Reflection

Originally I had planned on having a collage of memes similar to this particular one but unfortunately I could not make it work but this specific one encapsulates my intentions, as well as my own experience. This reference is a bit dated in the fact that it makes a reference of it happening over a few weeks but that is what makes it all the more interesting in a sense. Facebook was where I found this and there were many reactions to it, many of which were in agreement to this, after just a few weeks of covid and lockdowns people were already sick of it. Couple of weeks turned into months and those months turned into one year and three months, roughly, so now people are really sick of it; some want to get back to proper work hours and others just want to go about things they enjoy normally. Most people were obviously concerned at first when they heard of an “un-specified virus of unknown origin” but now it's gotten to the point where people don't really care and are just annoyed by it. Similar to how you constantly see a check engine light that just won't go away, you see it everyday just sitting there and after seeing or hearing about it all the time people just want to go on with their lives like normal.

What makes this so interesting as a primary source is that we have a take on just one certain point in the pandemic, an earlier point at that, that is displayed just by one person but comes across in a way that many people agreed with at the time. With the nature of this meme being pretty funny and displayed in a way that people can relate, I am willing to bet there are a lot of people that have seen their check engine light and worried about it, only to get sick of it and ignore it if there are no immediate problems for them. Researchers can look at this thought process and compare it to overall feelings at that relative point in the pandemic and look at the general consensus that is seen now, which is similar and has actually grown in many areas.

We see this situation of a small opinion at one point grow into something much bigger later on within some of the histories we have learned, even in more “recent years”. When we look at the situation with Fidel Castro, he started off as kind of small time so to say, going against the current situation of the government and what it was doing. After much more time and as his points and views about the government were true we see the general views that the people had line up with his views and then his beliefs were not so far fetched.

Past-Present Analysis

 When most people think of Cuba they most likely think small, secluded, and all in all not that important or capable in certain things. In actuality though because of its closed off and reclusive nature it has been able to advance really well in medicine and how it reacts to medical situations such as covid, all of this is a culmination of investing in its people.

 Literacy and overall education was in shambles in Cuba before Castro took over as well as the healthcare system, which is affected by the education, which I will bring up soon. After Castro came into power, there was major reform to the education and literacy system in play, a so called “war on illiteracy” where the government stepped in to teach its citizens to read and write, men and women of course. This has a positive effect on its people in an emotional/mental aspect, as shown in the video “Maestra” when the one lady states how amazing and thrilling it was to look at something and realize that she can read. This little aspect I want to note is something that we all take for granted because for us it's a basic function that we learn early but to them it was a whole new world of possibility. As the overall literacy was being worked on, Castro also worked on healthcare reform for all, which resulted in many citizens getting much needed healthcare as well as demand for doctors to help people. This is where these two aspects meet because with a better literacy/education people are able to work on becoming doctors and care for people and we see this medical practice start to have a positive impact on the citizenry. Leading up to the current pandemic there is a vast increase in doctor to patient ratio, especially compared to larger and much better funded countries such as the US and Canada for example, despite being cut off from trade. We see this really come into play when there are incidents of emergency within other countries that require extra medical personnel, such as within Haiti and its problems with cholera. Cuba started this years ago, sometime after the revolution after 1959, they sent out “armies of white coats” to help around the world, not for free with money going back to help Cubas quite sequestered economy. While this may lift a few eyebrows, with some saying that this is a form of slavery, all the doctors involved do this task voluntarily and their families at home are still getting the salary they are earning in the process. With their doctors being able to improve upon their skills abroad they have gained great knowledge on medical practice and their understanding of vaccinations. With its understanding of vaccinations Cuba has been pretty sovereign with its own vaccines as well as how it makes them, along with their effectiveness.

How these years of investment in its people and healthcare culminates into a country that is pretty well prepared for most medical emergencies and pandemics. This is especially prevalent in how they operate and keep tabs on their citizens’ health by giving them checkups every year. With this knowledge they have a good idea of how a community is structured in terms of vulnerability to sickness, and who should be top priority. With the ratio of doctors being so high there is more concentration on the patients they have under their care so doctors are not getting overwhelmed as well, which also allows them to help other places in need as well. Similar to helping Haiti and other nations in the past, there are also instances of Cuban doctors going to other countries and lending their aide as well, such as in the country of Togo. [[1]](#footnote-0)In this country and others they are more than welcome to help because it is a known fact that Cuban doctors are well worth their salt and most countries are in need of extra doctors to help them out. While helping those other countries in the process the doctors are also helping their own country of Cuba as well, as I mentioned earlier those countries will give compensation for these services which is a big boon to the economy of Cuba. With the lockdowns in place and a lack of tourist travel the overall GDP and earning for the country has dropped so the more help the better. Speaking of helping other countries, there is also the fact of Cuba and its vaccination capabilities, with their own Covid vaccine known as Soberana 2, which is showing great results throughout its application within the country. Soberana 2 is doing so well in fact that it is getting attention overseas in countries such as Iran, which has banned vaccines from the US and Britain. There is also the fact that this vaccine is shown to be adaptable to other versions of the virus and can be adjusted to handle such things as well. Throughout the country of Cuba the organization and investment into its healthcare really shows with having extremely low numbers of cases and fewer cases of death from covid due to this collective awareness of health and safety for those around.

While the history of Cuba is rocky and full of those that wish to run it “for themselves” so to say we finally see the fruits of what happens when there is investment into its people and to allow them to better themselves. What we have in the end is a small island nation of 11 million in a pandemic that has shut down most of the industrial world, being able to show itself strong when it has much less than these other nations.

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)