

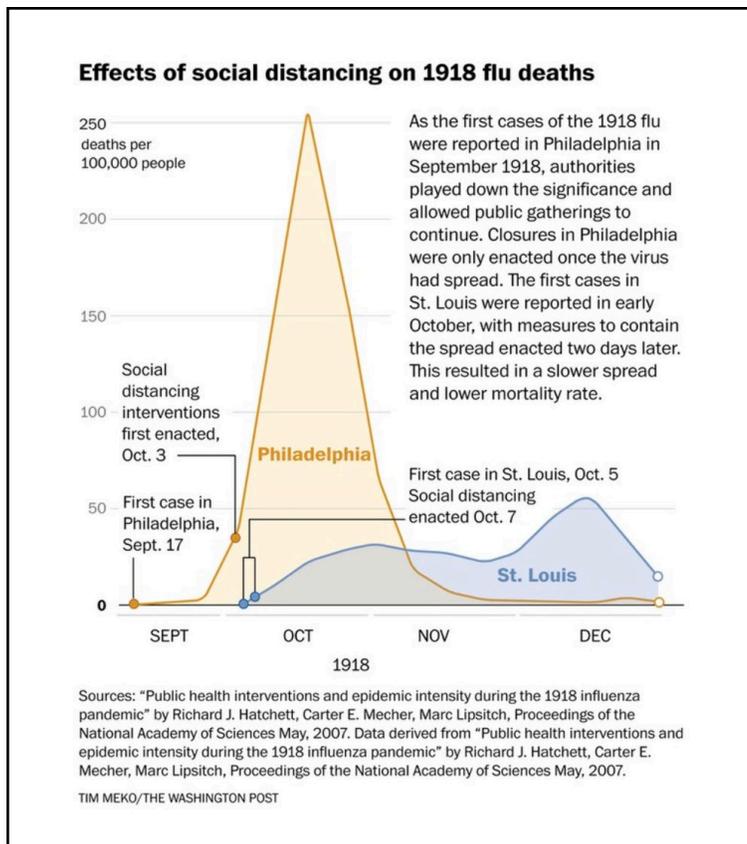
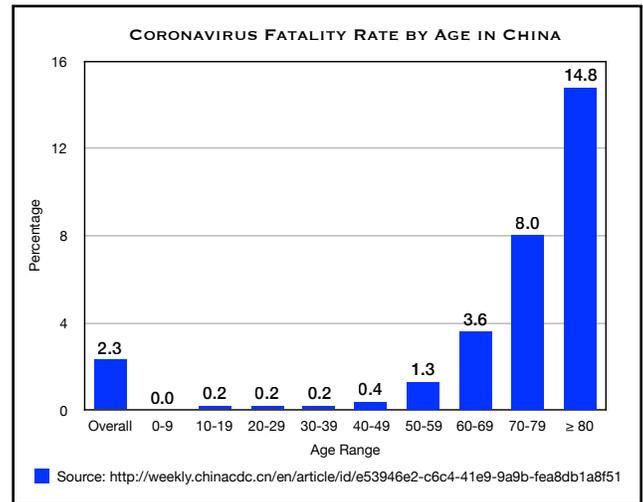
# LESSON FROM THE 1918 SPANISH FLU PANDEMIC

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First, I want to take a look at history, specifically the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic. One difference between the Spanish flu and the current COVID-19 outbreak is the age range that is susceptible. The Spanish flu affected all ages. COVID-19 affects almost exclusively the elderly with comorbid conditions like respiratory disease. The graph shows the age distribution for fatalities due to COVID-19. This is from the CDC China, but the age distribution is similar to what has been seen in the United States.

At the time of the Spanish flu pandemic, the travel between cities was not as extensive as it is today. Researchers were able to compare the difference between different cities. Philadelphia and St. Louis are often used as comparison cities during the Spanish flu pandemic. This graph shows the difference in the death rate between the two cities and when they started social distancing and closing businesses.

That was not the main difference between Philadelphia and St. Louis. In 1918, the Mayor of



Philadelphia refused to cancel the Liberty Loan parade on Sept. 28th. The parade stretch for two miles through downtown Philadelphia. Just 72 hours after the parade, all 31 of Philadelphia's hospitals were full and 2,600 people were dead by the end of the week.

In 1918, the Mayor of St. Louis cancelled the parade. Also notice there was no spike in December in Philadelphia because most of the survivors had been exposed to the virus and achieved herd immunity. The spike in December in St. Louis occurred because not enough members of the community had been exposed to the virus due to the social distancing thereby not achieving herd immunity.