

## **Feb through Apr**

I have always been somewhat of an amateur journalist I guess. One of the biggest passions I have in my life to stay up to date on current world events in a big picture was that I can pick apart and understand. I also am a person who knows a little about a lot as opposed to a lot about a little. I enjoy a wide range of topics and having the internet as a tool to digest and understand the world around me has been one of the more valuable tools ever created for people like me. The internet however has changed much too rapidly over the last two decades for people to really understand what it means to digest and inform themselves with facts. Within the last decade in particular, I started to see corners of the internet develop into what is referred to as an echo chamber, a place where the same rhetoric is repeated through users which shoot down any opposition to a controversial point of view, to a point of enforcement. Slowly this crept into the social aspects of the internet, and has now dominated all aspects of life, especially politics (particularly the West), to where finding truth on any given topic is a matter of opinion. Not difficult for someone who has a passion for sorting through the bullshit and piecing things together like I do. I have been wrong before, and take things with a grain of salt, so with this preface I want to give a general idea that I understand how disinformation affects people's opinions on the severity, cause and enforcement on Covid-19.

Wherever this came from, "it" (current pandemic) started in Wuhan China. Anybody who understands anything about the outside world knows the CCP has gone to great lengths to silence and close the fist of their will around their country. Disregarding politics, one must understand that there were serious signs of something happening months before anything got out of hand. The first people I usually show shocking videos or content of world events too are my close friends, who I would deem rather neutral and intelligent. I came across several videos on forums

and websites depicting a "lock down" nature on city citizens, days after the height of the Hong Kong protests. I linked the two in my brain thinking it might be a CCP play or fake news, so I did a little digging. Several videos depicting armed, HAZMAT trained medical/military personnel, taking people off the streets, barring doors shut, and removing dead bodies in the street. It did not take long for the Covid-19 virus to take responsibility and upon showing my close friends and siblings, it disturbed them, but telling them about what is happening in response to the virus was met with criticism and rebuke. Alright cool. Been there before. I never take pride in being the guy to act like he said it first, but the flip over the last month is morbidly comical to me. My initial opinion was also based on understanding the lock down to which the CCP keeps on their government controlled networks. Usually when shock or new videos come out of China, you have to translate direct source material from various Chinese dialects, or typed messages. Some of these videos can easily be taken out of context, however the information from various parts of the web piled up to depict a much, much darker picture.

All of this is well before Seattle had its first case, which resides in the state I do. I started to see the effects of this virus in these videos and translations. News was slowly hitting the mainstream media, and people were becoming aware of the virus as a problem, but "over there". The amount of misinformation from my common people truly has changed how I see people now. I started wearing a mask Feb 28th in public. It was met with every kind of question and opinion you can imagine. The comparisons with the flu, heart disease, guns, war, "it's not that dangerous, the flu kills more people" etc. As the Seattle cases, primarily held in the nursing home, were slowly making national news, I noticed even more people feeling the need to express their ignorance and will to think it's still a hoax, or a fake. Since Feb 28th I have pretty much stayed inside my apartment. I quit my job proactively because I really did believe this was going

to get worse. Since I quit, I cannot collect unemployment. I have survived on savings but the stimulus check is going to save my ass. This might be the last paycheck my landlord gets if things get worse. I stocked up on food and rarely go out if not only for nicotine. I also remember all the comments on masks not working in early Feb. I have been wearing a full face 7600 respirator w/p100 filters when I go out in public. The ignorance that Americans met this with reminds me so much of the early ignorance of people during the beginning of the social age on the internet. Still, in my community, while not hit hard, mom-and-pop shops stay open, people still meet it with ignorance. As of when I type this, New York has 3600 dead. This is not going away anytime soon, and I think right now is the start of when all people realize this is serious.