Police-involved shootings, the cultural impact upon the "hard" sciences, urban planning gone awry, and stealthy enemies.

As our national attention has been diverted back to the civil disobedience of tearing down statues and not wearing masks and social distancing, it may be time to bring a bit of data to police-involved deaths.

"The state kills people in two ways, executions and police killings. Executions require trials, appeals, long waiting periods and great deliberation and expense. Police killings are not extensively monitored, analyzed or deliberated upon and, until very recently, even much discussed. Yet every year, police kill 25 to 50 times as many people as are executed. Why have police killings been ignored?"

A quick review of the book, When Police Kill [2], from Tyler Cowen’s blog Marginal Revolution

I have long felt that like social sciences, but to a lesser degree, the hard quantitative sciences like physics and chemistry are not purely intellectual edifices but carry a cultural imprint – the words of scientific description often come with a cultural undertow. Don’t be fooled by the moniker Laws, appended to some basic scientific principles, like the Laws of Thermodynamics. They did not arrive chiseled on two tablets.

"Thermodynamics was extremely useful science for a society in the throes of rapid industrialization and a shift toward a capitalistic free market. The laws and their extensions could be applied to improving the engines driving advances in productivity. Just as importantly, they could be phrased in broad terms that were
What is that saying? Be careful of what you wish or, in this instance, plan?

“The decision to bury and pave over its rivers, creating today’s arid metropolis, was a 20th-century plan meant to protect residents from disease – specifically, cholera, malaria and other waterborne illnesses brought on by frequent flooding.”

It’s time to take a look at Mexico City as a measure of urban planning. From The Conversation, Mexico City buried its rivers to prevent disease and unwittingly created a dry, polluted city where COVID-19 now thrives

Of course, it wouldn’t be the time of COVID if I didn’t include some thoughts on the current pathogen of concern.

“Germs have a variety of strategies for reproducing and transmitting to new hosts – strategies shaped by the action of natural selection, which ensures that each lifeform is adapted to its ecosystem, and that the fittest survive. Some germs, such as smallpox, spread through contact, but they also have another, more powerful way of persisting: they’re durable in the external environment. Smallpox virus particles (virions) can remain infectious for years if they’re buried in a scab. That’s one way the virus can keep infecting and spreading: it waits for a new host to happen by. Spreading through water or by insect vectors are strategies, too.

But spread by stealth is another strategy and, perhaps, the most terrifying of all.”

You know the phrase, those who fail to learn from the past are condemned to repeat it. From Aeon, Stealth infections