

Transcript of Monologue by Mekenna Miller

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Abstract: This is a personal reflection about how fear is an unavoidable consequence of pandemics.

Mekenna Miller 00:01

This is a personal reflection on COVID-19, fear, and social media censorship. When considering epidemics and pandemics of the past and present, there's one characteristic that defines and unites them all pretty well - fear. The widespread panic of cholera in 19th century London was evident in government documents depicted through political cartoons about miasma in newspapers and written about in diaries and letters. The fear of yellow fever during the outbreak in Philadelphia in 1793 even caused doctors to panic and led Dr. Rush to use inhumane treatment techniques on thousands of patients. Today, widespread fear of COVID-19 has presented itself in many different ways, some humorous and inconveniencing, such as hoarding toilet paper, and some concerning, such as increased social media censorship. In many ways, fears connected to increased censorship. Medical professionals and social media platforms fear the spread of misinformation because they're so focused on stopping the spread of COVID and getting as many Americans vaccinated as possible. However, the increased censorship has caused many people to fear that their personal liberties are being taken away. Unfortunately, in a situation where everyone has the same goal - protecting the lives of American citizens - there's a lot of polarization about how citizens are best protected. Should citizens be responsible for their own protection. Should the government step in? How much should the government step in? What about independent companies and platforms? These are all questions spiraling, spiraling throughout society, causing many people to feel uncertain. Well, I can't provide the best answer for this issue. One certain thing is that just like any other widespread disease, fear is a natural and unavoidable consequence of COVID-19.