

Sonja Williams
MACS 317
September 14, 2020

Flu Files Part II

The artifact that I chose to analyze is a newspaper article from *The Shanghai Times*. The title of the article reads, *SPANISH "FLU"*. The article was published November 5, 1918. The article is from a Chinese Newspapers Collection, and it is featured on page 8. It is evident that the article is not that long.

During November of 1918, the tropical city of Singapore was experiencing the Spanish influenza. "The city was known as a major global trading hub at the time. The actual influenza occurred in two different waves. The first wave dates from June-July, and the second wave dates from October to November. The influenza resulted in approximately 3,000 deaths. The excess mortality rate was higher than that for industrialized nations in the Northern Hemisphere but lower than that for less industrialized countries in Asia and Africa. With the increase in travel and trade, a future pandemic may reach a globally connected city early and spread worldwide. Preparedness and surveillance plans must be developed to include the megacities of the tropical world" (Lee, 2007).

Moreover, in the text, we find a formal writing that presents audiences with vital information on the flu during this time. The author of the text makes it clear that the influenza had become *prevalent* in Singapore, and warned the people of the fatal results. The writer wanted the audience to know that they should take precautions, so they wouldn't spread the disease. In the text, we are told how the disease is transferred: through coughing & spitting. We also learn that it is highly infectious, especially in a room filled with a group of people. The

article also warned people ,who already had the disease, to isolate themselves and undergo proper treatment. The meaning of this part of the text was to provide important information to audiences who may not have known anything about the disease. It gives a concise analysis of how the disease was transferred.

However, the article doesn't just talk about the negative effects of the disease. The latter part of the article includes how the people could prevent themselves from catching the influenza. It reads, "Occupiers of premises, especially those which accommodate a large number of persons, should disinfect the floors daily. The floors should be sprayed with some *Jeyes* fluid, *Izal*, *Lysol*, *etc.* The solution should not be swept away, but should be allowed to dry on the floor" (*Shanghai Times*, 1918). The meaning of this part of the text was to provide audiences with insight on how to go about staying safe from the virus as well as preventing the spread of the virus.

The above observation stood out to me because it reminds me of the times that we are currently living in. This is because we have also been told to use solutions like *Lysol* to disinfect our surfaces. Also, as mentioned previously, we were also put in isolation due to the virus today (Covid-19). The ideology that history repeats itself stands out to me in reading this article. This is because the same exact things that were happening in a whole different country, years ago, is happening right now! This truly proves that history does in fact repeat itself, and we must continue to pay attention on how the Spanish influenza was cleared up back then to fix our Covid-19 virus now. Even though we are living in the 21st century, we are still being told to take the same precautions that the people back then were told to take. This article makes me think that history will continue to repeat itself, so as a society we need to try to figure out how we can

control outbreaks like this one. I believe that learning how to control it is more important than trying to figure out how to prevent it. I believe that because if history does in fact repeat itself then we will experience yet another outbreak in the future, but if we learn how to control it before it gets too bad, then we will be fine!

Work Cited

1. Lee, Vernon J., et al. "Influenza Pandemics in Singapore, a Tropical, Globally Connected City." *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, vol. 13, no. 7, 2007, pp. 1052–1057.,
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