What I'm Reading (Oct 8)

By Chuck Dinerstein, MD, MBA — October 8, 2020

For your review: COVID-19's second wave ... a history lesson about Presidential illness (spoiler alert: it's not Garfield, Wilson, or FDR) ... the unintended consequences of defending Darwin ... and different thinking about parenting.

"When you don’t know someone well enough to buy them a gift, you give them money; likewise, self-confidence and diligence are seen as the universal tool for the child who must “become someone”—you know not who.

And yet parental resources are no greater than they have ever been. Apart from some desperate attempts at supplementation—all those after-school activities parents are mocked for enrolling children in—all that each of us has to give remains her own values and standards and practices and skills. The only thing we can change is how we “give” them"

A thoughtful piece on parenting, From The Point, Acceptance Parenting [2]

“1863, Huxley was appointed by the British government to be one of three royal commissioners investigating the state of marine fisheries. The commission had been formed to resolve a dispute between artisanal fishermen, who used hooks, lines, and crab pots, and trawlersmen, who sailed larger ships, towing a net like a wide gullet, the lower jaw of which was a weighted cable that dragged along the sea floor. Over the previous two decades, the British trawling fleet had quadrupled in size, and artisanal fishermen thought
the trawlers were not only extracting inordinate volumes of valuable fish, but also degrading the seafloor “garden” or “forest” that those fish relied on as habitat. Ship captains had been threatened, and their nets set ablaze.”

An interesting tale of Thomas Huxley, a big supporter of Darwin, “the Copernicus of the organic world.” In displacing man from the center of ecology, did they inadvertently minimize our ecologic impact? From Nautil. Us, The Human Error Darwin Inspired [3]

“Despite the multiple press briefings that first day, the initial inclinations of Eisenhower’s physician and staff were to play down the seriousness of the unfolding events and to deflect questions about delays in his initial care. The first briefing consisted of a short statement that the president had had a “mild” coronary thrombosis, that he had been driven to the hospital in his own car, and that he had walked from the house to the car. But the press and the public wanted more information, and for good reason — no president had been hospitalized for a major heart attack before.”

In the mood for a quick history lesson? Consider how physicians of another President, with an unprecedented illness, treated him and educated the public. From the New England Journal of Medicine, Seizing the Teachable Moment — Lessons from Eisenhower’s Heart Attack [4]

Finally, who would think that a Twitter thread might be useful for something more than exercising your thumb? It pays to be open-minded, consider this on the 2nd lockdown instituted in Israel.

"I will start with a summary of the key take-homes:

1. Don’t open schools with a high number of daily cases and high infection rates (R-naught around 1). This will fuel a further surge, and anyway be ineffective due to many quarantines of kids and teachers

2. Don’t manage the pandemic based on the capacity of your healthcare system. You are bound to reach it. At that point, the outbreak will reach record levels, a high death toll, lockdown will be needed, and it will take very long to bring the numbers down. Act early

An outbreak in the younger population will inevitably reach the elderly within weeks

4. An outbreak in some cities will inevitably spread to other cities, due to population mixing. We had localized outbreaks but could not implement differential lockdown due to political reasons, and they eventually spread

5. In a heterogeneous population, lockdowns can have different effects on different groups due to different behaviors of these populations. Two weeks into the lockdown, the outbreak halted in the general population but continues to spread in the Orthodox."

This is particularly pertinent as we begin to deal with rising COVID-19 cases in New York City. And while I can’t believe I am saying this, from Twitter, Lessons from an Israeli Second Wave [5].