

How many nursing home residents died in 2020? (We still don't know)

Jessica Hockett, PhD

Meeting with NY Senator Skoufis

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Sent in advance

- “Does New York City Make Any Sense?” (Verduyn, Hockett, Engler, Kenyon, & Neil, 2023)
- Conversational article from Wood House 76 what the HERDS data doesn't say
- HERDS Nursing Home Resident COVID death data for Orange County, New York City, New York State (minus NYC)
- Hockett correspondence with HHS OIG-OEI re: “COVID-19 Had a Devastating Impact on Medicare Beneficiaries in Nursing Homes During 2020” (June 2021) and related analysis

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Jessica Hockett, PhD

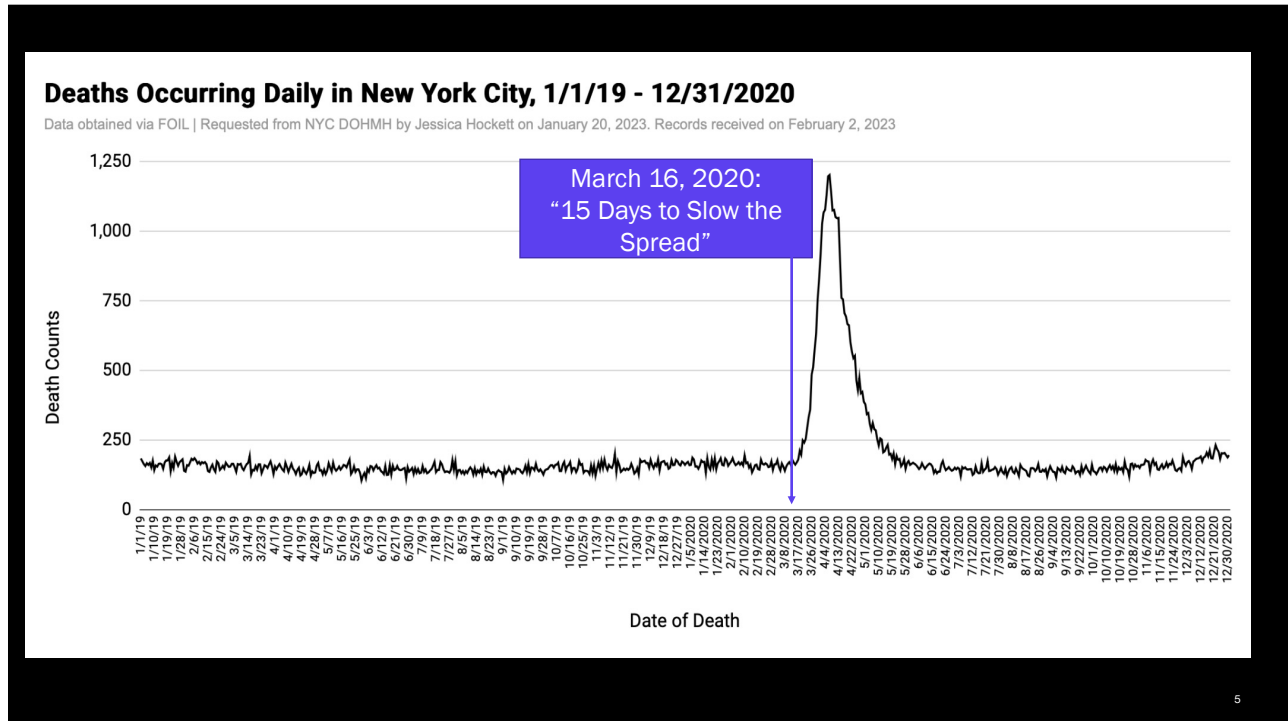
- Independent researcher conducting a pro bono, open inquiry into New York City mortality patterns in spring 2020
- Began focused investigation in 2022 as a matter of public interest
- Not affiliated with any political party, advocacy group, or institution
- Research and documentation published on Substack (now WordPress) and X/Twitter (WoodHouse76.com)
- Contributing author to *Fighting Goliath: Exposing the Flawed Science and Statistics Behind the COVID-19 Event* (with Norman Fenton and Martin Neil)

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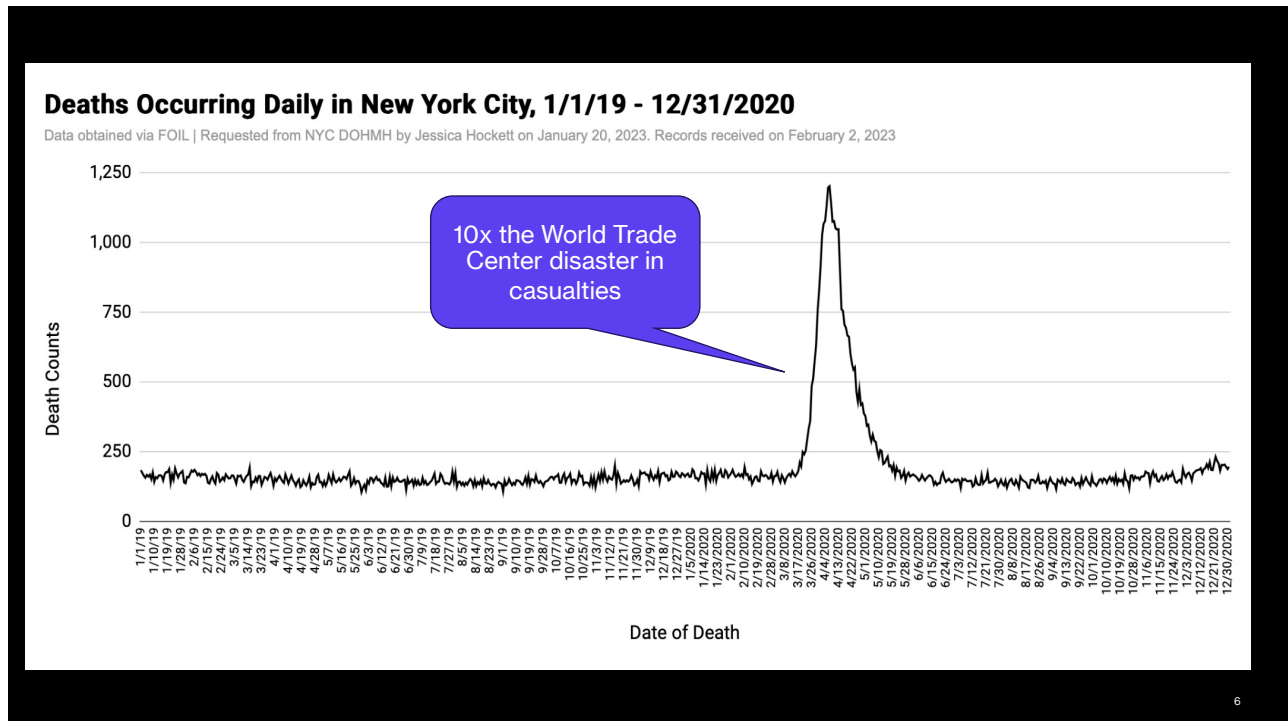
NYC Event Approach

- **Data side:** Review and reconcile official mortality datasets (daily where available) and records obtained from city, state, and federal agencies through FOI requests.
- **Current Conclusion:** The NYC event curve and the 26K–27K excess-death estimate cannot be independently verified with available data. It is **unsubstantiated.**

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Today's Emphasis:

- Despite six years' worth of committees and millions of dollars, there is **no comprehensive or reliable data on the number of nursing home residents that died in 2020**, or any single week in 2020, regardless of cause or setting of death, for NY state, New York City, or U.S.
- The NY/NYC toll cannot be blamed solely or primarily on Gov Cuomo's nursing home policy, per official data

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Health Care

Local Officials Say a Nursing Home Dumped Residents to Die at Hospitals

The deaths of 18 residents of a New York nursing home highlight the continuing controversy over the Cuomo administration's decision not to count deaths in hospitals as nursing home deaths. The home denies the allegations.



The Grand Rehabilitation and Nursing at Barnwell, Columbia Memorial Hospital. Photo illustration: Lisa Larson-Walker/ProPublica. Source Images: Google StreetView

by Joe Sexton and Joaquin Sapien
August 11, 2020, 5:00 am

Sen Skoufis: "It's my opinion that your administration's definition truly misrepresents the scale of this crisis as a result. So let's try and get the full picture here and now: **How many of New York's nursing home residents died in hospitals?**"

Zucker insisted the state couldn't say because it **didn't yet have a fully accurate count.**

"You don't have a ballpark that you can give? So the total official number is about **6,500**. Are we talking with the hospital deaths: 8,000? 10,000? 15,000? What are we looking at?" Skoufis countered.

"I'm not prepared to give you a specific number. We are in the middle of a pandemic obviously, we always forget about that sometimes," Zucker said.

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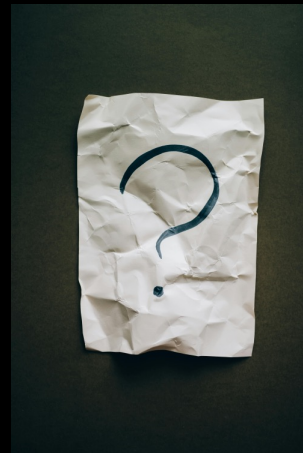
In the early weeks of the pandemic, the state had counted these deaths by attributing them to the nursing home regardless of where they physically occurred. But in April — as the death toll related to nursing homes mushroomed, hitting as many as 250 deaths a day — that changed: The administration of Gov. Andrew Cuomo decided not to count residents who died of COVID-19 in hospitals as nursing home deaths, saying it feared that their deaths would be double-counted if they were recorded that way.

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What's "Normal"?

- Most nursing home residents die in the nursing home facility (~75%-80%).
- 5-40% of transfers from nursing homes to hospitals are inappropriate or due more harm than good to the resident**



*Allers, K., Bausewein, C., Mehnert, A., & van den Block, L. (2019). Hospitalizations of nursing home residents at the end of life. *BMC Palliative Care*, 18, Article 90. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12904-019-0468-1> | Temkin-Greener, H., Zheng, N. T., Xing, J., & Mukamel, D. B. (2013). Site of death among nursing home residents in the United States: Changing patterns, 2003–2007. *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association*, 14(10), 741–748. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jamda.2013.06.006>

**Lemoine, S. E., Herbots, H. H., De Blick, D., Remmen, R., Monsieurs, K. G., & Van Bogaert, P. (2019). "Appropriateness of transferring nursing home residents to emergency departments: A systematic review." *BMC Geriatrics*, 19, Article 17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12877-019-1028-z>

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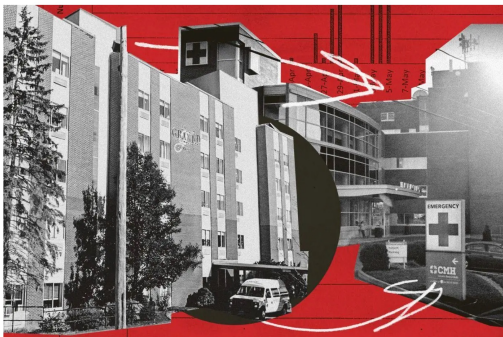
Residents with DNRs sent to hospitals for no good/apparent reason

- *[The nurse at Barnwell] didn't have detailed medical records for the patients, but she noted that all had arrived at the hospital with orders saying no extraordinary measures were to be taken to keep them alive. As a result, she and the Columbia County health director developed a theory: "For me," said Jack Mabb, the health director, "it appeared they were sending people to the hospital so they wouldn't die in the facility."*

Health Care

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Not mentioned

- CARES Act incentivized COVID hospitalizations and deaths
- Death "certificates" record actual place of death
- There is no state or federal source for nursing home/LTC resident deaths, regardless of place or cause of death.



CDC WONDER

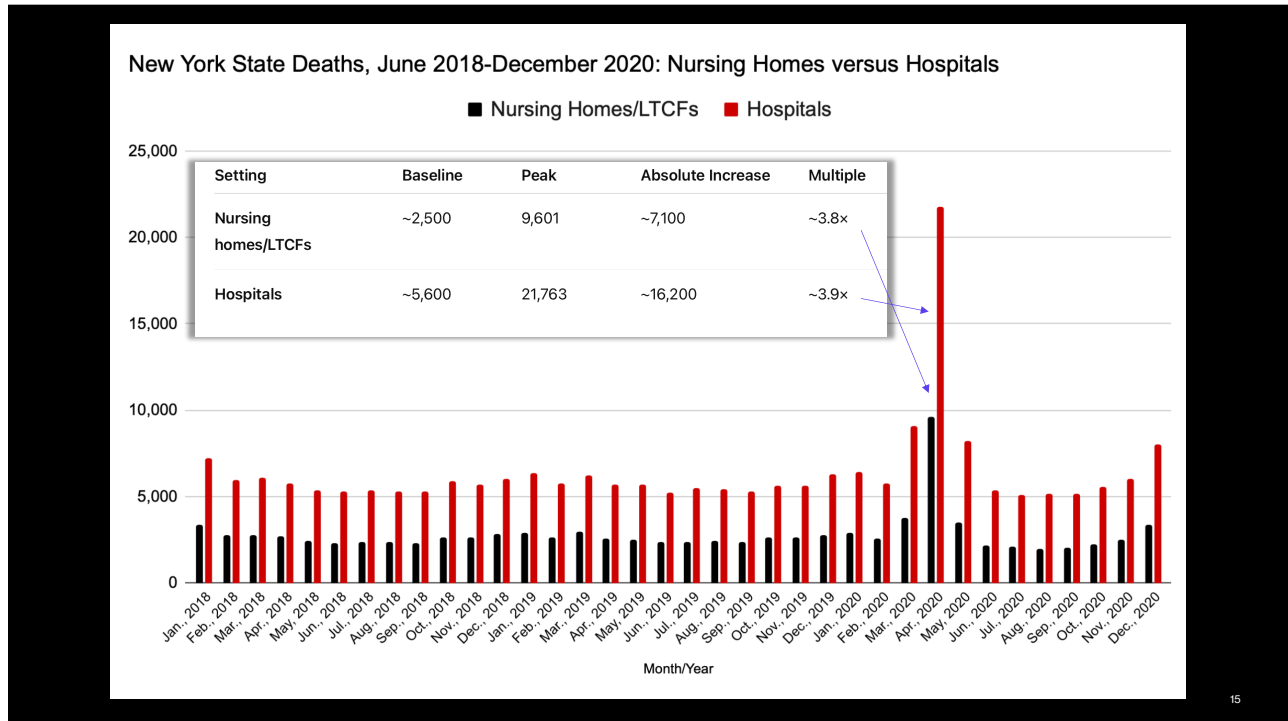
- Federal warehouse for death record data
- Permits weekly, monthly, and yearly queries for place of death at the county level
- (Provisional “COVID” dashboard was launched in April 2020)

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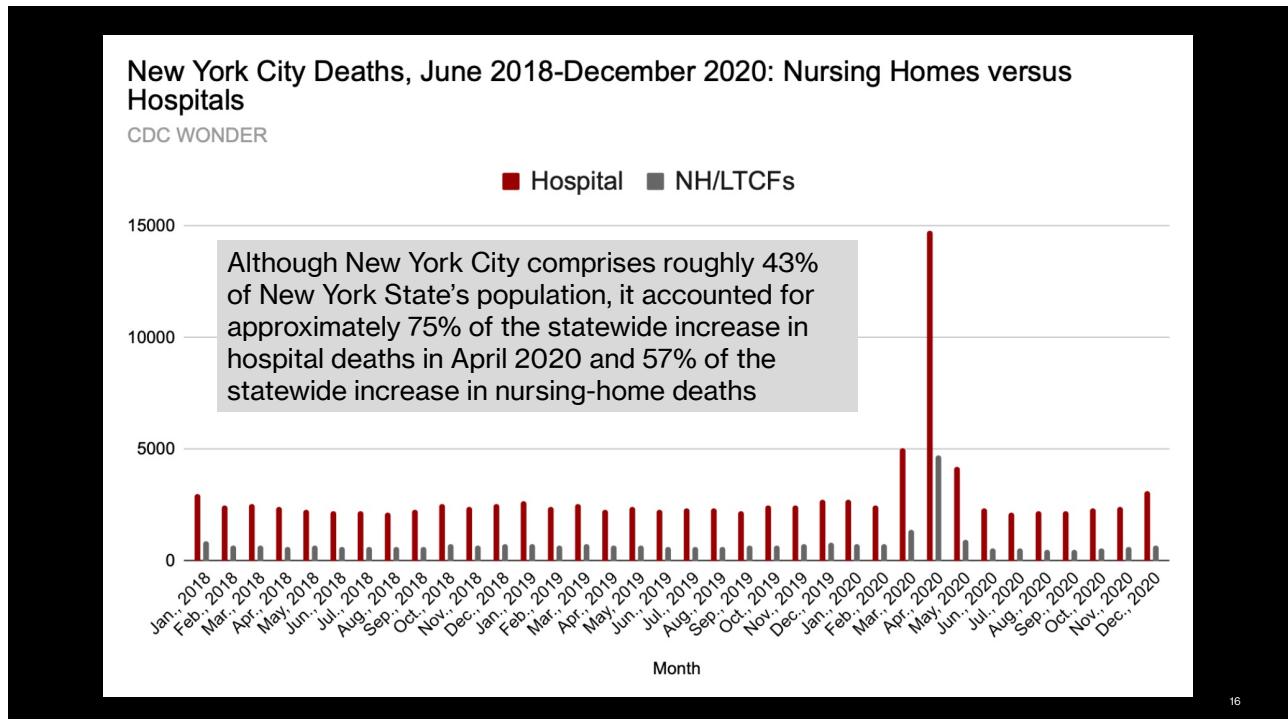
Place of Death (CDC WONDER)

- Medical Facility, inpatient
- Medical Facility, Outpatient/Emergency Department
- Medical Facility, Dead on Arrival
- Decedent’s Home
- Hospice Facility
- Nursing Home/LTC Facility
- Other

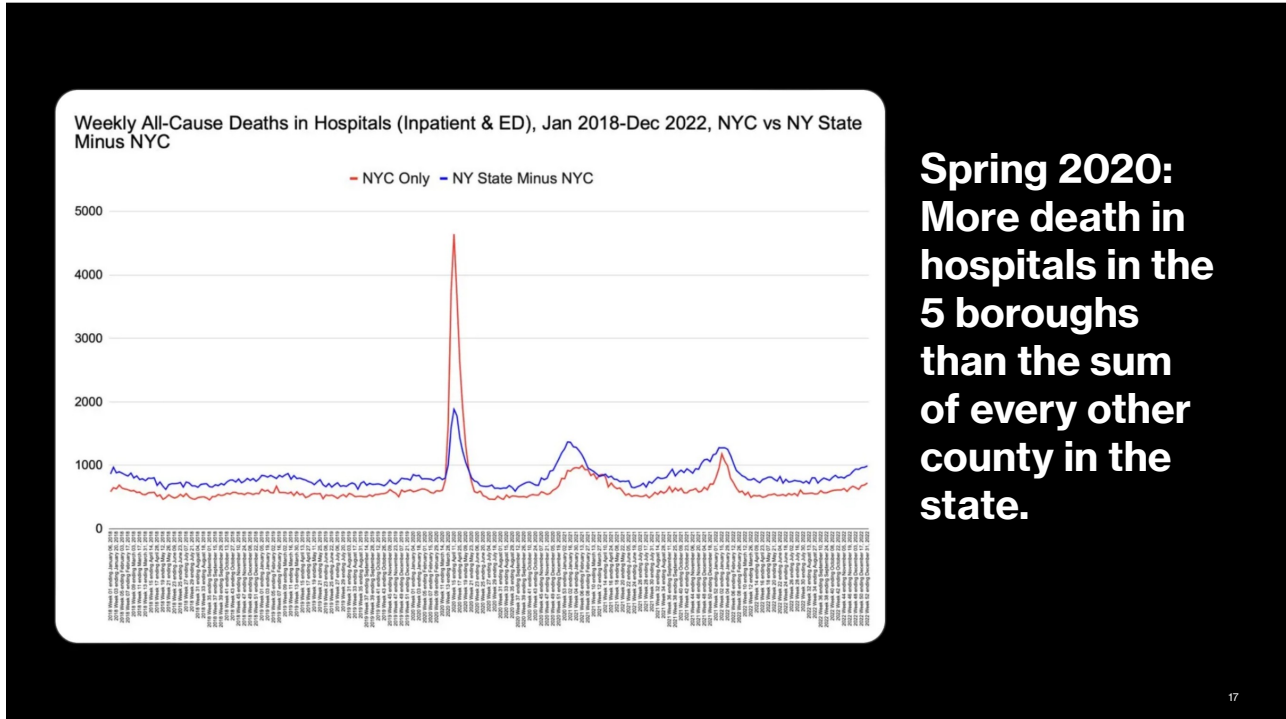
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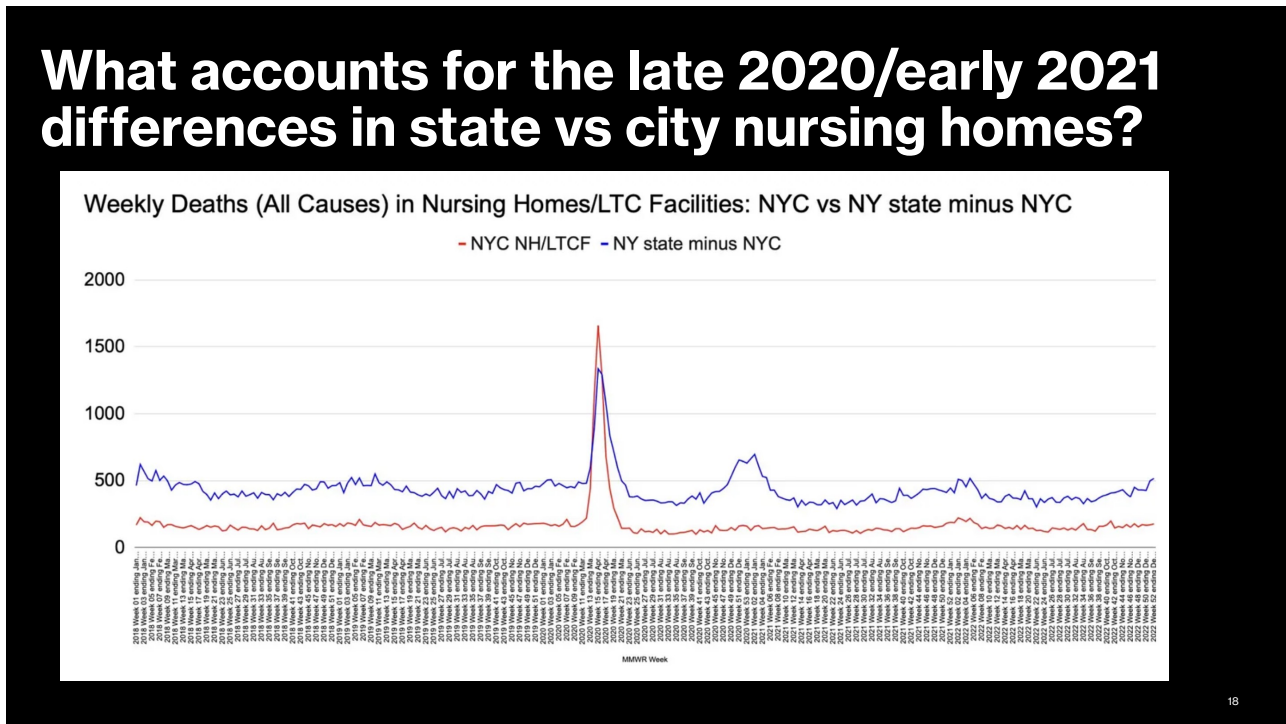
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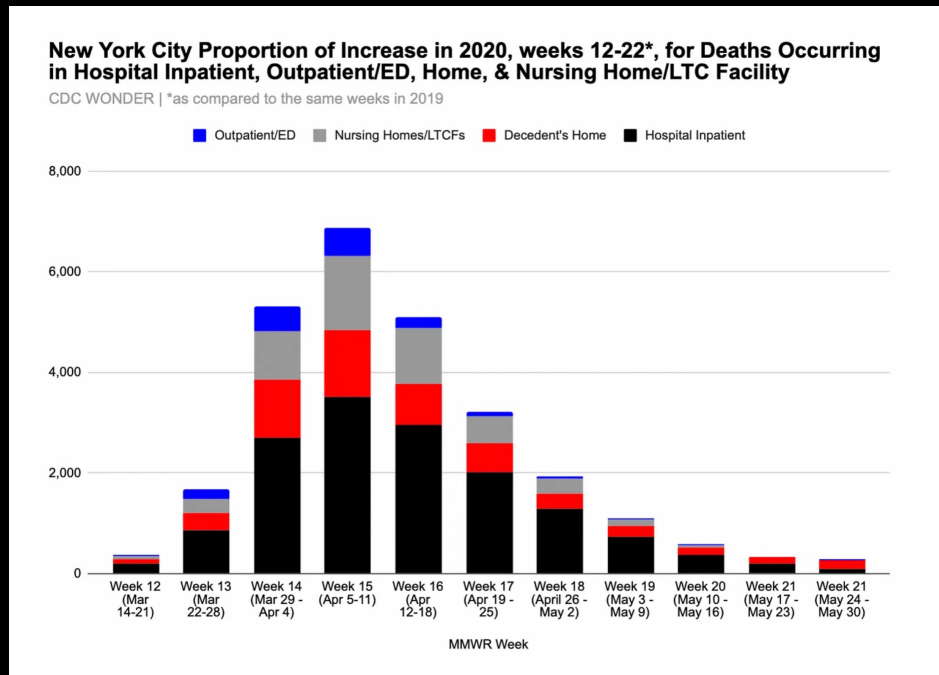


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Most of the increase was in hospitals, not in nursing homes.



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Alarming increases in deaths in hospital, at home, and in nursing homes.

| New York City, Weeks 12-22, 2020 | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Place of Death | 2019 Deaths from All Causes | 2020 Deaths from All Causes | All Cause Increase/Decrease (2019/2020) | Percent Change from 2019 | Percent of Total Increase/Decrease |
| Hospital Inpatient | 4,837 | 19,827 | 14,990 | 310% | 55.5% |
| Outpatient/Emergency Department | 1,026 | 2,697 | 1,671 | 163% | 6.2% |
| Nursing Home/LTC Facility | 1,762 | 6,642 | 4,880 | 277% | 18.1% |
| Hospice Facility | 267 | 231 | -36 | -13% | -0.1% |
| Decedent's Home | 2,906 | 8,215 | 5,309 | 183% | 19.7% |
| Dead on Arrival (to Hospital) | 122 | 139 | 17 | 14% | 0.1% |
| Other | 220 | 403 | 183 | 83% | 0.7% |
| Totals | 11,140 | 38,154 | 27,014 | 242% | 100% |

CDC WONDER


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BBC Trending

China coronavirus: Misinformation spreads online about origin and scale

By BBC Monitoring
And UGC Newsgathering
© 30 January 2020



'Bioweapon' conspiracies

Another baseless claim that has gone viral online suggests the virus was part of China's "**covert biological weapons programme**" and may have leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Many accounts pushing the theory cite **two widely-shared Washington Times articles** both of which quote a former Israeli military intelligence officer for the claim.

However, no evidence is provided for the claim in the two articles, and the Israeli source is quoted as saying that "so far there isn't evidence or indication" to suggest there was a leak.

The two articles have so far been posted to hundreds of different social accounts to a potential audience of millions.

The Daily Star published a similar piece last week, claiming the virus might have "started in a secret lab". However, **it has since amended the piece** to add there is no evidence for the claim.

BBC News approached the Washington Times for comment.

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Most deaths listing COVID-19 as underlying cause were in hospitals.

| New York City, Weeks 12-22, 2020 | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|-------------------------|
| Place of Death | 2019 Deaths from All Causes | 2020 Deaths from All Causes | All Cause Increase/Decrease (2019/2020) | 2020, Deaths Listing Covid as Underlying Cause | % of total Covid Deaths |
| Hospital Inpatient | 4,837 | 19,827 | 14,990 | 14,704 | 76.1% |
| Outpatient/Emergency Department | 1,026 | 2,697 | 1,671 | 1,271 | 6.6% |
| Nursing Home/LTC Facility | 1,762 | 6,642 | 4,880 | 1,797 | 9.3% |
| Hospice Facility | 267 | 231 | -36 | 57 | 0.3% |
| Decedent's Home | 2,906 | 8,215 | 5,309 | 1,426 | 7.4% |
| Dead on Arrival (to Hospital) | 122 | 139 | 17 | 25 | 0.1% |
| Other | 220 | 403 | 183 | 43 | 0.2% |
| Totals | 11,140 | 38,154 | 27014 | 19,323 | 100.0% |

CDC WONDER

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New York City Resident Deaths by Place of Death, Weeks 12-22

| Place of Death | 2019 | 2020 | Increase | % Increase | % of Total |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| Hospital Inpatient | 4,837 | 19,827 | 14,990 | 310% | 56% |
| Outpatient/ED | 980 | 2,620 | 1,640 | 167% | 6% |
| Decedent's Home | 2,873 | 8,130 | 5,257 | 183% | 20% |
| NH/LTCF | 1,762 | 6,642 | 4,880 | 277% | 18% |
| Other | 220 | 403 | 183 | 83% | 1% |
| Hospice Facility | 267 | 231 | -36 | -13% | 0% |
| TOTALS | 10,939 | 37,853 | 26,914 | 246% | 100% |

Source: CDC WONDER | Dead on Arrival not shown. (Numbers are very low.)

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HEALTH DATA NY.GOV | HEALTH DATA NY | DATA NY.GOV | DEVELOPERS | HELP | ABOUT | Sign In

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New York State Statewide COVID-19 Nursing Home and Adult Care Facility Fatalities Health

This dataset includes the number of nursing home, or adult care facility-reported fatalities for residents with lab-confirmed COVID-19 disease that occurred at the facility, lab-confirmed COVID-19 disease that occurred outside of the facility, and COVID-19 presumed disease that occurred at the facility.

Last Updated: January 21, 2026
Data Provided By: New York State Department of Health

About this Dataset

Daily COVID-19 survey through the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Health Electronic Response Data System (HERDS).

Nursing homes and Adult Care Facilities required to complete daily. Began reporting in April 2020 for fatalities that occurred on or after March 1, 2020.

Prior fatalities are reflected in the earliest reporting week ending 4/21/2020 in the dataset.

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What about non-COVID deaths? Hospital versus Personal Home versus Hospice Facility?

Orange County nursing home deaths

| Period | Confirmed in facility | Presumed in facility | In facility (total) | Confirmed out of facility |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| April 2020 | 69 | 22 | 91 | 46 |
| May 2020 | 31 | 2 | 33 | 25 |
| Week ending June 2, 2020 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 4 |
| TOTAL (periods above) | 102 | 24 | 126 | 75 |

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What about non-COVID deaths? Hospital versus Personal Home versus Hospice Facility?

NYC nursing home deaths (Bronx, Kings, Queens, New York, Richmond)

| Period | Confirmed in facility | Presumed in facility | In facility (total) | Confirmed out of facility |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| April 2020 | 941 | 1,739 | 2,680 | 1,590 |
| May 2020 | 372 | 195 | 567 | 488 |
| Week ending June 2, 2020 | 28 | 9 | 37 | 33 |
| TOTAL (all periods above) | 1,341 | 1,943 | 3,284 | 2,111 |

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What about non-COVID deaths?

Hospital versus Personal Home versus Hospice Facility?

New York State nursing home deaths outside NYC

| Period | Confirmed in facility | Presumed in facility | In facility (total) | Confirmed out of facility |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| April 2020 | 1,089 | 755 | 1,844 | 1,071 |
| May 2020 | 906 | 126 | 1,032 | 590 |
| Week ending June 2, 2020 | 96 | 6 | 102 | 80 |
| TOTAL (all periods above) | 2,091 | 887 | 2,978 | 1,741 |

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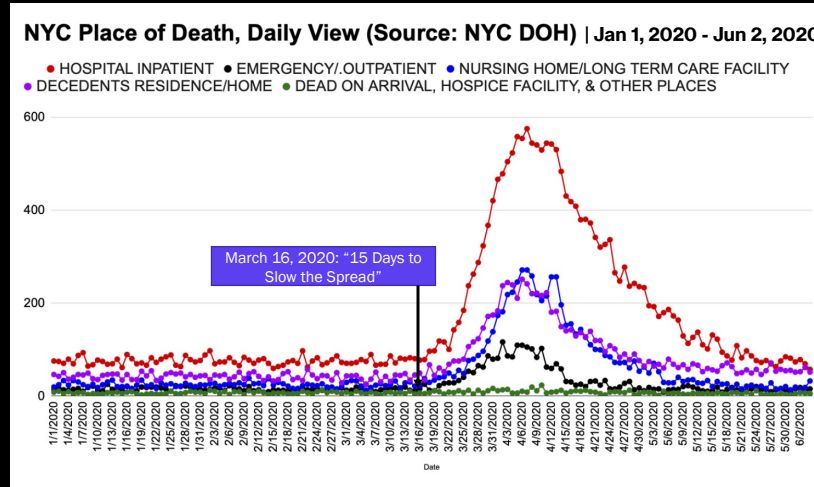
**Problems with
“discharging to
nursing homes
created
spread”:**

**Timing
Data gap
Testing realities**



28

Daily view: near-synchronous rise in deaths by place/setting.



NYC all-cause mortality by place of death. Data obtained via FOIL. Requested from NYC DOHMH on 6/15/23 by Jessica Hockett. Records received on 7/26/23 | Values under 5 were censored and replaced with 3 in ED/Outpatient only

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Transfer data divorced from time, place, or a sense of what's normal

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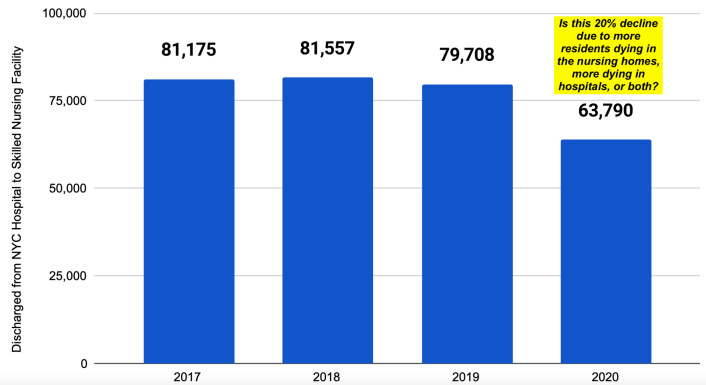
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Discharges from Hospitals to Skilled Nursing Facilities Went DOWN in 2020

Number of NYC Hospital Inpatients Discharged to Skilled Nursing Facilities

Time-series data (monthly, weekly, daily) not available to public

[New York] Statewide Planning and Research Cooperative System (SPARCS) | Jessica Hockett, PhD



- Decrease is the rough equivalent of the hospital inpatient excess
- Challenges the claim that sending COVID+ patients into nursing homes spread a deadly coronavirus
- Deaths that occurred in nursing homes can be explained by other sudden changes to standard of care

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About the tests...



- PCR testing is highly sensitive and may detect non-infectious viral material
- New York deployed a state-specific PCR test with unusually high reported positivity in NYC (often 60–70%)
- PCR positivity can persist after active infection, particularly among older adults
- Positive tests triggered care protocols (e.g., isolation) that altered standard practice and carried known risks

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March 23, 2020 Executive Order 202.10 requires closer scrutiny



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EO 202.10

- Centralized hospital control under the Health Commissioner
 - Suspended normal care, licensing, oversight, and documentation rules
 - “Forced” rapid capacity expansion (50% - not achieved and inflated with field hospitals)
 - Allowed emergency staffing with minimal qualification
 - Permitted ambulances to operate outside their normal territories
 - Shielded providers and institutions from liability
 - Reduced transparency through recordkeeping waivers
 - Allowed redesignation of hospice beds as inpatient beds
 - Enabled state (and federal?) takeover of hospitals
- No third party witnesses**

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What is needed

- Complete hospital datasets with sufficient historical baselines
- County-level time-series data showing dates and places of death for nursing home and long-term care residents, regardless of cause
- Ambulance transfer and hospital discharge data documenting resident movement into and out of hospitals
- Independent substantiation of the New York City death curve and total mortality estimates
- Independent review or audit of hospital patient records

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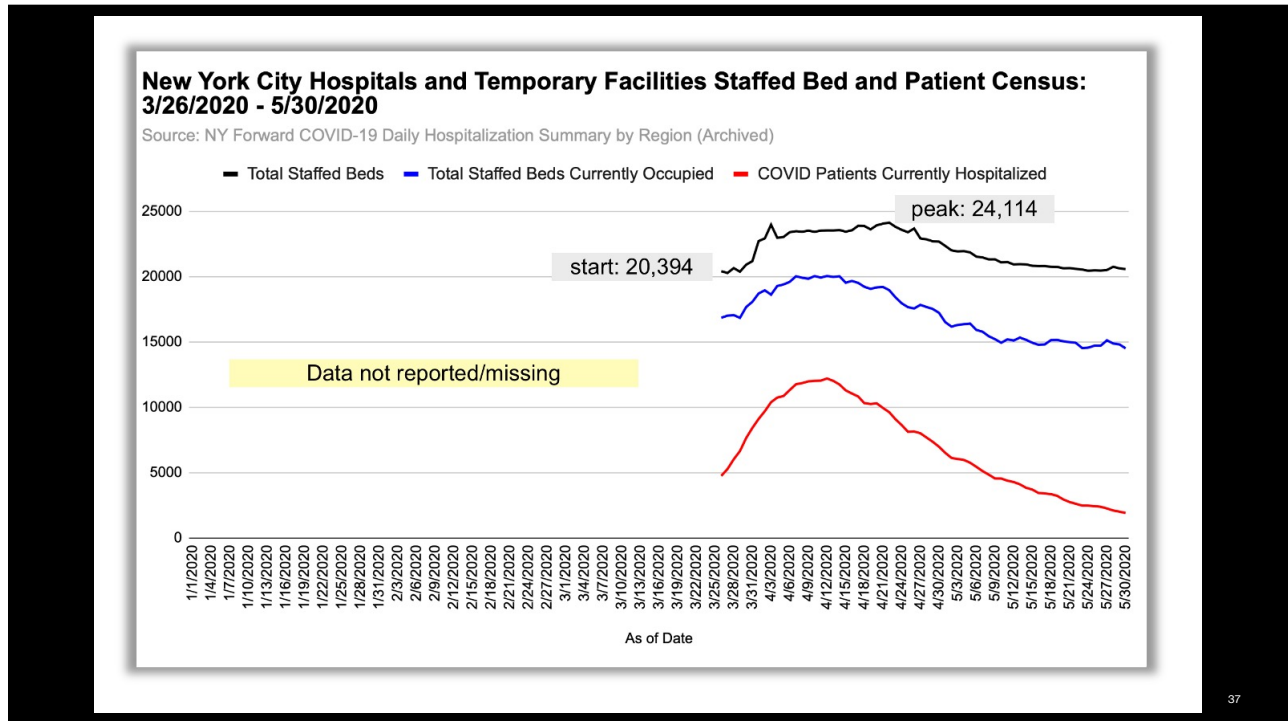
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Summary

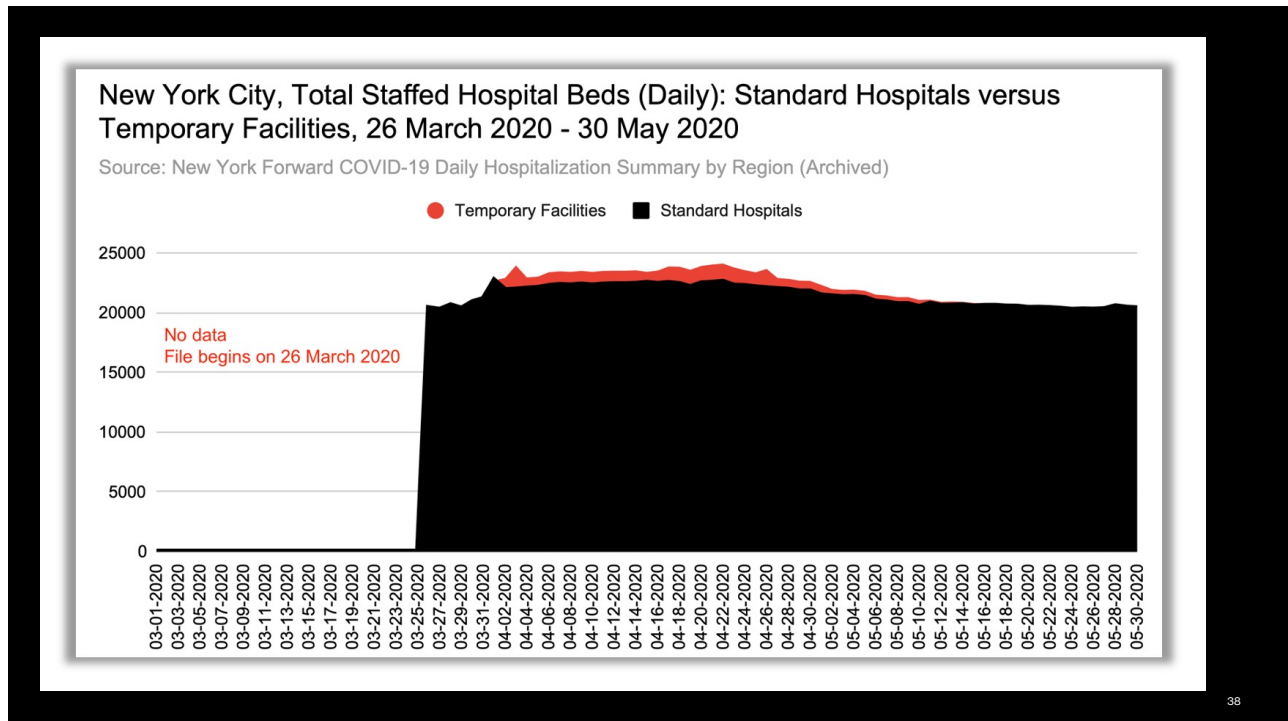
- New York City's spring 2020 mortality figures were central to state, national, and international policy decisions
- Those figures continue to be cited as evidence of an unprecedented public-health emergency
- Key records needed to independently verify the timing, magnitude, and location of deaths have not been publicly released
- Establishing an accurate and verifiable historical record is essential for accountability and public trust

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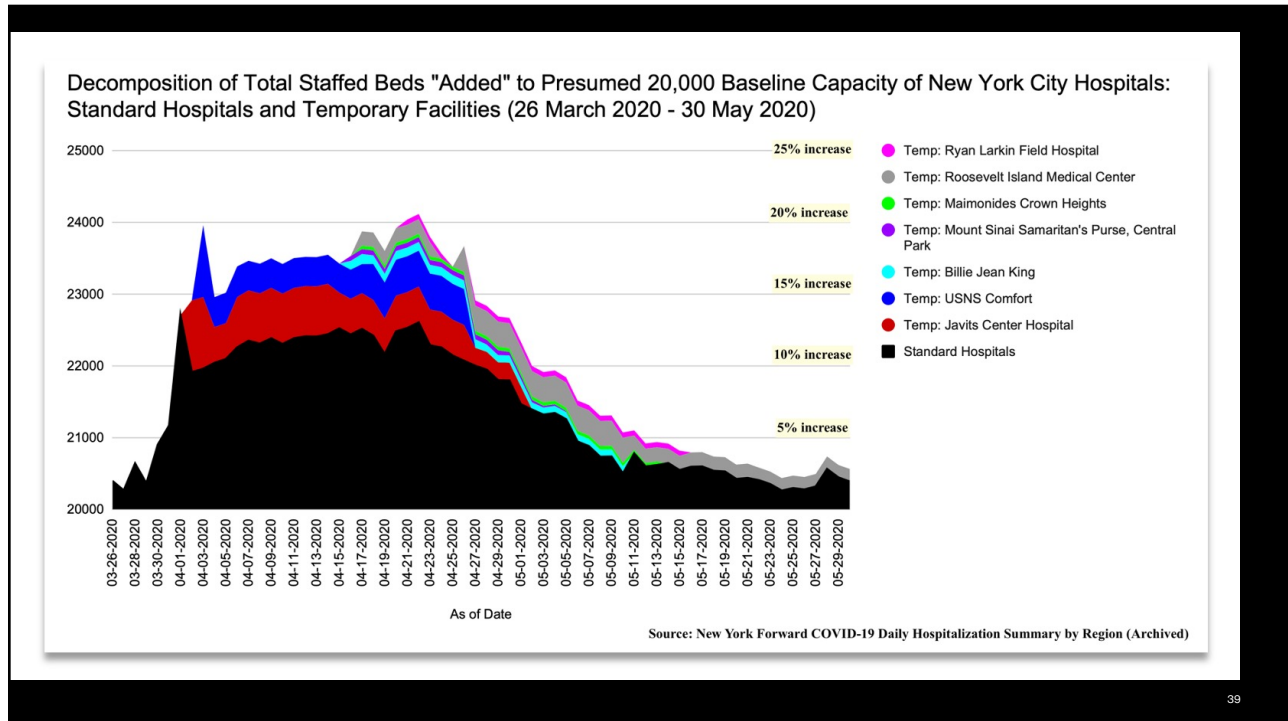
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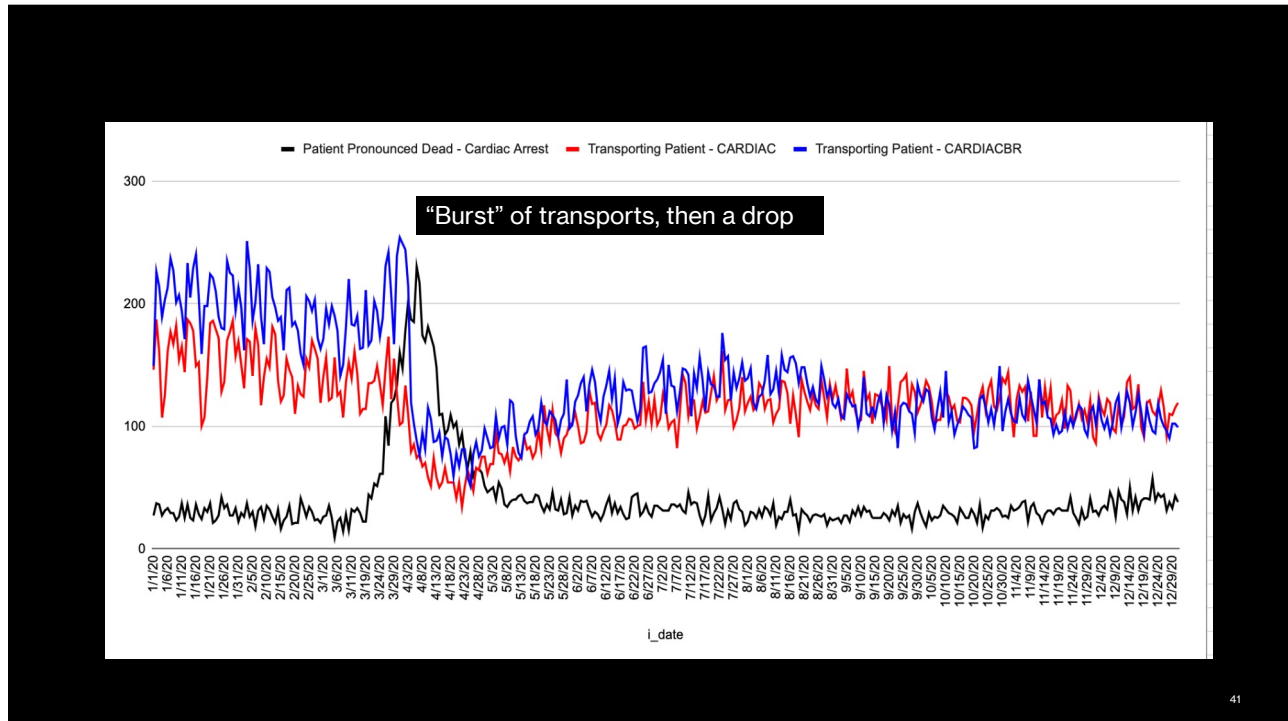


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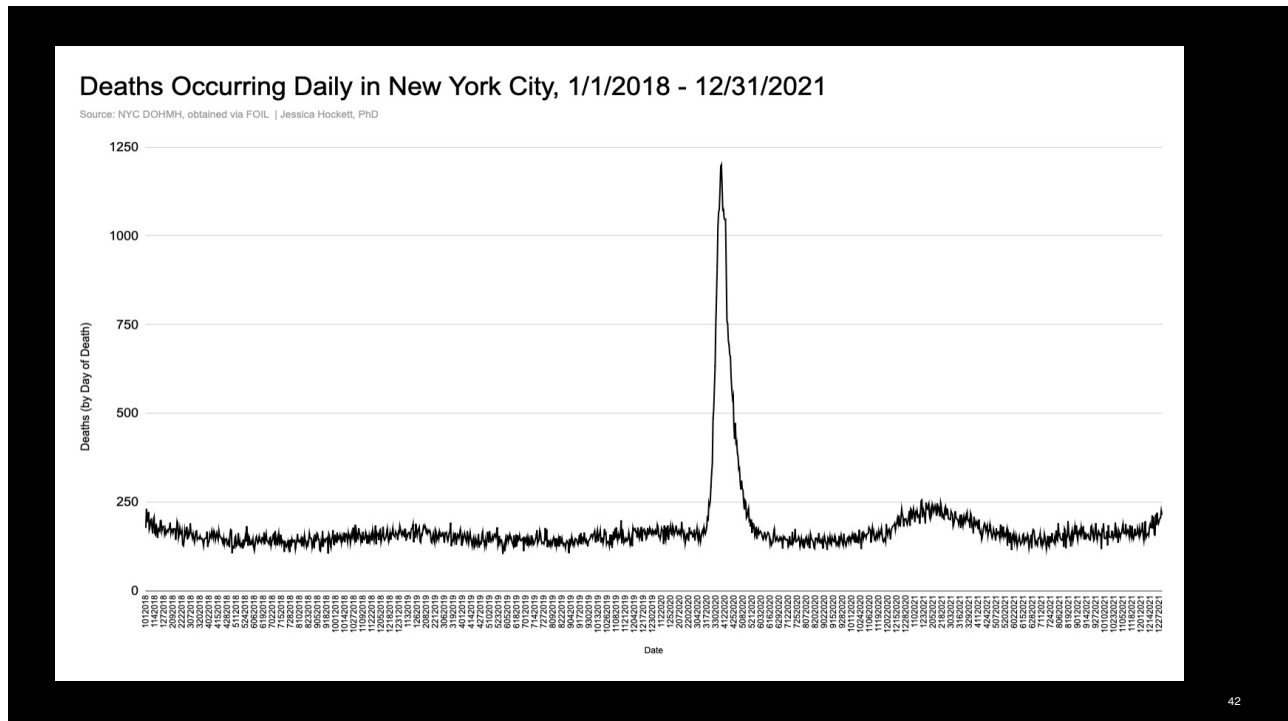
The equivalent of every hospital inpatient died in the timeframe (yet hospitals weren't busy and field hospitals were barely used).

| Deaths at New York City Medical Facilities, Total for Weeks 12-22, 2019 vs. 2020 | | | | |
|--|--------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Borough of Occurance | 2019 Deaths | 2020 Deaths | Raw increase | % increase |
| Medical Facility: Inpatient | 5,085 | 19,275 | 14,190 | 279% |
| Medical Facility: Outpatient/ED | 1,006 | 2,648 | 1,642 | 163% |
| Medical Facility: Dead on Arrival | 116 | 129 | 13 | 11% |
| Total | 6,207 | 22,052 | 15,845 | 255% |
| CDC WONDER: Borough of Occurance | | | | |
| <i>Inpatient, Outpatient/ED, Dead on Arrival</i> | | | | |

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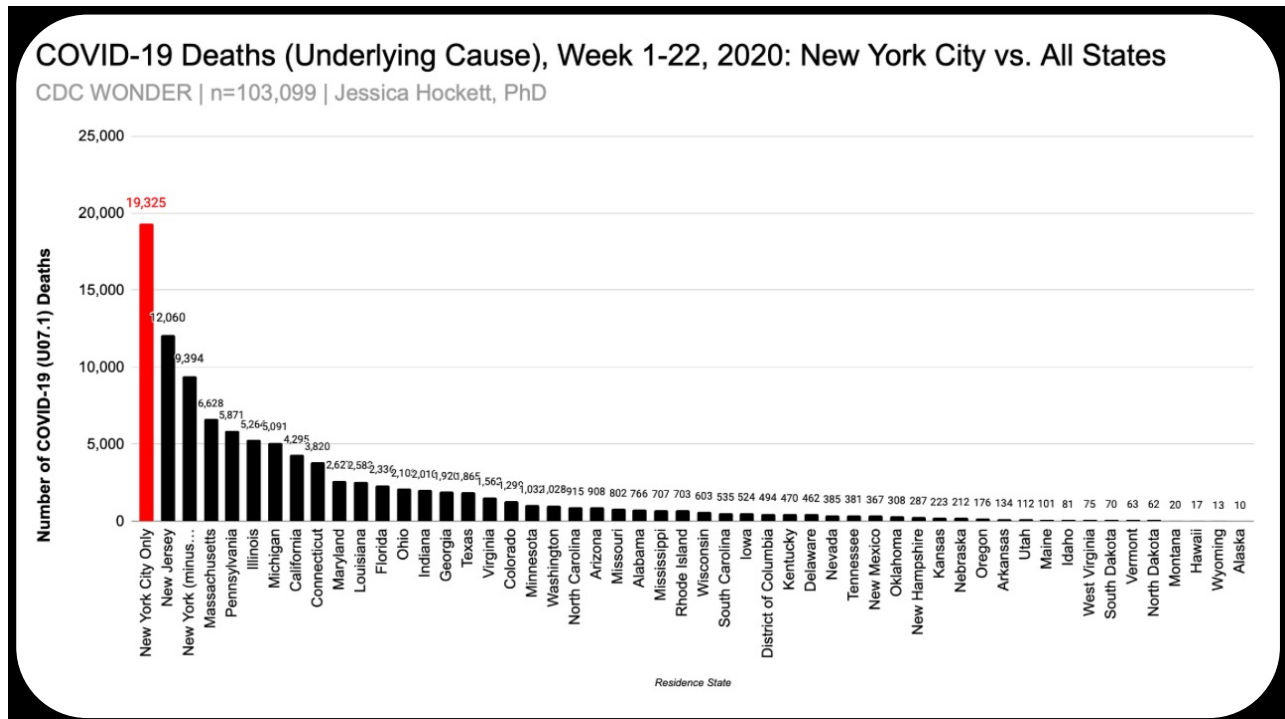
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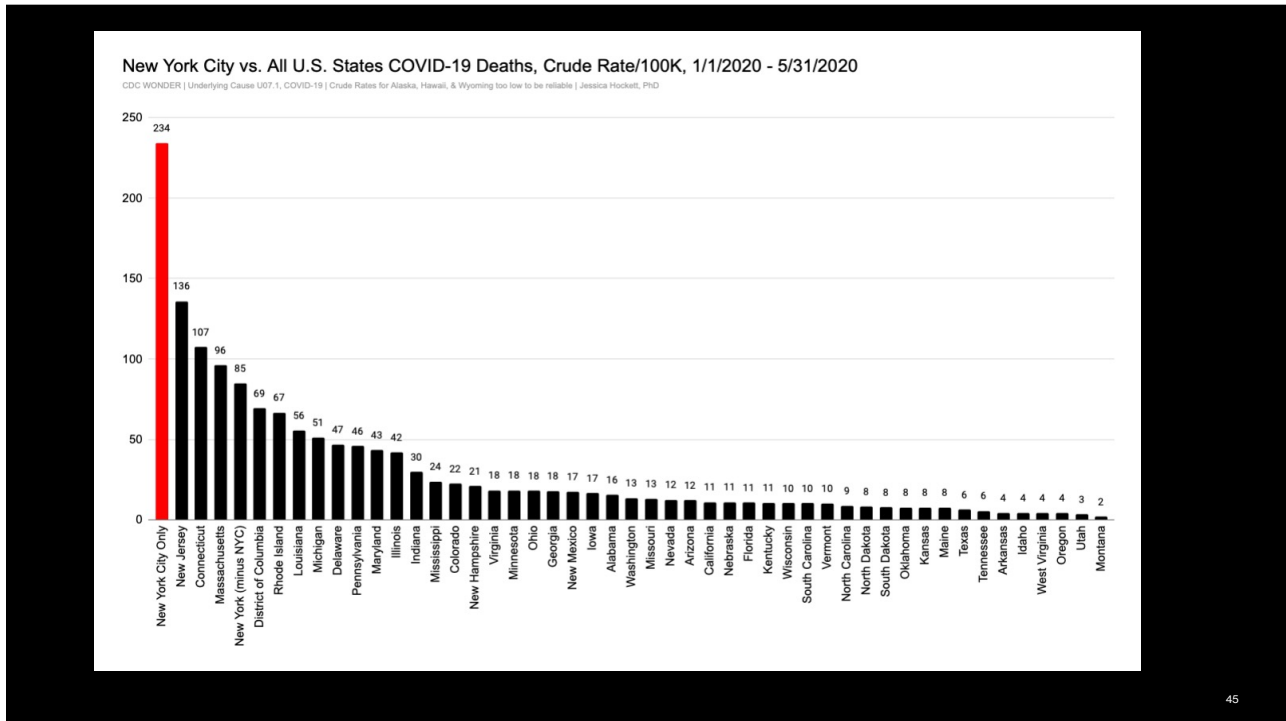
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| New York City, pop. 8.8 million | | | | New York City, pop. 8.8 million | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| MMWR Week | 2019 All-Cause Deaths (20-69) | 2020 All-Cause Deaths (20-69) | % Increase | MMWR Week | 2019 All-Cause Deaths (70+) | 2020 All-Cause Deaths (70+) | % Increase |
| Week 12 | 323 | 445 | 38% | Week 12 | 676 | 942 | 39% |
| Week 13 | 341 | 961 | 182% | Week 13 | 742 | 1,831 | 147% |
| Week 14 | 354 | 2,192 | 519% | Week 14 | 665 | 4,186 | 529% |
| Week 15 | 380 | 2,541 | 569% | Week 15 | 689 | 5,474 | 694% |
| Week 16 | 321 | 1,896 | 491% | Week 16 | 629 | 4,193 | 567% |
| Week 17 | 321 | 1,325 | 313% | Week 17 | 609 | 2,838 | 366% |
| Week 18 | 336 | 996 | 196% | Week 18 | 645 | 1,939 | 201% |
| Week 19 | 336 | 813 | 142% | Week 19 | 687 | 1,320 | 92% |
| Week 20 | 344 | 588 | 71% | Week 20 | 683 | 1,043 | 53% |
| Week 21 | 330 | 540 | 64% | Week 21 | 701 | 806 | 15% |
| Week 22 | 311 | 447 | 44% | Week 22 | 567 | 718 | 27% |
| TOTALS | 3,697 | 12,744 | 245% | TOTALS | 7,293 | 25,290 | 247% |
| Source: CDC WONDER | | | | Source: CDC WONDER | | | |

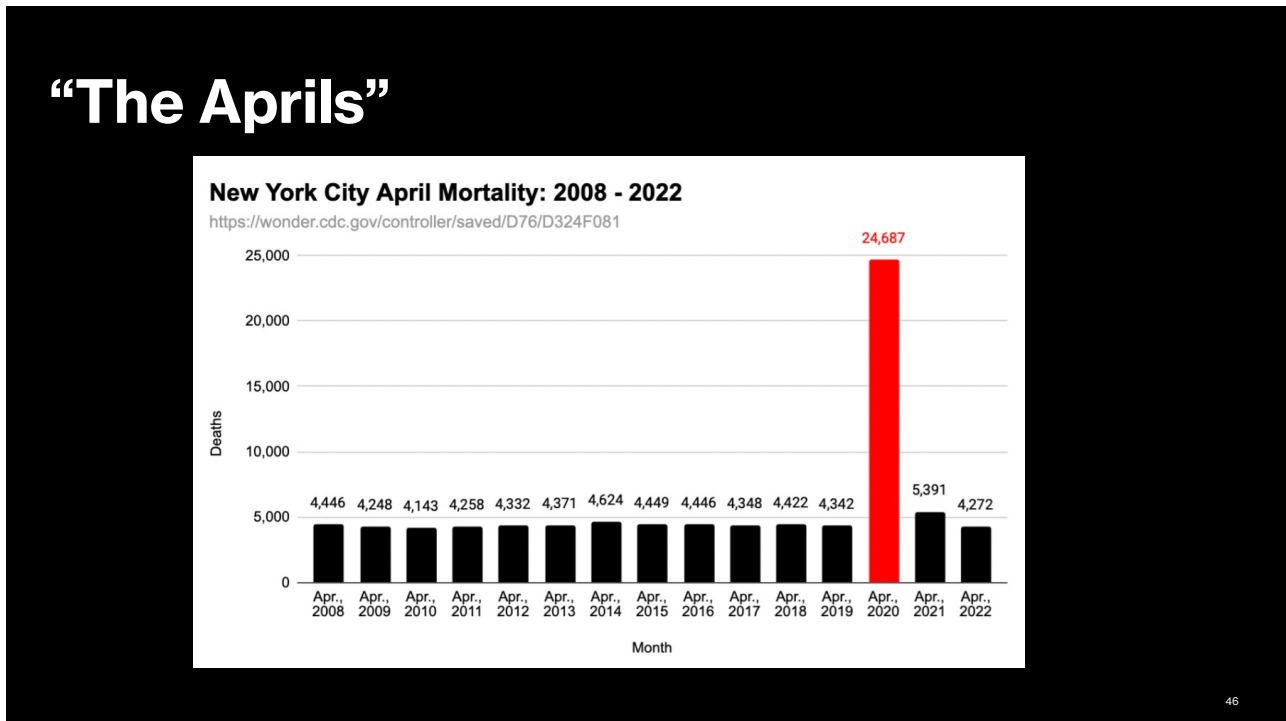
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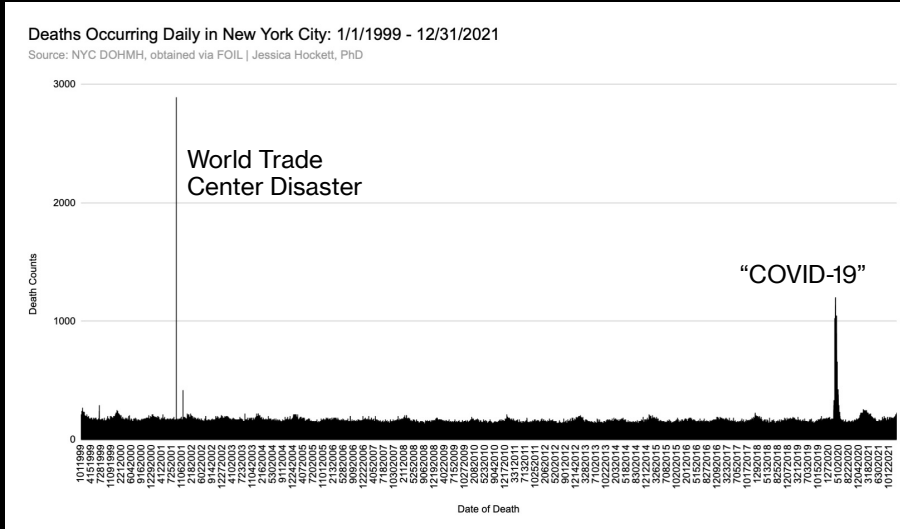


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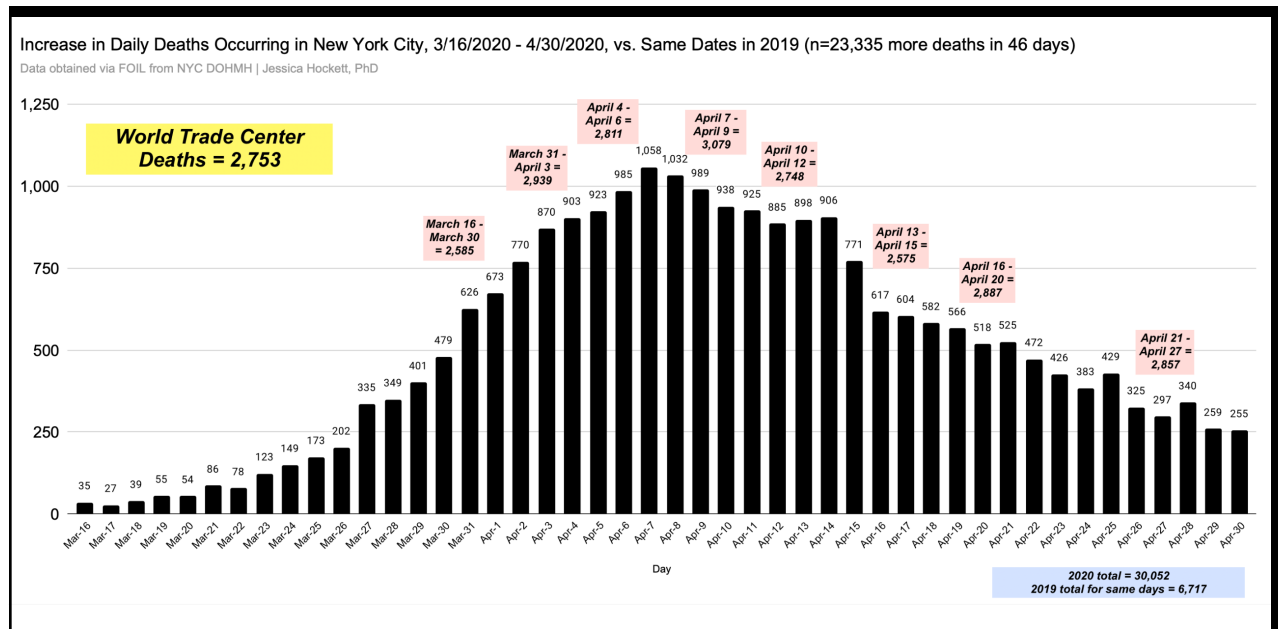
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New York vs. Itself: 1999-2021



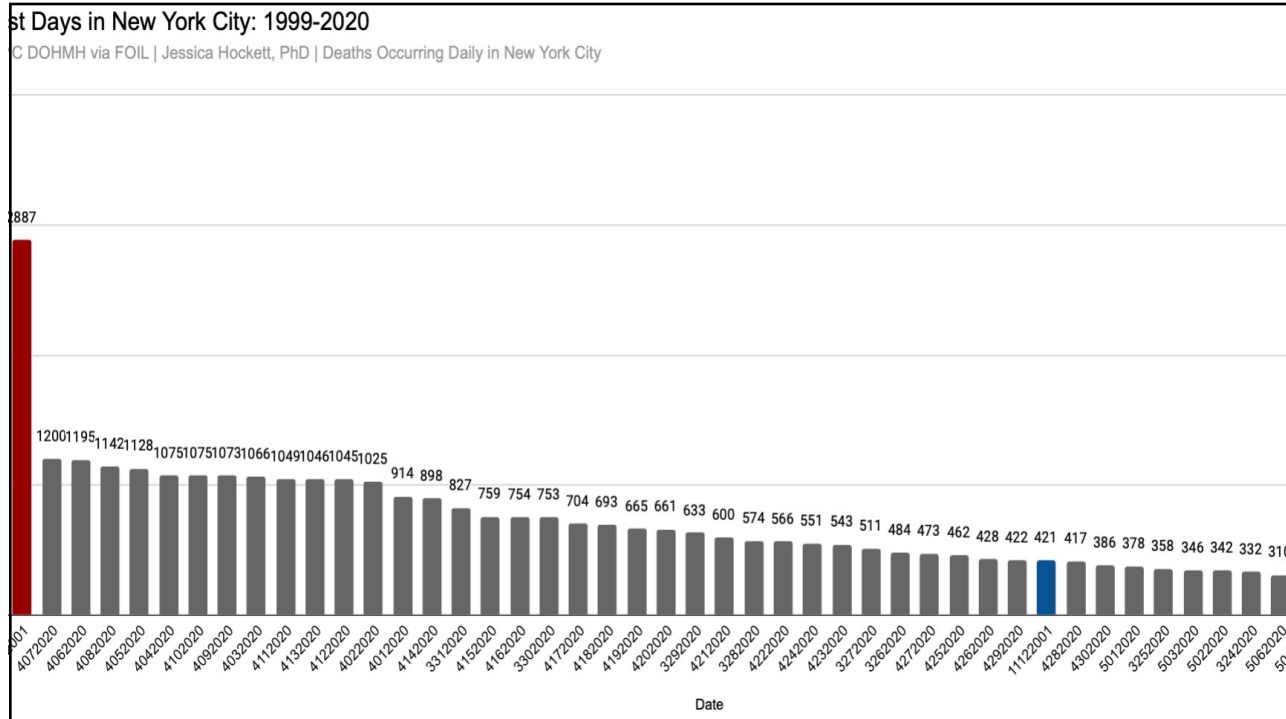
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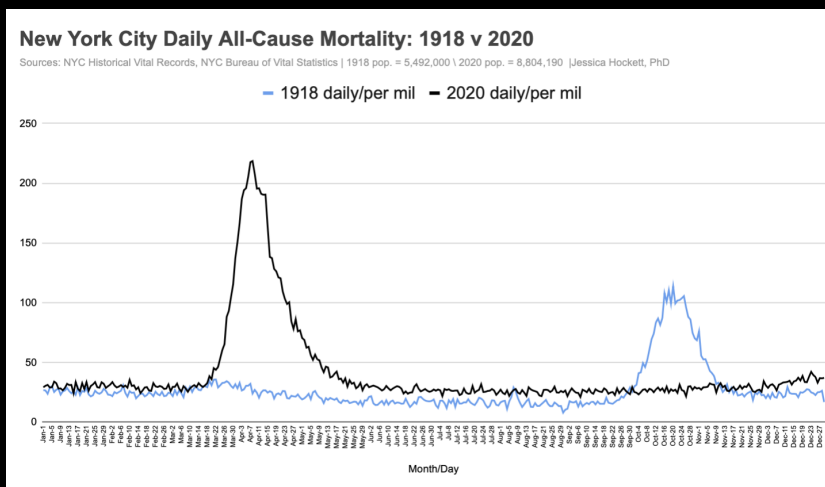
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2020 New York vs. 1918 New York



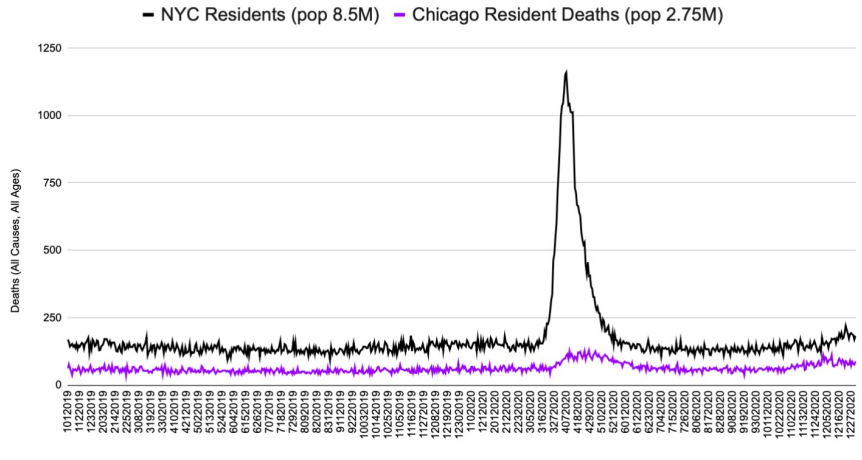
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New York City vs. Chicago

Daily Deaths Among Residents, NYC vs. Chicago, 2019-2020

Data obtained from NYC DOHMH & Illinois DPH, via public records requests | Jessica Hockett, PhD

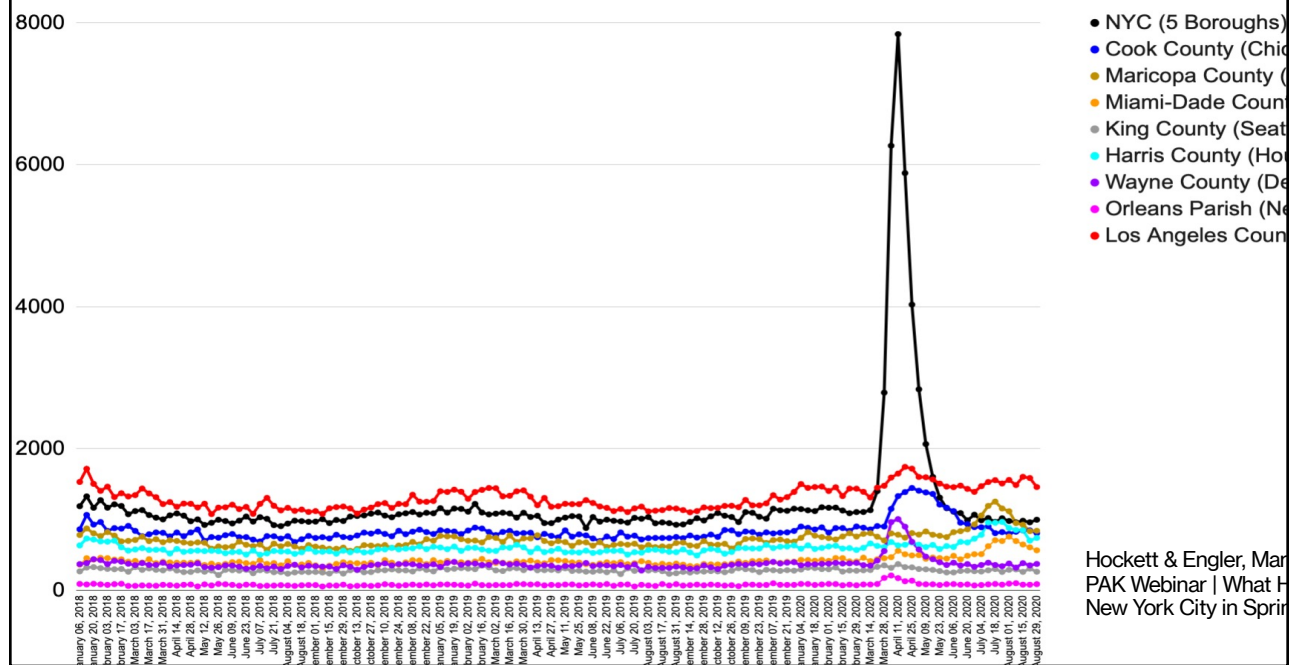


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Weekly Deaths, All Causes, Jan 2016 - August 2020

CDC WONDER



Hockett & Engler, Mar
PAK Webinar | What H
New York City in Sprin

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Many people have forgotten how easy it was to make Americans believe an emergency involving deadly respiratory illness was besieging New York. Numbers and images from

Why Does the New York Event Matter?

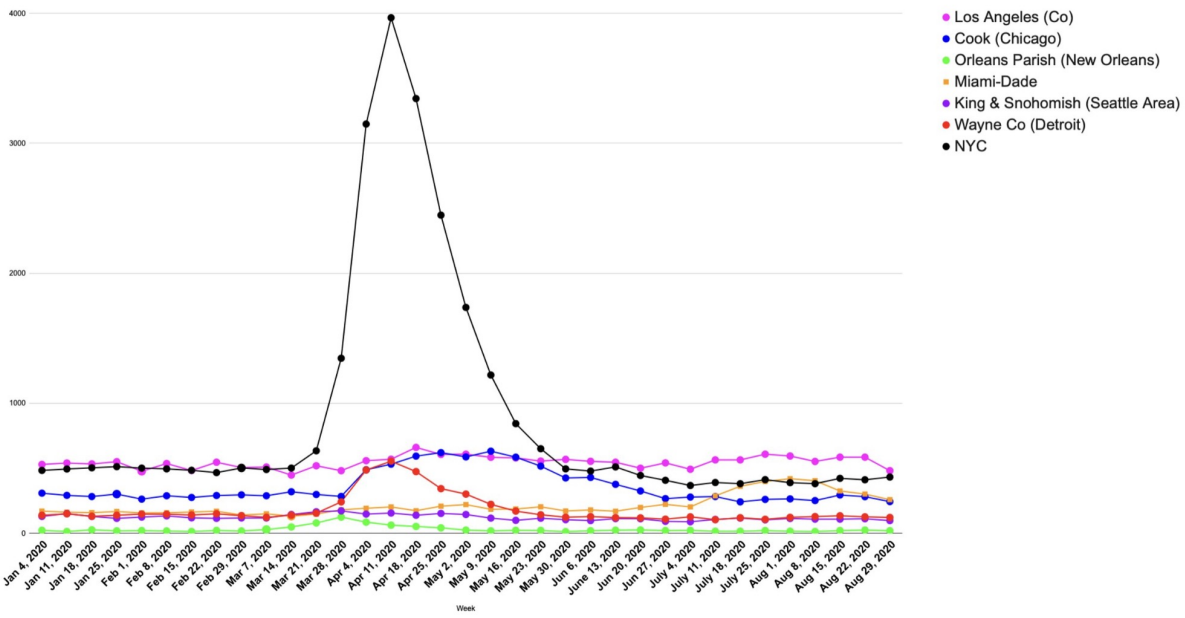
- Without the New York event, there would have been no selling Americans - or the rest of the world - on the WHO Pandemic Declaration or the story of a Novel Spreading Virus in Need of New Treatments and a Dedicated Shot.
- The U.S. government had (and still has) every incentive to lie about not only the causes of NYC deaths in March, April and May 2020, but also the timing, magnitude, and places of those deaths.
- If the New York City 2020 daily death curve is manipulated or fraudulent in any way, it presents a serious challenge to the WHO pandemic declaration, the U.S. government's endorsement thereof, and everything that followed.
- We need proof that America's largest city experienced such extreme and sudden loss of life.

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Weekly Hospital Inpatient Mortality (All Causes): Select U.S. Cities: Jan - Sept 2020

CDC WONDER | Jessica Hockett, PhD



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