

**AG OFFICE HOURS OUTDOORS
THIS FRIDAY—COME TO
HARVARD YARD IF YOU CAN
(ZOOM TOO)**

**ALSO, OUR LAST TWO CLASSES WILL LIKELY OFFER
AN IN-PERSON OPTION IN HARVARD HALL 202**

Prediction: Week 7

quick review of outdoor Navigation Exercise



1 year ago

Coming up: Linz (3/23); Radcliffe AI/Health (4/1); your final projects...

“Prediction vs. Prophecy”

John Snow & Cholera (edX highlights & more)

Modeling the spread of epidemics, and uncertainty

Bookkeeping SIR Models SEIR Models Agent-based models Data-driven models

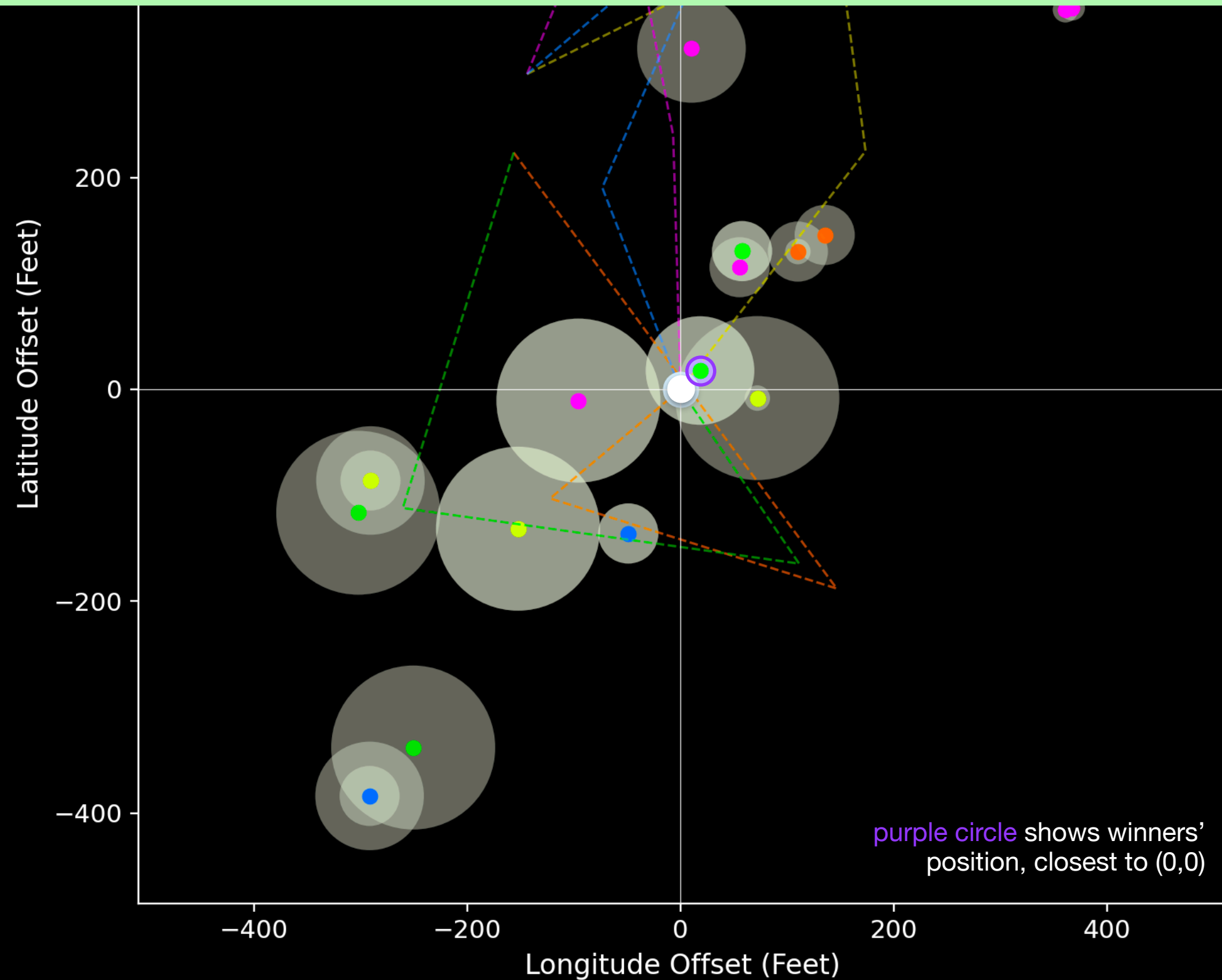
Prediction and decision in the face of uncertainty: COVID-19 and Harvard (discussions)

Thursday & in section: COVID-19 student readings discussion (see Canvas Tuesday eve)

Special Guest for Thursday’s discussions: geneticist/epidemiologist Dr. Immaculata DeVivo, Professor at Harvard’ T.H. Chan School of Public Health and at Harvard Medical School

transparent discs show
positional “uncertainty”

quick review of outdoor Navigation Exercise



LIVE UPDATES

Updated 11 minutes ago

Coronavirus Live Updates: W.H.O. Declares Pandemic as Number of

1 year ago

Coronavirus “Pandemic”

NYT web clipping as of
March 11, 2020 12:42 PM

[www.nytimes.com/
2020/03/11/world/
coronavirus-
news.html#link-1452bb3f](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/11/world/coronavirus-news.html#link-1452bb3f)

Chancellor Angela Merkel foresees two-thirds of Germans being infected. The U.S., with more than 1,000 cases and business disruptions, weighs possible responses.

RIGHT NOW “All countries can still change the course of this pandemic,” said the W.H.O.’s leader, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, adding, “We need each other.”

[新冠病毒疫情最新消息](#)

Here’s what you need to know:

- [This is a global pandemic, the W.H.O. says.](#)
- [“It is going to get worse,” a leading American scientist says.](#)
- [Governments step up fiscal interventions as the virus threatens economies.](#)
- [Germany warns that the worst is yet to come.](#)
- [Stocks drop again, as investors wait for Trump to act.](#)
- [As virus races across Europe, nations step up restrictions.](#)
- [Delays in testing set back the U.S. coronavirus response.](#)

“Prediction vs. Prophecy”



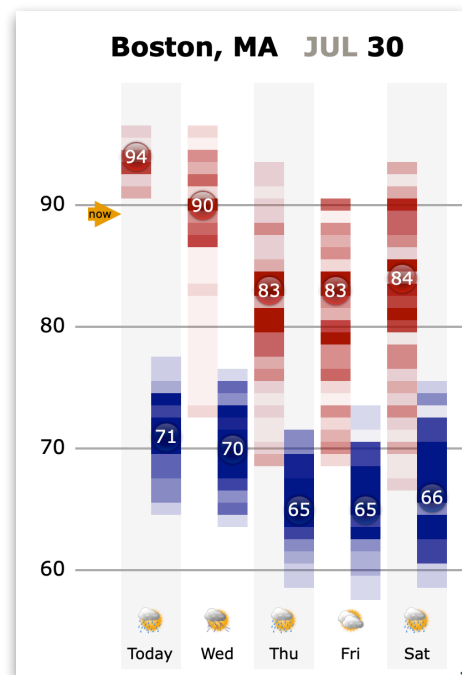
"When Knowledge Conquered Fear"



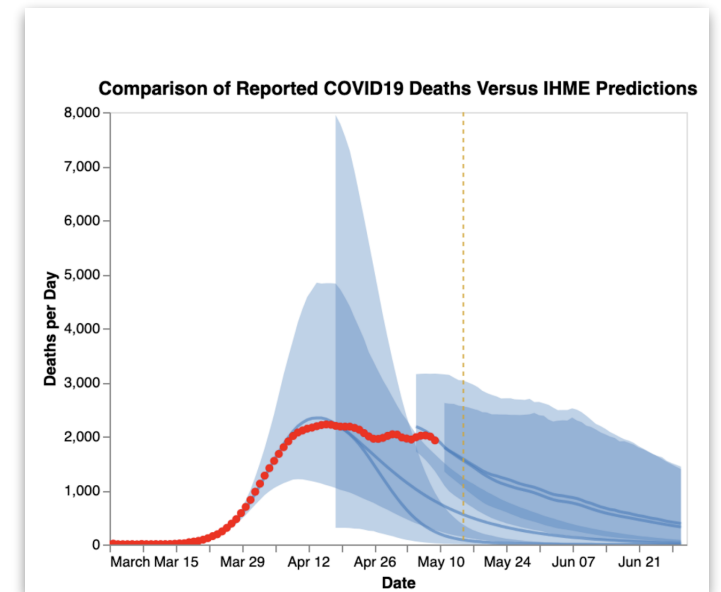
"When Knowledge Conquered Fear" is the third episode of the American documentary television series *Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey*. It premiered on March 23, 2014 on Fox, and premiered on March 24, 2014 on National Geographic Channel. [Wikipedia]. [IMDB link](#)
Reproduced without permission—please do not distribute.



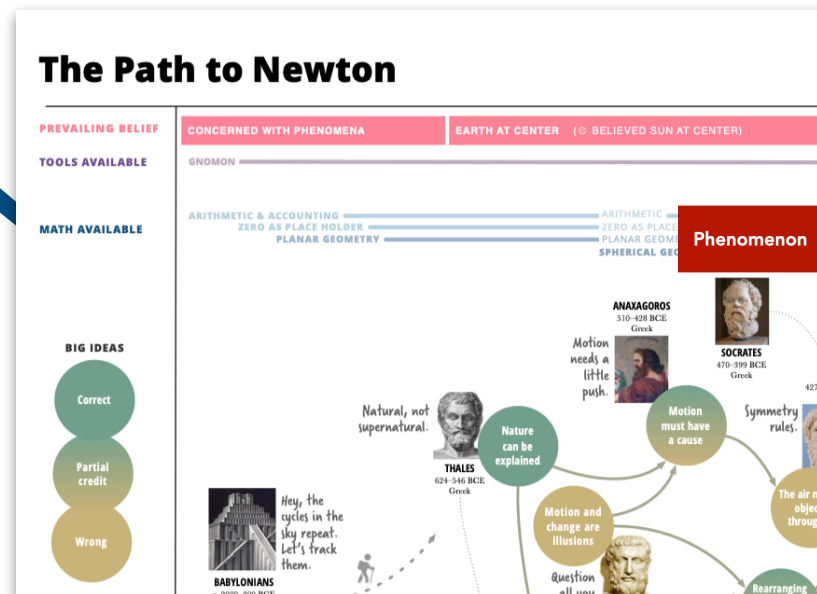
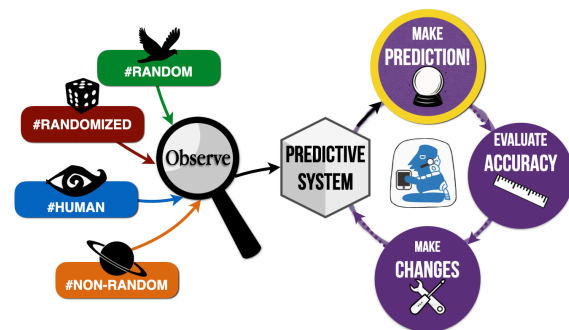
Take-a-Sweater



IHME COVID-19



The Path to Newton



Welcome to HarvardX's PredictionX!

Mini-Course: John Snow and the Cholera Outbreak of 1854

Support

John Snow & Cholera (edX highlights & more)

PredictionX: John Snow and the Cholera Outbreak of 1854



Snow and Cholera



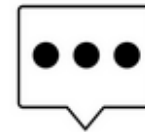
Expert Conversations



The Map



Timeline



Extra Material

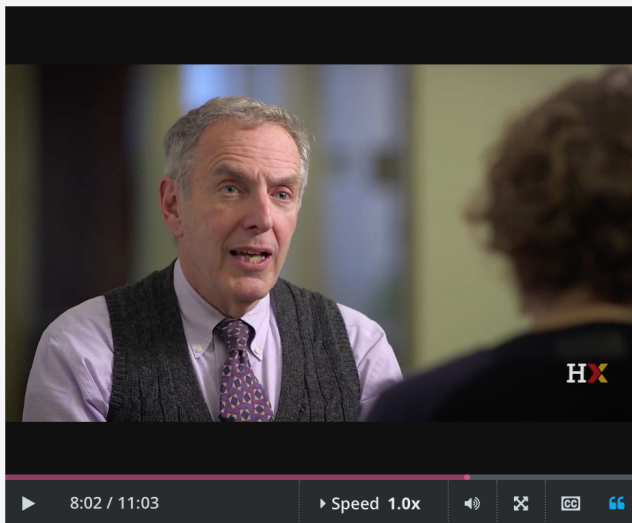


Assessments



PredictionX

A Conversation with Experts



Video

[Download video file](#)

Transcripts

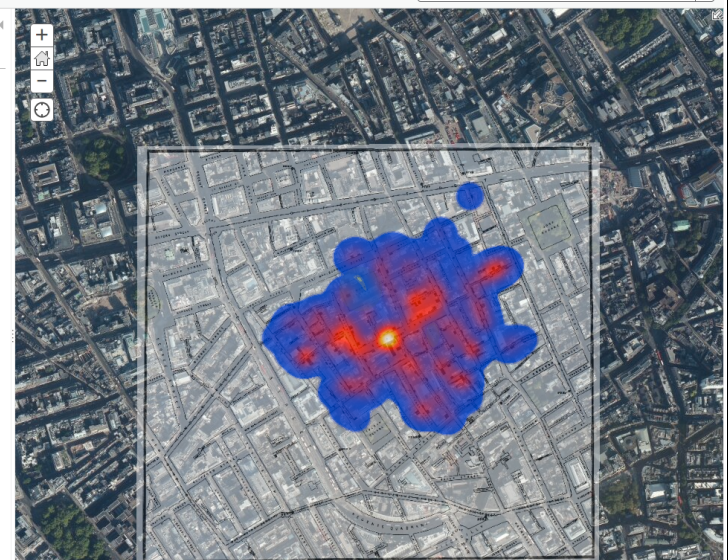
[Download SubRip \(.srt\) file](#)

[Download Text \(.txt\) file](#)

JOHN SNOW SOCIETY mag.
ROSALIND: Yes.
So he had, if you like, he'd got the data.
And this was just another way of demonstrating it.
It wasn't how he solved the outbreak.
DON: When I talk to my students about this, I always ask them, **so did John Snow perform a case control study,** which is fundamental in epidemiology.
It's the greatest tool for working up outbreaks that we have.
In a case control study, you study the exposure of the cases, in this case, water pumps, and the exposure of the controls: the people who were

ArcGIS - PredictionX: John Snow Maps

- Details
- Basemap
- Contents
 - Workhouse
 - Brewery
 - JohnSnowCholera - Broad Street Pump
 - JohnSnowCholera - Pumps
 - JohnSnowCholera - Deaths by Address
 - Snow Cholera Points - Heatmap
 - John Snow Map Semi-Transparent
 - John Snow's Map
 - SnowWaterCompanyMap
 - Imagery



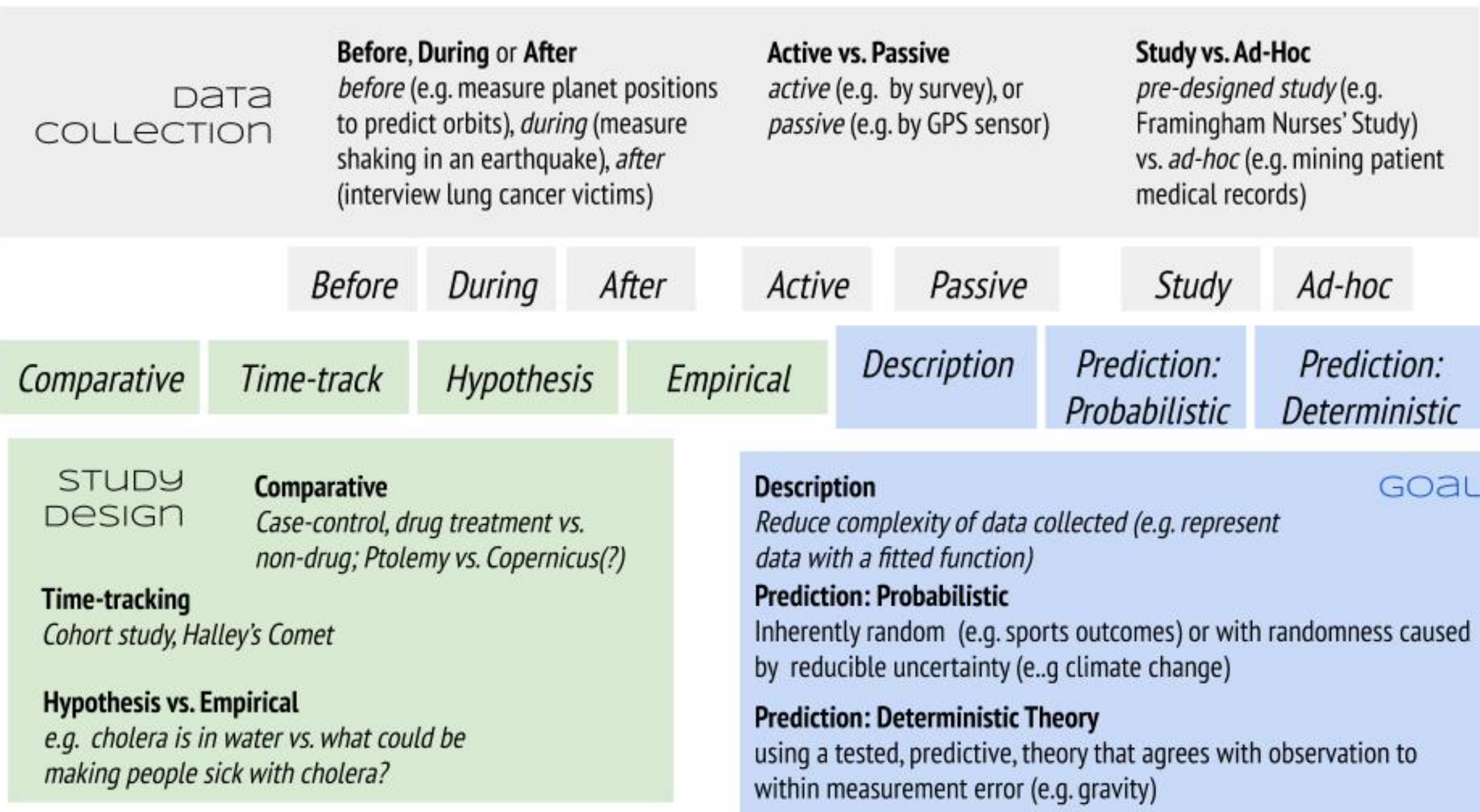
featuring Don Goldmann, AG & Rosalind Stanwell-Smith

John Snow & Cholera (edX highlights & more)

Key facts to remember

1. Water-borne nature of cholera was a new idea in 1854 (and earlier)
2. Miasma (bad air) was prevailing theory
3. Very hard, for John Snow, to convince people of his water-borne theory
4. Germ theory of disease not fully accepted until c. 1880s
5. Crowding in London made for the dangerous sanitary conditions that fostered spread
6. Not clear how much of an effect the “drastic” act of removal of the pump handle had
7. Exceptions to the pattern proved key (brewery, workhouse, Ely family in Hampstead)
8. Drastic change (to sanitary systems, and treatment of cholera) followed, eventually
9. “Epidemiology” as a discipline, was essentially born from Snow’s work
10. Snow’s was not a “case-controlled study.”

Study Design



John Snow & Cholera (maps)

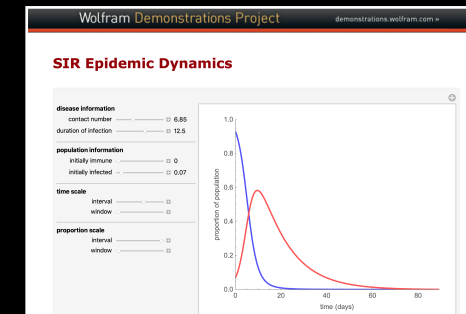
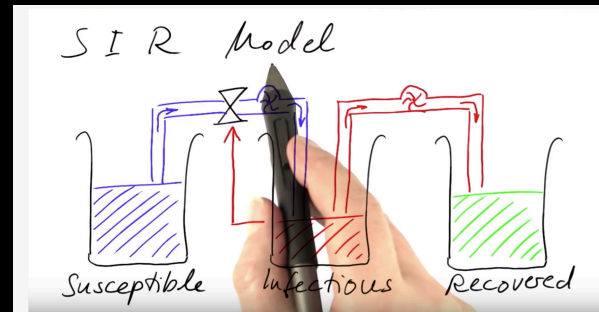


Modeling the spread of epidemics, and uncertainty

Bookkeeping SIR Models SEIR Models Agent-based models Data-driven models

Bookkeeping e.g. $(\# \text{infected}) \times (\% \text{fatal (age group, region)}) = \text{probability of death}$

SIR Models
(Susceptible-
Infected-
Removed)

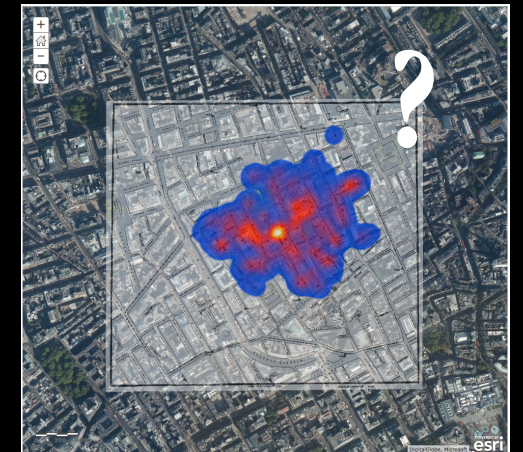


SEIR Models

like SIR, but allowing for “Exposed” uninfected group

Agent-based models

account for spatial & behavioral factors...



Data-driven models

e.g. Blue Dot prediction

Info from these links: [“Modern Predictive Systems”](#), [OneNote collection](#) (available via Canvas)

Modeling the spread of epidemics, and UNCERTAINTY

Bookkeeping for COVID-19: consider $a \times b \times d$

a: Probability of exposure = high

b: Probability of any symptoms = medium

c: also consider probability of diagnosis at all = medium/high

d: Probability of “death,” see below

a: 0.7 (70%)

b: 0.2 (20%)

c: 0.7 (70%)

d: 0.002 (0.2%)

$a \times b \times d = 0.03\%$

from March 11, 2020

Age of Coronavirus Deaths

COVID-19 Fatality Rate by AGE:

***Death Rate** = (number of deaths / number of cases) = **probability of dying if infected by the virus (%)**. This probability differs depending on the age group. The percentages shown below **do not have to add up to 100%**, as they **do NOT represent share of deaths by age group**. Rather, it represents, for a person in a given age group, the **risk of dying** if infected with COVID-19.

AGE	DEATH RATE confirmed cases	DEATH RATE all cases
80+ years old	21.9%	14.8%
70-79 years old		8.0%
60-69 years old		3.6%
50-59 years old		1.3%
40-49 years old		0.4%
30-39 years old		0.2%
20-29 years old		0.2%
10-19 years old		0.2%
0-9 years old		no fatalities

Pre-existing medical conditions (comorbidities)

Patients who reported no pre-existing ("comorbid") medical conditions had a case fatality rate of 0.9%. Pre-existing illnesses that put patients at higher risk of dying from a COVID-19 infection are:

COVID-19 Fatality Rate by COMORBIDITY:

***Death Rate** = (number of deaths / number of cases) = **probability of dying if infected by the virus (%)**. This probability differs depending on pre-existing condition. The percentage shown below does **NOT represent in any way the share of deaths by pre-existing condition**. Rather, it represents, for a patient with a given pre-existing condition, the **risk of dying** if infected by COVID-19.

PRE-EXISTING CONDITION	DEATH RATE confirmed cases	DEATH RATE all cases
Cardiovascular disease	13.2%	10.5%
Diabetes	9.2%	7.3%
Chronic respiratory disease	8.0%	6.3%
Hypertension	8.4%	6.0%
Cancer	7.6%	5.6%
no pre-existing conditions		0.9%

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Modeling the spread of epidemics, and UNCERTAINTY

Notes On \mathcal{R}_0

James Holland Jones *
Department of Anthropological Sciences
Stanford University

May 1, 2007

1 The Basic Reproduction Number in a Nutshell

The basic reproduction number, \mathcal{R}_0 , is defined as the expected number of secondary cases produced by a single (typical) infection in a completely susceptible population. It is important to note that \mathcal{R}_0 is a dimensionless number and not a rate, which would have units of time^{-1} . Some authors incorrectly call \mathcal{R}_0 the “basic reproductive rate.”

We can use the fact that \mathcal{R}_0 is a dimensionless number to help us in calculating it.

$$\mathcal{R}_0 \propto \left(\frac{\text{infection}}{\text{contact}} \right) \cdot \left(\frac{\text{contact}}{\text{time}} \right) \cdot \left(\frac{\text{time}}{\text{infection}} \right)$$

More specifically:

$$\mathcal{R}_0 = \tau \cdot \bar{c} \cdot d \tag{1}$$

where τ is the transmissibility (i.e., probability of infection given contact between a susceptible and infected individual), \bar{c} is the average rate of contact between susceptible and infected individuals, and d is the duration of infectiousness.

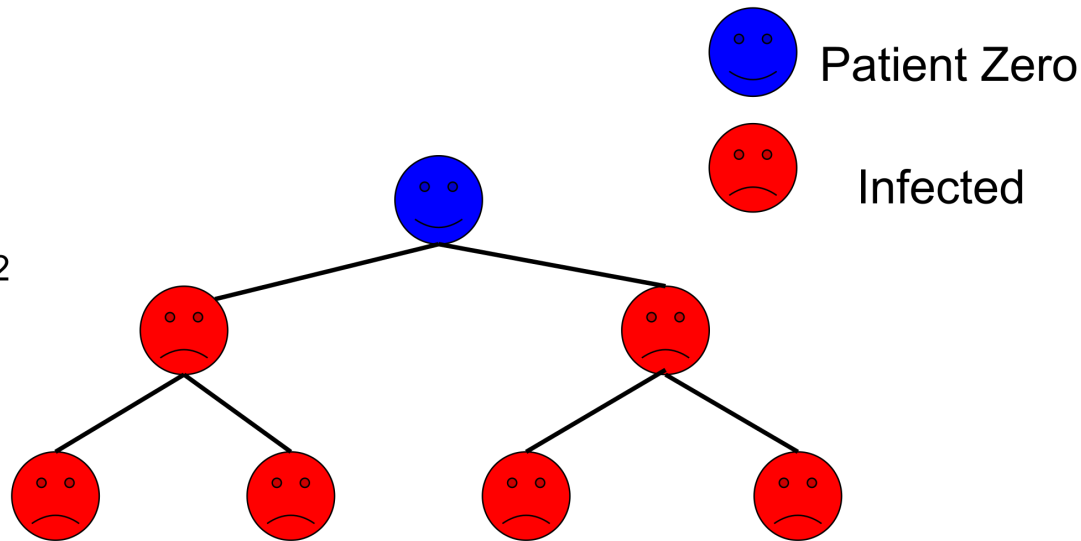
The meaning of R_0

“expected number of cases directly generated by one case in a population where all individuals are susceptible to infection”

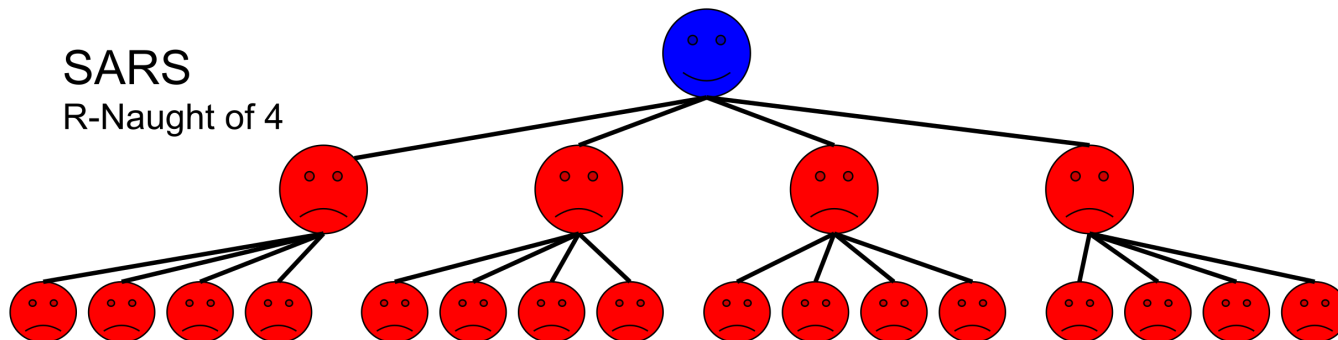
Values of R_0 of well-known infectious diseases^[1]

Disease	Transmission	R_0
Measles	Airborne	12–18
Diphtheria	Saliva	6–7
Smallpox	Airborne droplet	5–7
Polio	Fecal–oral route	5–7
Rubella	Airborne droplet	5–7
Mumps	Airborne droplet	4–7
Pertussis	Airborne droplet	5.5 ^[2]
HIV/AIDS	Sexual contact	2–5
SARS	Airborne droplet	2–5 ^[3]
COVID-19	Airborne droplet	1.4-3.9 ^{[4][5][6][7]}
Influenza (1918 pandemic strain)	Airborne droplet	2–3 ^[8]
Ebola (2014 Ebola outbreak)	Body fluids	1.5–2.5 ^[9]
MERS	Airborne droplet	0.3-0.8 ^[10]


Ebola:
R-Naught of 2





SARS
R-Naught of 4



What is for R_0 COVID-19: It's *still* uncertain


The NEW ENGLAND
JOURNAL of MEDICINE

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OR RENEW

EDITORIAL
Triumph and Tragedy of 21st
Century Tuberculosis Drug
Development

Notable Articles of 2019
1 exclusive collection

ORIGINAL ARTICLE
First Case of 2019 Novel
Coronavirus in the United States

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Early Transmission Dynamics in Wuhan, China, of Novel Coronavirus–Infected Pneumonia

Qun Li, M.Med., Xuhua Guan, Ph.D., Peng Wu, Ph.D., Xiaoye Wang, M.P.H., Lei Zhou, M.Med., Yeqing Tong, Ph.D., Ruiqi Ren, M.Med., Kathy S.M. Leung, Ph.D., Eric H.Y. Lau, Ph.D., Jessica Y. Wong, Ph.D., Xuesen Xing, Ph.D., Nijuan Xiang, M.Med., et al.

January 29, 2020
DOI: 10.1056/NEJMoa2001316
[Chinese Translation 中文翻译](#)

Article
Figures/Media

[Metrics](#)

<https://www.nejm.org/doi/10.1056/NEJMoa2001316>

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basic_reproduction_number

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0-9 years old		no fatalities

update—this simple estimate from 3/11/20 gave ~100K deaths for US, which ~was the actual value for 5/26/20

Medical conditions (comorbidities)

Pre-existing ("comorbid") medical conditions had a case fatality rate of 0.9%. Pre-existing conditions at higher risk of dying from a COVID-19 infection are:

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SIR Epidemic Dynamics

TERMINOLOGY

“contact number” (γ)
= [infection rate, α] / [recovery rate, β]

(for an SIR model $\alpha/\beta=R_0$)

CRITICAL ASSUMPTION

no spatial variations, correlations

disease information

contact number

duration of infection

population information

initially immune

initially infected

time scale

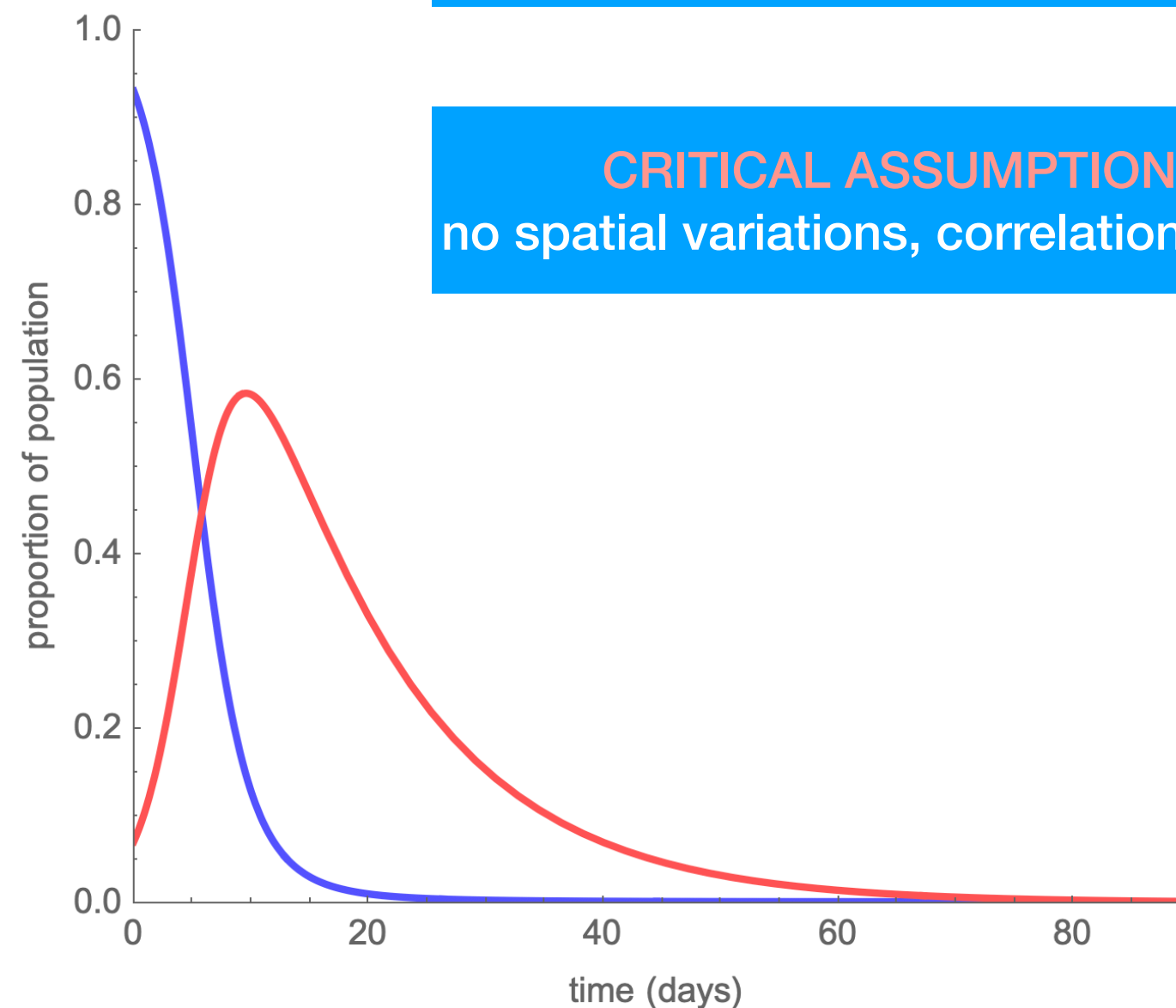
interval

window

proportion scale

interval

window



Opinion

No One Knows What's Going to Happen

Stop asking pundits to predict the future after the coronavirus. It doesn't exist.

By Mark Lilla

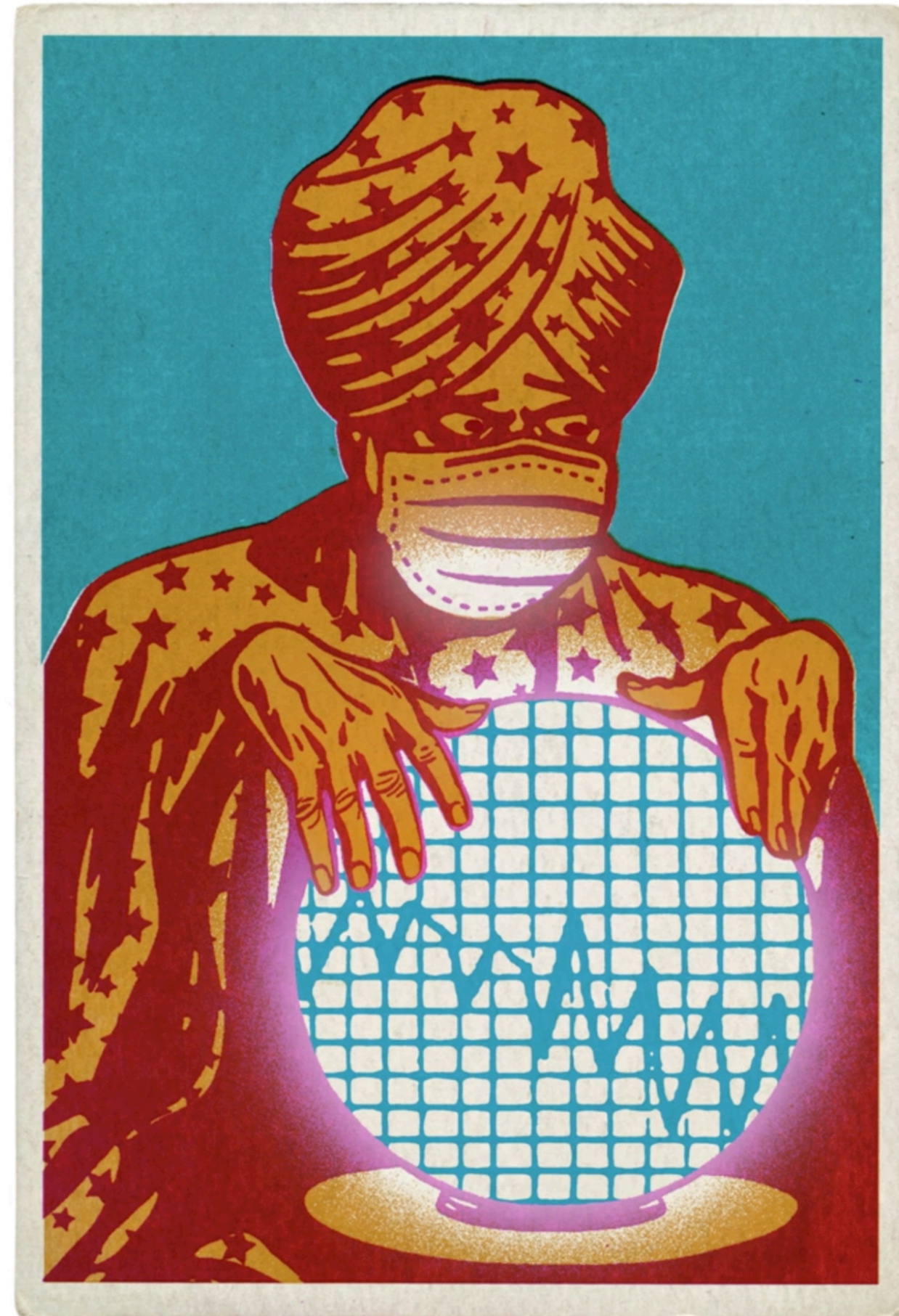
Dr. Lilla is a professor of humanities at Columbia.

May 22, 2020

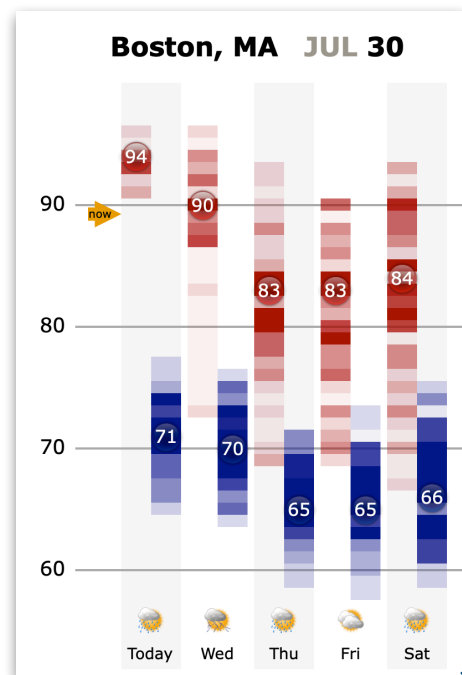


The best prophet, Thomas Hobbes once wrote, is the best guesser. That would seem to be the last word on our capacity to predict the future: We can't.

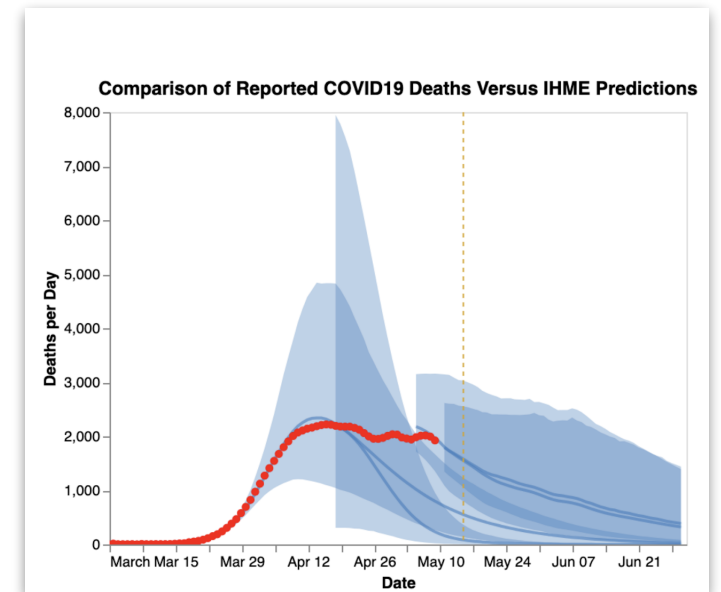
But it is a truth humans have never been able to accept. People facing immediate danger want to hear an authoritative voice they can draw assurance from; they want to be told what will occur, how they should prepare, and that all will be well. We are not well designed, it seems, to live in uncertainty. Rousseau exaggerated only slightly when he said that when things are truly important, we prefer to be wrong than to believe nothing at all.



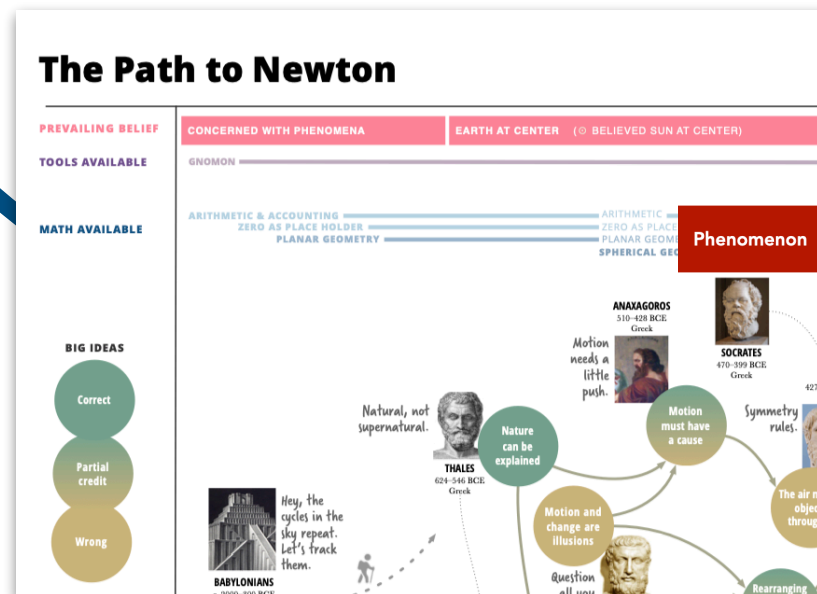
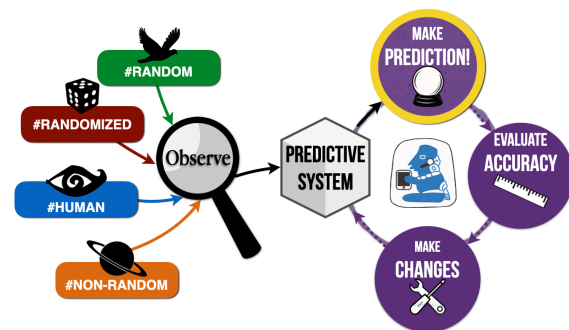
Take-a-Sweater



IHME COVID-19



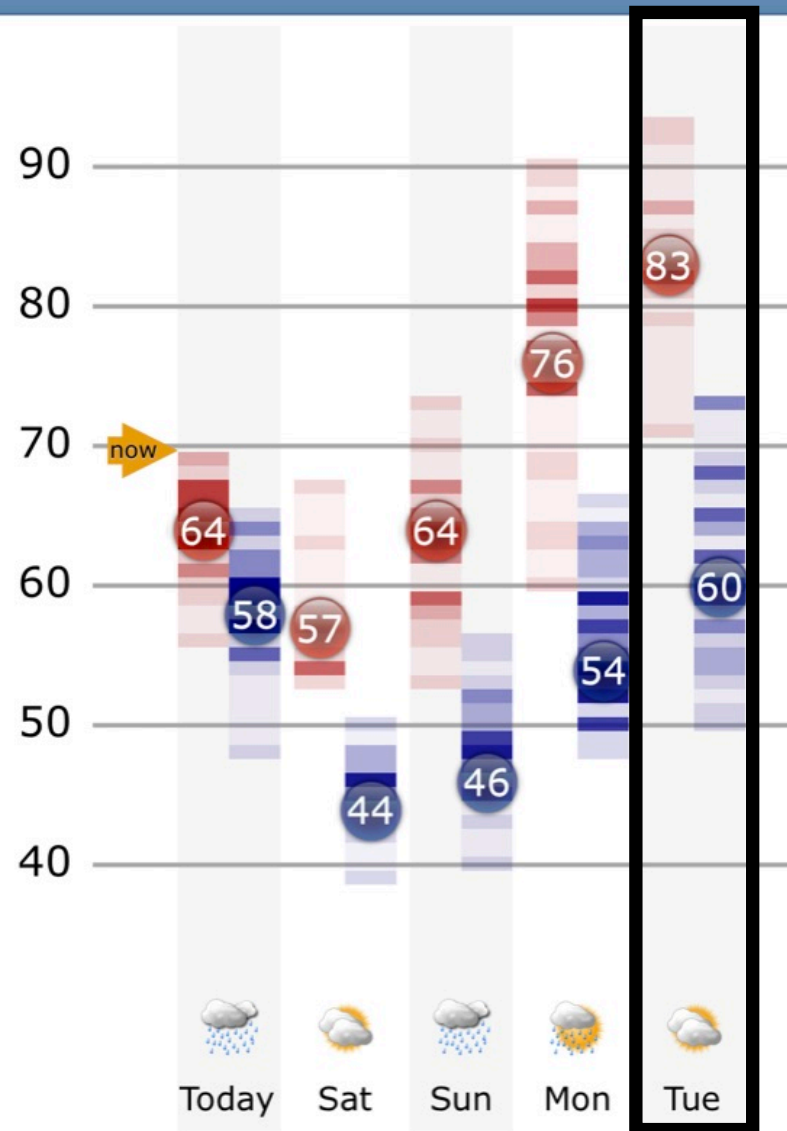
The Path to Newton



May 26, 2020 weather for Boston, predicted in the past...

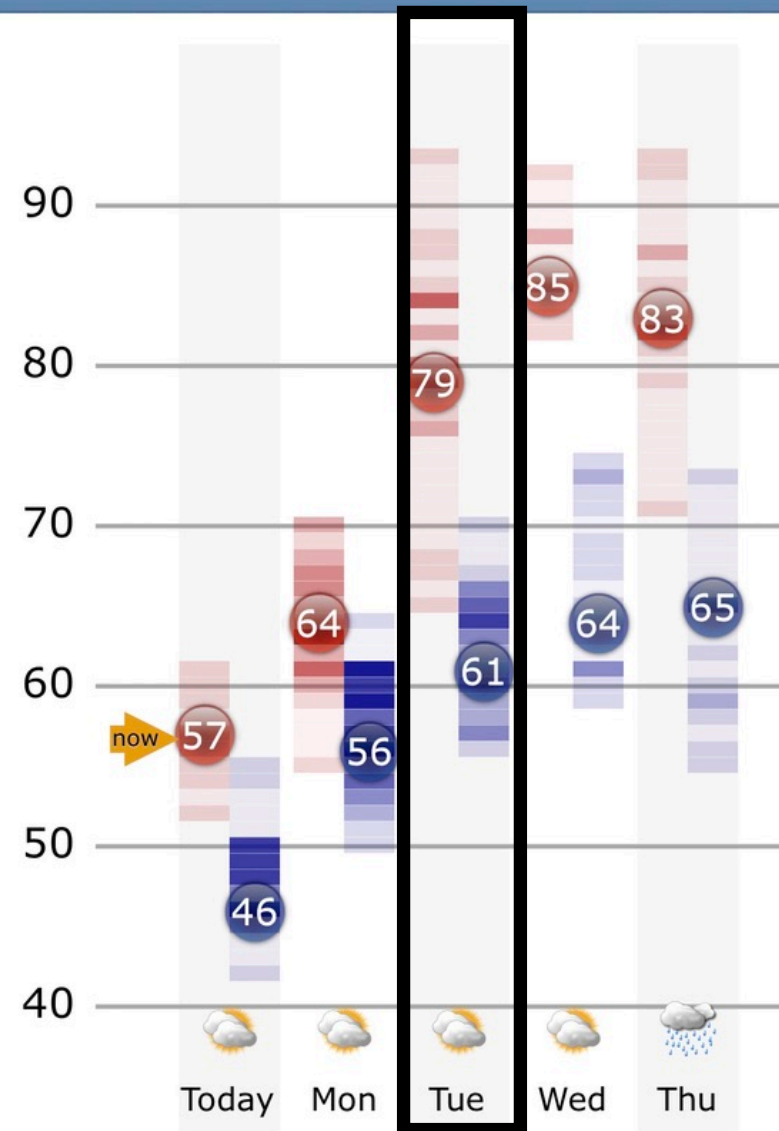
Friday, May 22, 2020

Boston, MA



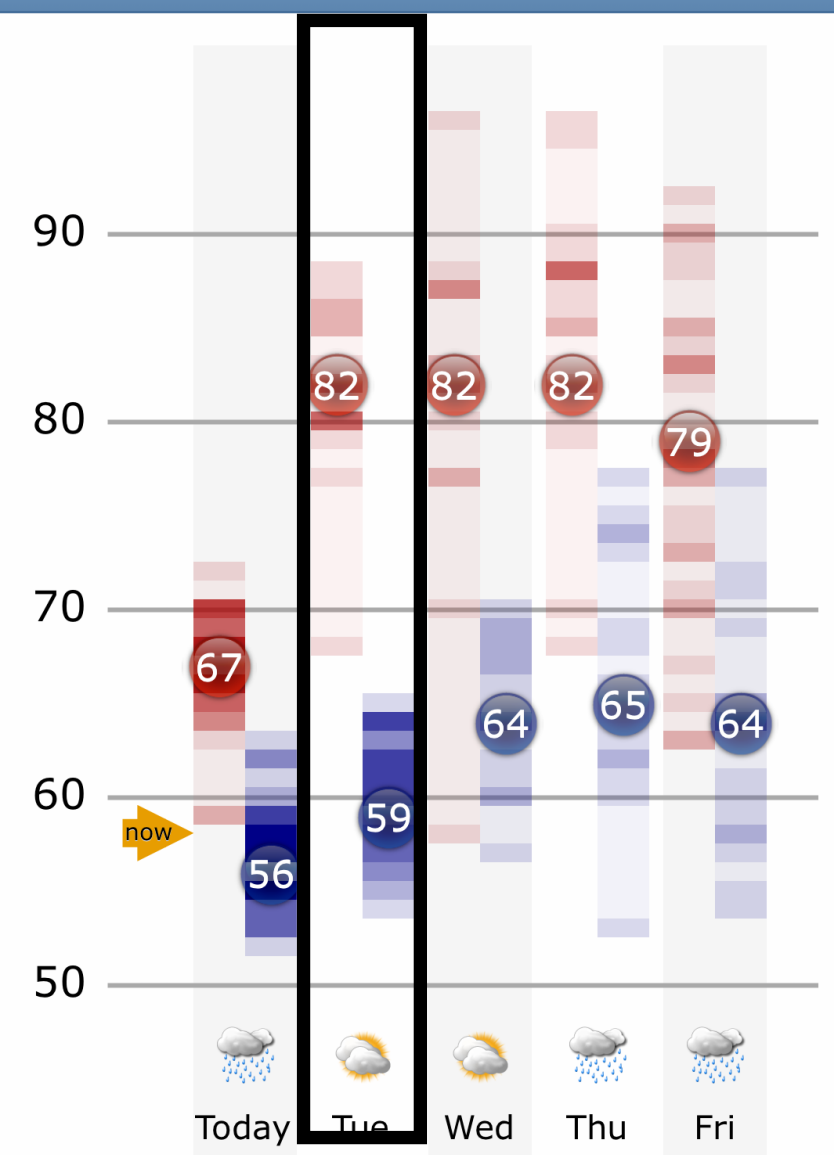
Sunday, May 24, 2020

Boston, MA



Monday, May 25, 2020

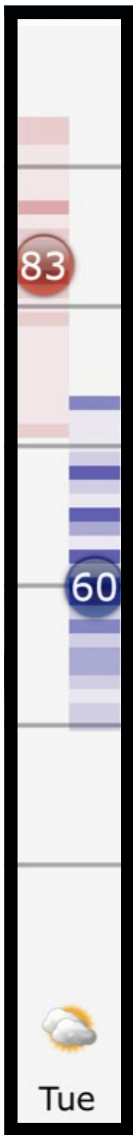
Boston, MA



from takeasweater.com

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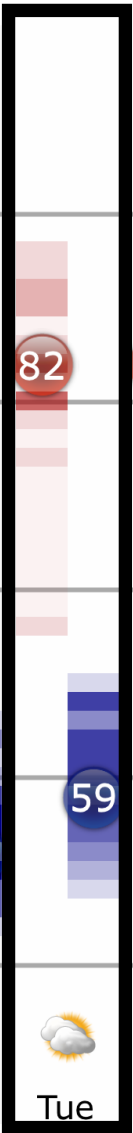
Friday, May 22, 2020



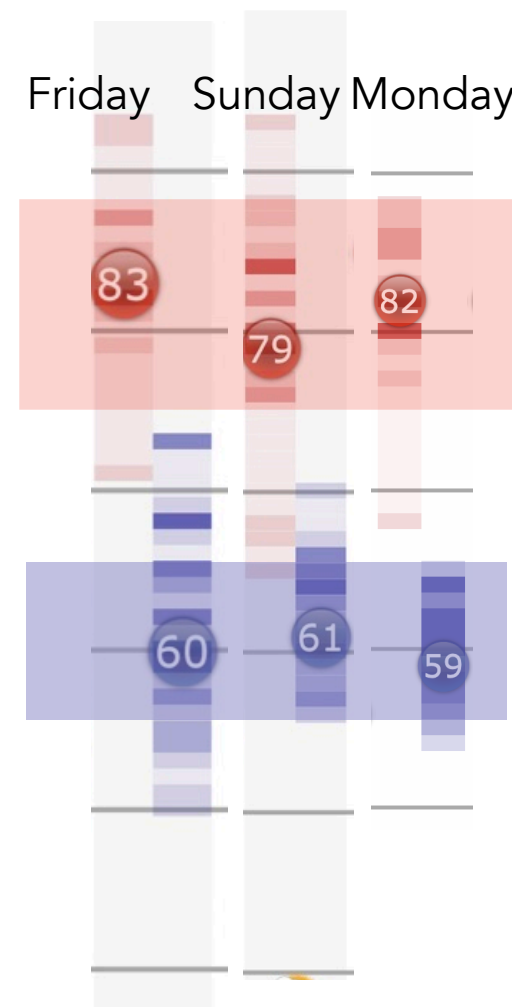
Sunday, May 24, 2020



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May 26, 2020 weather for Boston, predicted in the past...



Predictions ~fall within “expected” uncertainty ranges.

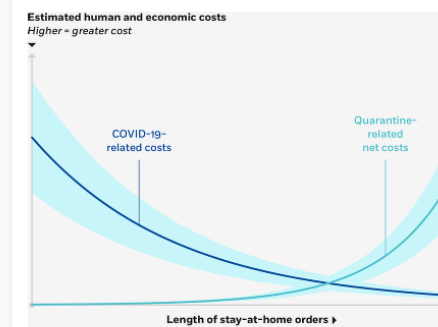


Writings

This section highlights writings by Professor Goodman on contemporary topics related to uncertainty and prediction. While these pieces are not official Prediction Project material, they contain major conceptual ideas from the Prediction Project's courses applied to major real life questions. These articles reflect Professor Goodman's personal views, not official Harvard policy.

Data Driven Dilemmas Posed by COVID-19

In this essay, Alyssa discusses the **complex tradeoffs** involved with decision making in an age of pandemic. Scientists face ethical dilemmas when choosing to view this crisis in a rational or emotional way.

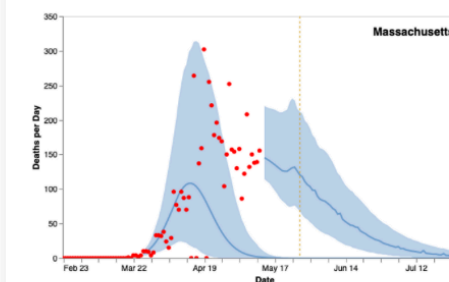


[Read More](#)

Uncertainty about Uncertainty

This commentary piece examines predictions of uncertainty in IHME COVID-19 models. She sheds light on the tendency of these important models to **underestimate** uncertainty in deaths per day estimates.

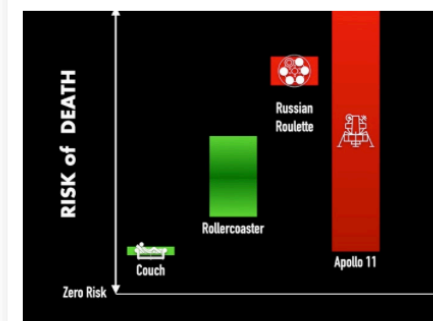
COVID-19: Reported Deaths (Red) and IHME Predictions (Blue)



[Read More](#)

Uncertain Risks

We know how to express **risk** and **uncertainty** with numbers, but people don't always take practical actions based on those numbers. **The COVID crisis brings this contrast into sharp focus.**



[Read More](#)

You'll read all of these short essays
(and 1 more article, each)
for Thursday.

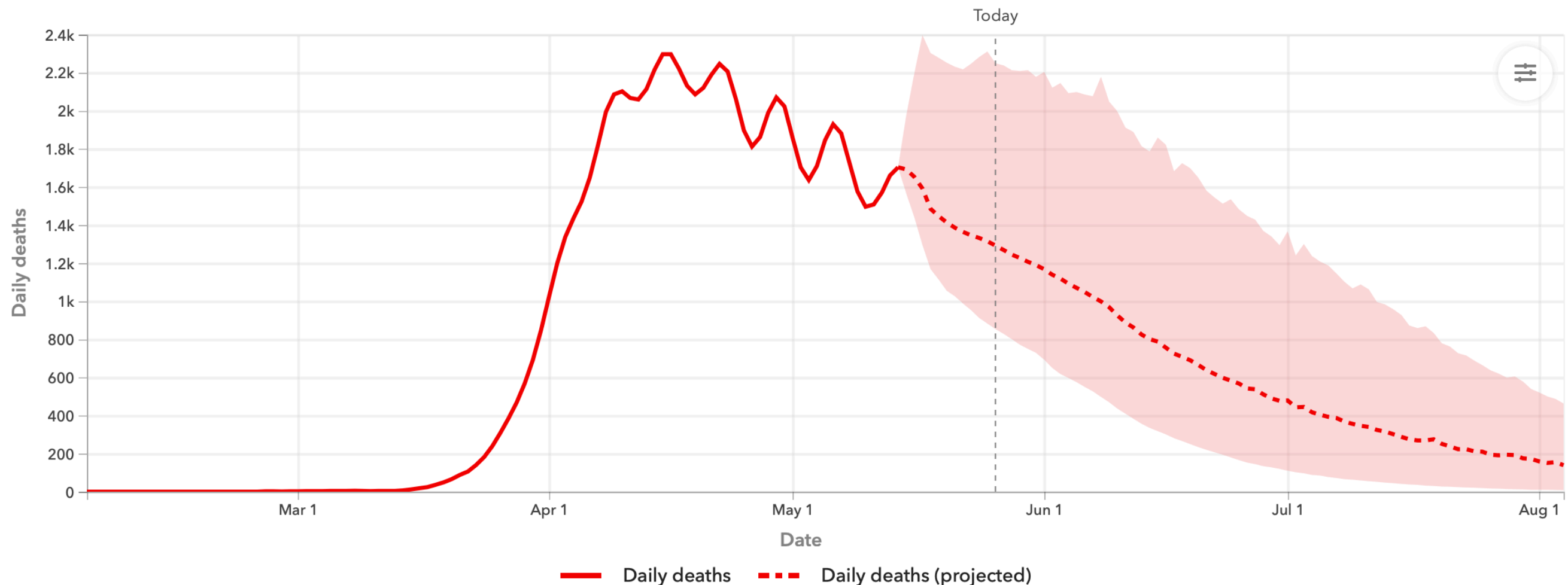
May 26, 2020 IHME forecast for US COVID-19 Daily Deaths, with Uncertainty

Trend

Compare

Map

Daily deaths ⓘ

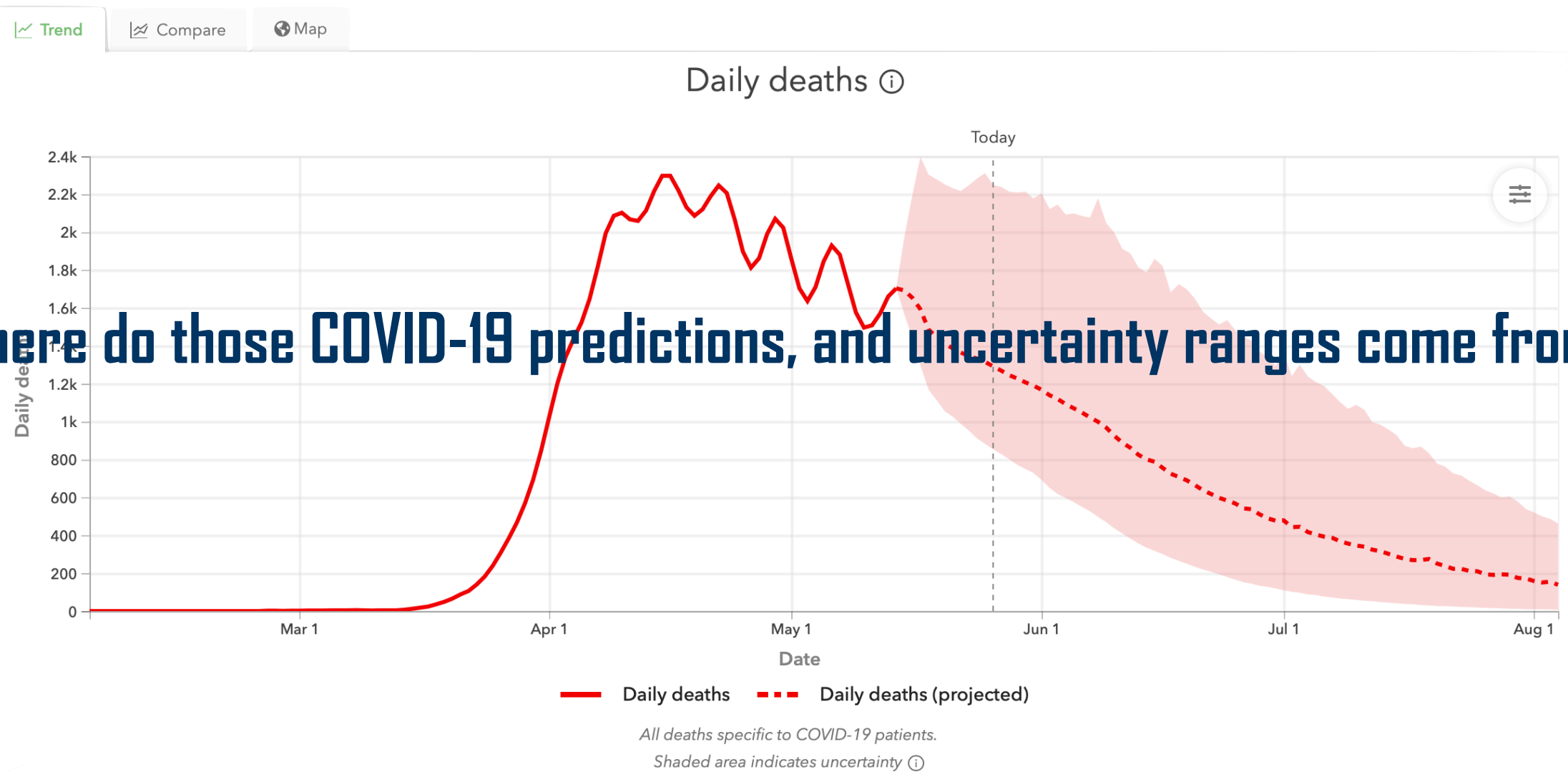


All deaths specific to COVID-19 patients.

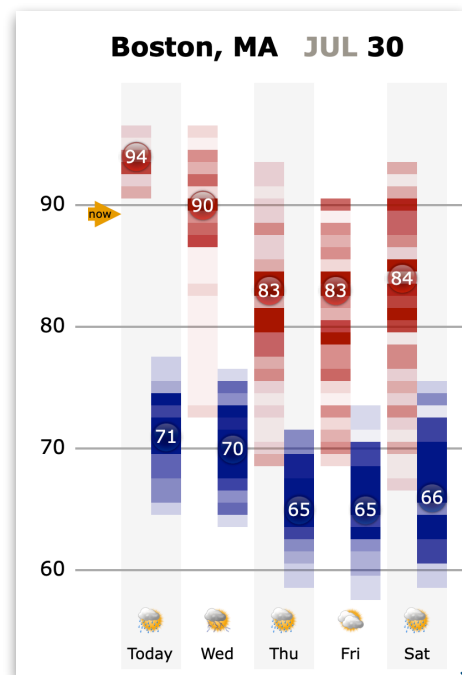
Shaded area indicates uncertainty ⓘ

Predictions are shown with “expected” uncertainty ranges.

Where do those COVID-19 predictions, and uncertainty ranges come from?



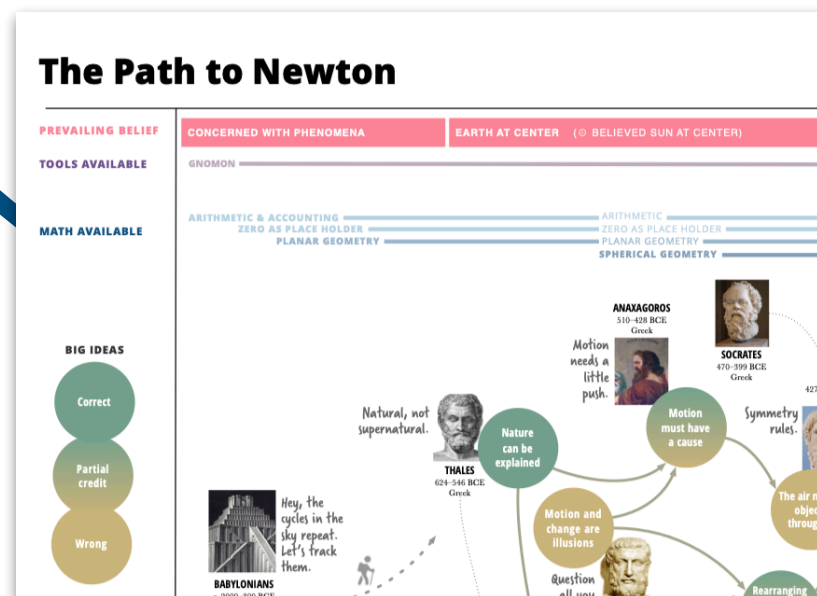
Take-a-Sweater



takeasweater.com

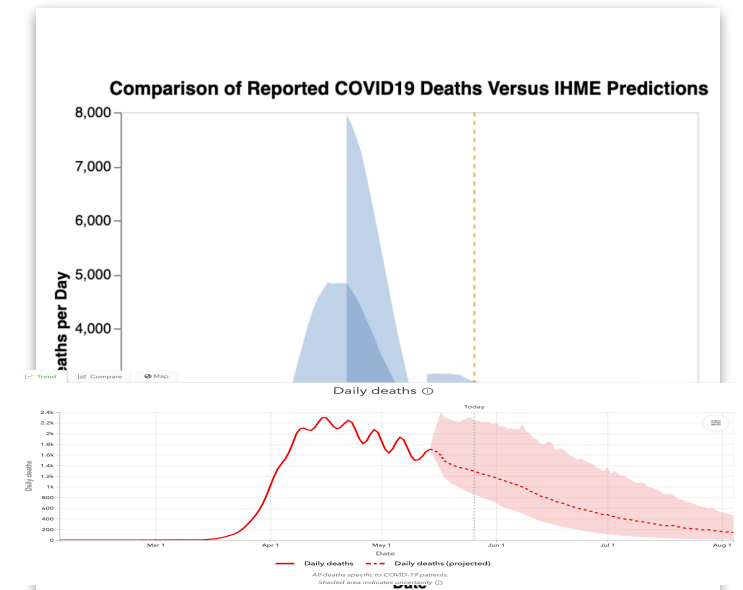


The Path to Newton



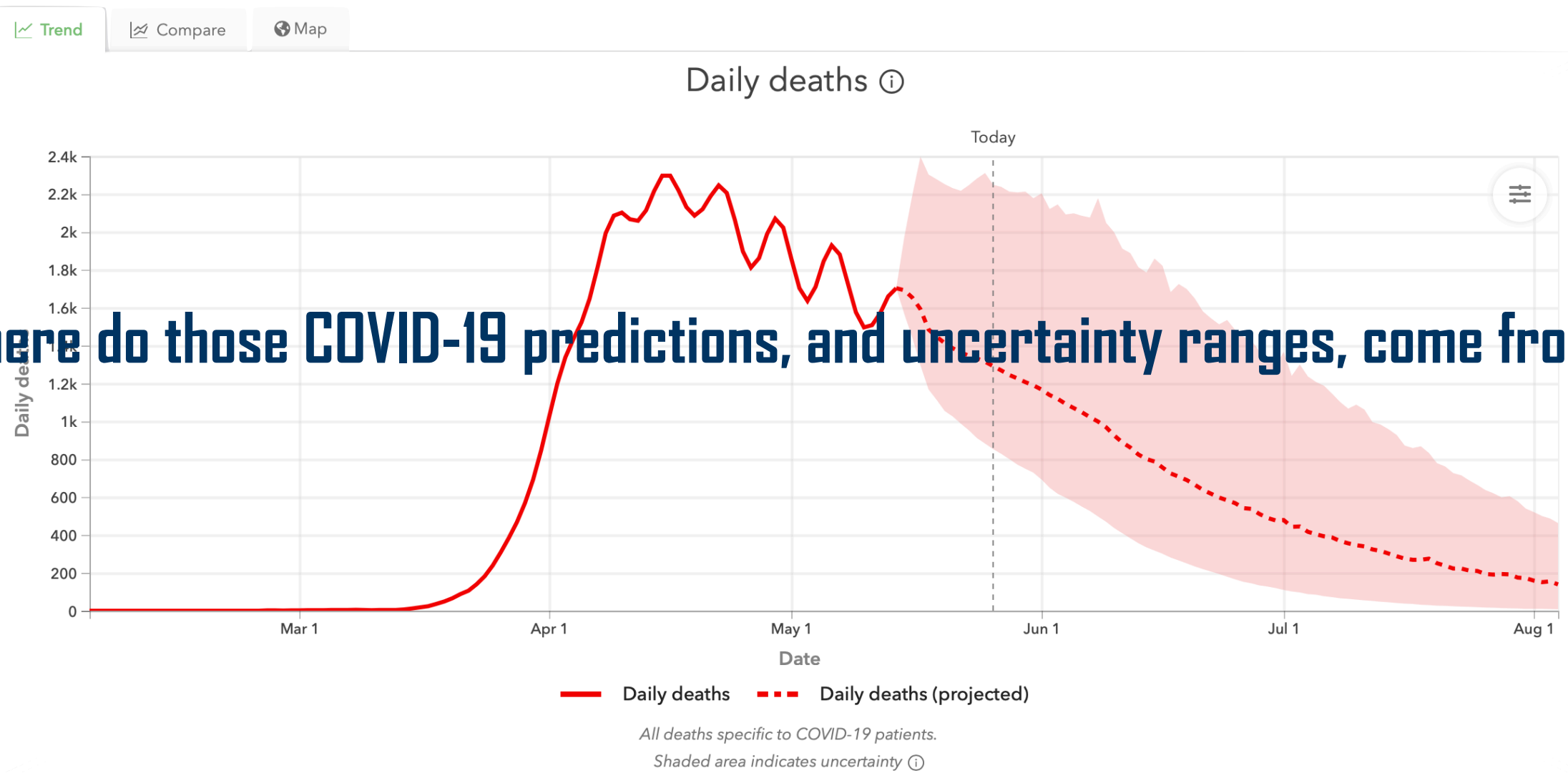
path-to.org

IHME COVID-19

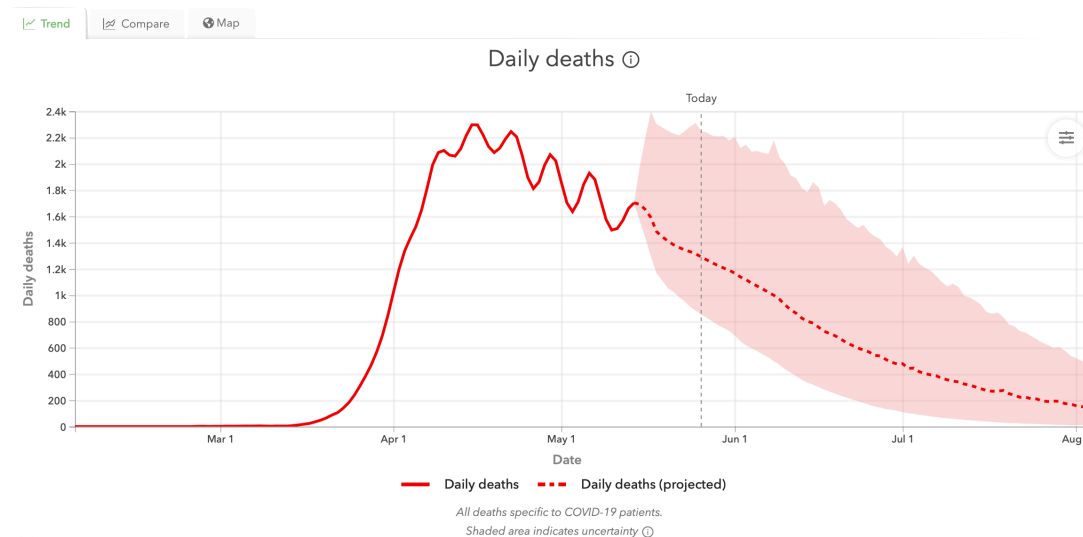


gluesolutions.io/social-impact

Where do those COVID-19 predictions, and uncertainty ranges, come from?



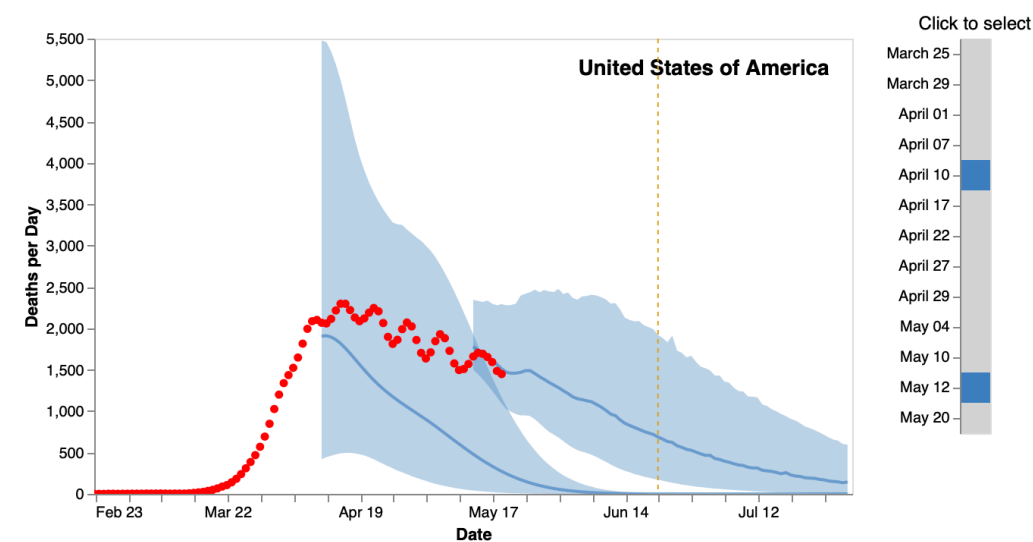
Where do those COVID-19 predictions, and uncertainty ranges, come from?



[covid19.healthdata.org/
united-states-of-america](https://covid19.healthdata.org/united-states-of-america)

And how uncertain are the uncertainties?

COVID-19: Reported Deaths (Red) and IHME Predictions (Blue)

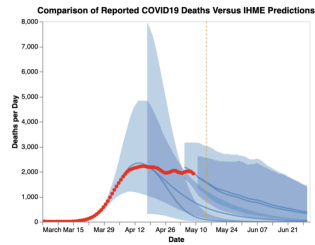
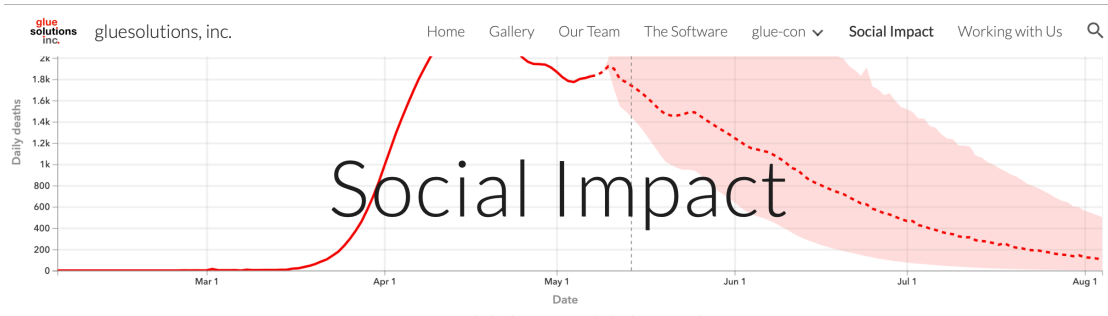


Location:

Time:

[gluesolutions.io/
social-impact](https://gluesolutions.io/social-impact)

Where do those COVID-19 predictions, and uncertainty ranges, come from?



IHME Models over time, for the United States, for 4 representative dates, made with the interactive tools offered below.

What's this tool for? Using the interactive graphics below, you can re-create the display of deaths/day akin to what would have been visible at [IHME's site](#) on a range of modeling dates, for any region you select. In addition, you can show more than one model (date) at a time, to make comparisons.

How should I interpret what I see? In each of the panels below: **red** dots show reported *actual* deaths per day; solid **blue** lines show forecasts, and light regions show uncertainty bands. Those **uncertainty bands** indicate ranges of possible outcomes, as forecast on the date when the model was made. The shaded regions show the 95% uncertainty band. As one can see by moving the time slider below each graph, the model and its associated uncertainty band change over time. As more and more models are added, regions where shading appears darkest are regions where models have been most consistent.

There are **four versions** of the IHME evolution visualization offered below. They are as follows (with source links in [brackets]):

1. For the United States, showing only 4 representative model dates [[source](#)] [[GitHub](#)] [[mobile site](#)]
2. For the United States, offering a wide range of model dates [[source](#)] [[GitHub](#)]
3. For the World, showing only 4 representative model dates [[source](#)] [[GitHub](#)] [[mobile site](#)]
4. For the World, offering a wide range of model dates [[source](#)] [[GitHub](#)]

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How can I share interesting graphs I create? Join the discussion at the 10QViz.org [IHME COVID-19 Model Uncertainty Visualization](#) page to upload your graphic and tell the world what it shows you. (You can download your graphic using the three dots at the top right of each panel below.)

At present, this site's visualization interactions work best on larger screens. We provide links to standalone views of the visualization showing 4 representative model dates that may work better on many mobile devices.

IHME Model Uncertainty, Visualized over Time

The [Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation \(IHME\)](#) creates, maintains, [updates](#), and publishes an open-source statistical [model](#) of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, based on open-data resources. As a public service, [glue solutions, inc.](#) here offers an online tool for visualizing the evolution of the IHME models over time.

The general public has seen many versions of the IHME "Daily Deaths" plots, including in several White House briefings. Our goal here is to offer a look at **how the models change**—appropriately, in response to new data and information—over time, and how that affects model updates. In a [companion essay online at the Prediction Project](#) site, we offer more context on why this evolution is so interesting.

(Banner above shows sample IHME "Daily Deaths" [graphic](#), from 14 May 2020.)

 HARVARD UNIVERSITY

HARVARD.EDU

The Prediction Project

Thoughts, Resources, Course, Seminar and Someday a Book



Essays

UNCERTAINTY ABOUT UNCERTAINTY

Data-Driven Dilemmas posed by COVID-19

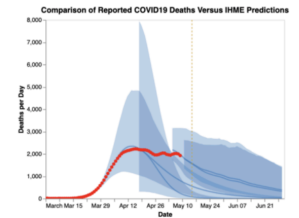
[HOME / COMMENTARY /](#)

Uncertainty about Uncertainty

by [Alyssa A. Goodman](#), May 18, 2020

This essay accompanies the release of an online [tool for visualization of IHME COVID-19 forecasts](#)' evolution over time and a [community discussion](#) of visualizations created with the tool.

Uncertainty about the future has motivated predictions for millennia. Sometimes, we're just curious—but other times, we really *need* to know. As the present pandemic evolves, our urgent societal need to plan has motivated many scientists to predict the spread and effects of the novel coronavirus.



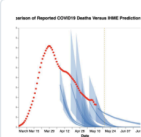
[Click here open the interactive site and explore the visualizations on your own.](#)

BACKGROUND: TWO BROAD CLASSES OF MODELS

Amongst the many predictions being used by governments to guide policy are two broad classes: infectious disease models based on an understanding of how contagion spreads; and more mechanism-agnostic statistical models informed primarily by data about prior outcomes. To the uninitiated, these approaches, both of which rely on statistical modeling, may sound the same—but they are not.

Models of infectious disease take into account, with varying levels of complexity: how many, and importantly *why*, people are susceptible, infected, immune, or have succumbed to a virus at any given point in time and space. The mathematics of these models moves people between groups called "Susceptible," "Exposed," "Infected," and "Removed," and so are often called "SEIR" models. At the philosophical other end of the modeling spectrum, what we call "**mechanism-agnostic**" approaches use information about cases, testing, hospital admissions, and deaths, to create algorithms that forecast what will happen under various combinations of conditions, given what's happened under similar conditions in the past. Purely mechanism-agnostic approaches do not factor in medically-informed information about how an infectious disease spreads.

✕ Tweet Analytics



Alyssa A. Goodman @AlyssaAGoodman

We think everyone needs to SEE how the @IHME_UW #Covid_19 models have changed, so we made a tool <https://www.gluesolutions.io/social-impact> to visualize the forecasts over TIME, and explained it here <https://predictionx.org/uncertainty-covid19> This is a preview. More to come... pic.twitter.com/41tQlk1qFa

Impressions

times people saw this Tweet on Twitter

58,682

Total engagements

times people interacted with this Tweet

9,097

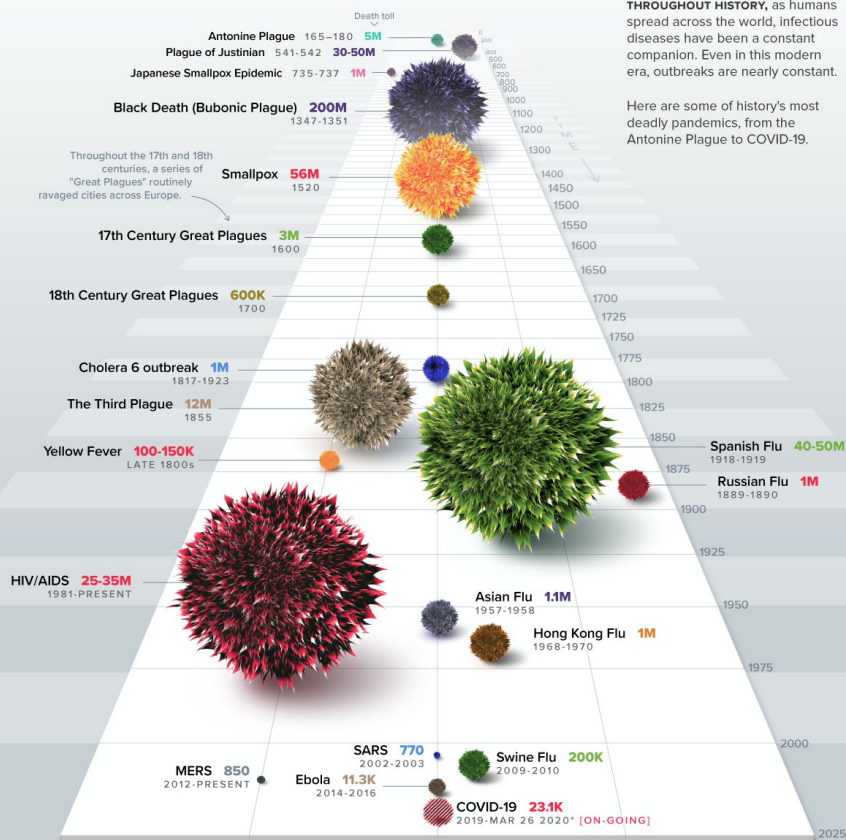
gluesolutions.io/social-impact

HISTORY OF PANDEMICS

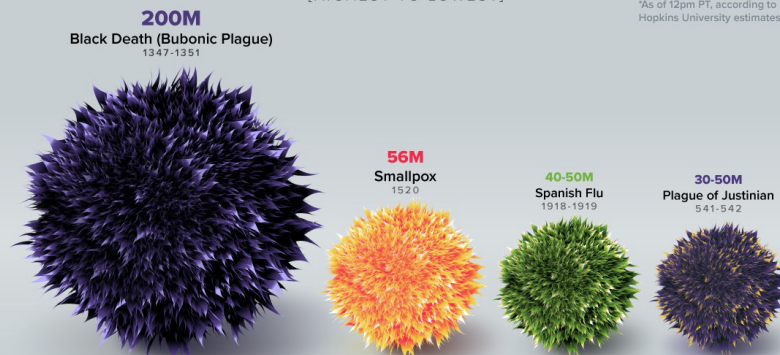
PAN-DEM-IC (of a disease) prevalent over a whole country or the world.

THROUGHOUT HISTORY, as humans spread across the world, infectious diseases have been a constant companion. Even in this modern era, outbreaks are nearly constant.

Here are some of history's most deadly pandemics, from the Antonine Plague to COVID-19.



DEATH TOLL [HIGHEST TO LOWEST]

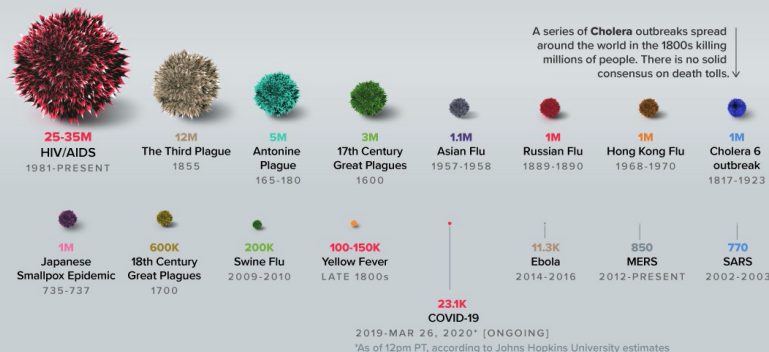


The plague originated in rats and spread to humans via infected fleas.

The outbreak wiped out 30-50% of Europe's population. It took more than 200 years for the continent's population to recover.

Smallpox killed an estimated 90% of Native Americans. In Europe during the 1800s, an estimated 400,000 people were being killed by smallpox annually. The first ever vaccine was created to ward off smallpox.

The death toll of this plague is still under debate as new evidence is uncovered, but many think it may have helped hasten the fall of the Roman Empire.



Sources: CDC, WHO, BBC, Wikipedia, Historical records, Encyclopedia Britannica, Johns Hopkins University

VISUAL CAPITALIST

f /visualcapitalist @visualcap visualcapitalist.com

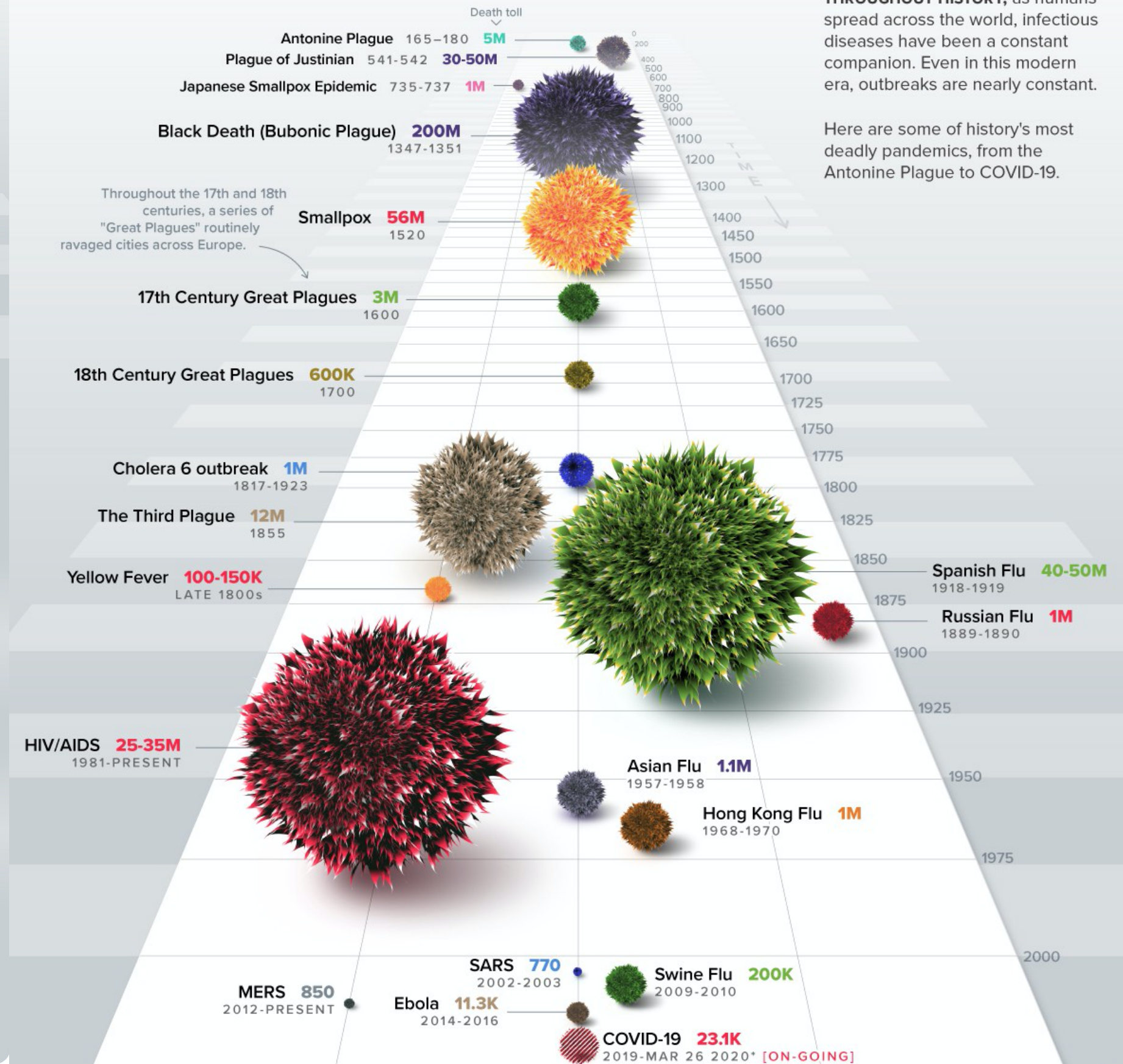
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medium.com/nightingale/
what-i-learned-from-
covid-19-data-
visualization-5c684eaa4698

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BUT...let's do the RISK calculation properly

18th Century Great Plagues

600K in 1750

800 million/600K=

1 person in 1,300 dead

COVID-19

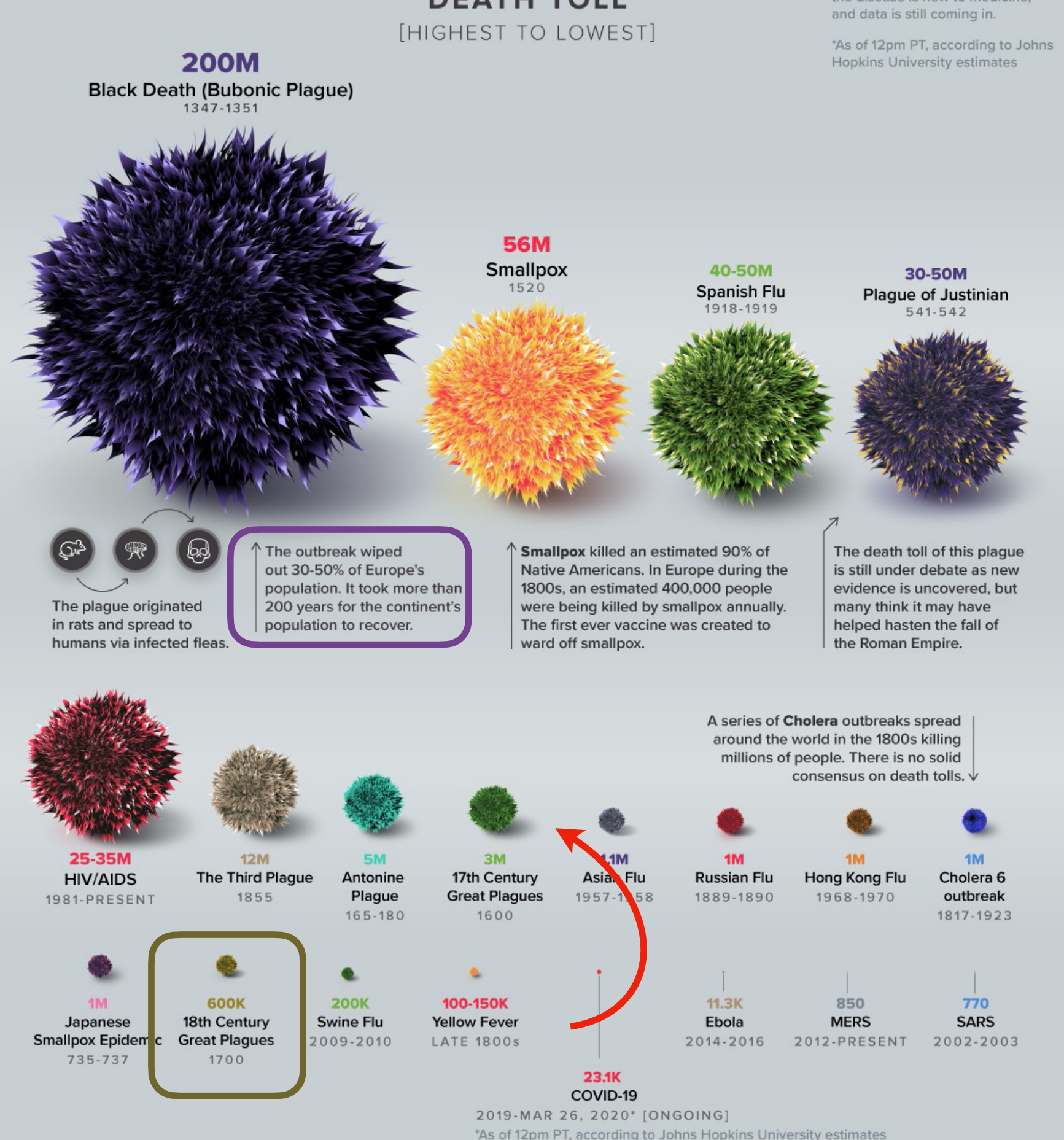
2.6 M (so far)

8 billion/2.6 million=

1 person in 3000 dead

So, per capita, the risk of dying from the 18th Century Great Plague was **3000 / 1,300 = 2x worse** than COVID-19 (so far).

And that was for a relatively "mild" plague.



<https://tinyurl.com/covid-gened-questions>

Prediction: Week 7

quick review of outdoor Navigation Exercise



1 year ago

Coming up: Linz (3/23); Radcliffe AI/Health (4/1); your final projects...

“Prediction vs. Prophecy”

John Snow & Cholera (edX highlights & more)

Modeling the spread of epidemics, and uncertainty

Bookkeeping

SIR Models

SEIR Models

Agent-based models

AI models

Prediction and decision in the face of uncertainty: COVID-19 and Harvard (discussions)

Thursday & in section: COVID-19 student readings discussion (see Canvas Tuesday eve)

Special Guest for Thursday’s discussions: geneticist/epidemiologist Dr. Immaculata DeVivo, Professor at Harvard’ T.H. Chan School of Public Health and at Harvard Medical School