is no money coming in from traveling, etc, then history will repeat itself and the economy will crash. This could potentially cause a Great Recession 2, but this time it is worse because we are dealing with a highly contagious disease that could be deadly. This would overrun the hospitals and would lead to more deaths.

This pandemic has meant a great deal to me, the community, and the world. This has impacted me and my family quite negatively because of the high risk that Covid-19 induces. My parents are older, so my brother and I must be very careful when we go out for groceries or food. We must wear masks and gloves when touching groceries and disinfecting them when bringing them back home. The older population seems to be the most affected in terms of mortality rate. It is surreal to think that we are risking our parents' lives when we go outside nowadays yet there are a handful of people that think this disease is not real or will not affect them. It is also sad to see my father being affected by this pandemic mentally since he used to love to go outside and grocery shop. He is newly retired and unfortunately, this is a major event that has impacted his life. This pandemic also impacts my life because since I am graduating this quarter, it may be

difficult to find a job. I wanted to provide for my family and myself, but this pandemic has changed it all. This also changed the way we are learning at school for online learning. It has been a little hard to learn online because I am less motivated to do things. I tend to procrastinate more because time seems to be in flux when you are stuck at home.

The community and world are impacted in ways that are unimaginable. This is probably one of the first times where there is a worldwide effort to find a cure or vaccine for Covid-19. The whole world is working together to put a stop to this pandemic and that is most likely the only way where things would go back to normal. The community is affected because there are major uncertainties to whether it is safe to go outside or not. People cannot communicate with strangers as they used to in their daily life like at the grocery store. It seems like everyone must be strangers in order to stay safe. The world is impacted because almost every country is dealing with this disease. We finally have something to relate to and we can only combat this disease by working together. In a way, it unites us all but has deadly implications. It takes a global effort to eliminate a pandemic.

The society during a pandemic is complicated because there are people who just do not listen or believe in certain things. The CDC and the cities enforced social distancing, wearing masks, to not go out for unessential things, and no big social gathering. Usually, in an ideal society, everyone would follow these rules, but of course, there are people who do not. Therefore, rules like these would not work in every society. People still break the rules by going to beaches or even protesting for some odd reason. A few weeks ago, there were protestors wanting the country to be reopened. It is understandable why they wanted that, but they seem to forget that Covid-19 exists. In order to have decreasing Covid-19 cases, there must be a

lockdown, or else the spread of the disease would be too enormous to handle. Many people would die or be hospitalized thus overrunning hospitals and mortuaries.

The Covid-19 pandemic will go down in the history books, just like the past pandemics. It is unreal to think that we are living in a time that would be in history books. Even though this is a rough time we are going through, history shows that societies and the world bounces back after a pandemic. I believe that after the discovery of a vaccine or cure, we will go back to living our normal lives. History tends to repeat itself and we are just living through a time that will be in the history books.