

Consuming Alcohol (History) May Cure Covid-19 (Policy):
Expansion of the Principles of Alcohol Regulation in the COVID-19 Pandemic

Adriel Barrett-Johnson

I. Introduction

To the extent alcohol enjoyed its status as unique among American commodities, 2020 was a terrible year. For most commodities, maximizing the market correlates with maximizing social good. The more puppies you sell, the more joy you produce; there is no downside. However, this is not the case with alcohol, which has long been unique in its need to balance the benefits of alcohol enjoyment with its harm to public health. In 2020, nearly all commercial enterprises joined alcohol in needing to balance these conflicting objectives as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has meant that engaging in the market (going into stores, going to work to produce things) comes at a potential cost to public health. Almost overnight, almost all market activity began to carry additional negative consequences, as going to work to produce goods or to the store to buy them began to carry risk of infection and spread of the virus.

The complexity of alcohol as a commodity stems from its disparate positive and negative effects on different segments of the population. On the one hand, alcohol can both create and reflectⁱ the culture in which it is produced. Alcohol can bring people together, facilitate connection, and be a pleasure like good food or art. However, alcohol is also an addictive toxic and psychoactive substance. Alcohol consumption is a causal factor in 3 million annual deaths on the global scale and contributes to 5.1% of the global burden of diseaseⁱⁱ. It tears families apart through addiction and death, leads to crime, contributes to poverty, and is one of the main

factors in deaths of despairⁱⁱⁱ. For some, alcohol is a delight enjoyed with temperance, and for others it is a destructive force.

Given these varied effects, there is tension between maximizing the alcohol market (and therefore consumption) and public health. Society has an interest in preventing alcohol abuse, while allowing those who enjoy it with temperance to do so. Alcohol policy has a long history of experience threading the needle on regulations that enable the market to function smoothly, while limiting the deleterious effects of excess and abuse. Now that the Covid-19 pandemic has transformed other markets such that maximizing the market does not maximize social good, those setting Covid-19 policy should learn from alcohol regulators experience.

This paper will explore (1) how the structure of alcohol as a market commodity can inform COVID policy, (2) the parallel between prohibition and lockdown policies, and (3) how the state-based structure of alcohol policy can inform COVID policy.

II. The Market Dynamic of Alcohol Regulation Should Inform Covid-19 Policy

Today's alcohol policy is the result of years of experience prioritizing a maximization of social good over the maximization of the market. Given alcohol's psychoactive properties, there has always been a tension between economic activity to produce, sell, and consume alcohol, and public health. With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, that tension has extended to any market activity that requires human interaction, ultimately affecting the entire global economy.

No aspect of society has been left unchanged by Covid-19. The death toll has reached numbers that are hard for the human brain to truly comprehend^{iv}. In the US alone, over 21.5 million people have had Covid-19, and over 360,000 have died from it^v as of January 8th, 2021. Described another way, on average someone has died in the US every 90 seconds since the first

official fatality in February 2020. Globally, over 88 million have been sick with Covid-19 and over 1.9 million have died^{vi}.

The effort to avoid infection has been one of both collective personal choices and federal, state, and local regulation. To protect friends, family, and the larger community, the majority of society voluntarily began to stay at home prior to the enactment of ‘stay at home’ orders in March 2020, to minimize the risk of infection and spread of the virus. Many businesses voluntarily closed and sent employees home. As the threat became increasingly clear, government regulation responded accordingly, enacting orders to require or encourage citizens to stay home. State governments instituted regulations for many aspects of economic and social interactions, including: mandates to wear face coverings, requirements to social distance, closure of restaurants, stores, and other businesses, caps on how many people could gather at a time, capacity limits on how many people could enter a building, and stay at home orders^{vii}.

This regulation to limit the spread of Covid-19, or ‘flatten the curve’, has put government regulation at odds with business interests. The closures and restrictions have limited citizens’ ability to go to work, as well as to buy goods and services. This situation has caused rippling impacts in the economy, with dramatic increases in unemployment claims and the permanent closure of many businesses. This has been painful for many families: in 26 states in Summer 2020, over 20% of households were behind on rental payments^{viii}. Food insecurity doubled^{ix}, and households with children faced especially high hardship rates. Further, these impacts have been disproportionately felt by communities of color and those of lower income, increasing income inequality^x.

This ongoing challenge shares significant structural characteristics with those in the alcohol industry, so the lessons learned from the history of alcohol regulation can improve government responses to Covid-19. In *Toward Liquor Control*, Fosdick and Scott address the recurring problem in the alcohol industry of applying economics to a product ‘whose ubiquity... is a cause for concern.^{xii}’ They note alcohol’s uniqueness in this, but now increased market interactions are a cause for concern for all products and services. Alcohol regulation has always had to contend with a fundamental tension between social interests and economic interests. In Covid-19 society has a scaled-up version of the same problem.

Policy makers who seek to set sound Covid-19 policy face immense pressure to prioritize business interests and ‘keep the economy going.’ This is not only an abstract value, as the economy, employment, and the ability to produce and consume are fundamental to human well-being. Policy makers are not restricting activity because that activity is inherently bad, but because certain types and frequencies of it lead to infection.

Alcohol parallels this dynamic. In his 1842 Temperance Address, President Lincoln remarked that, “It has long been recognized that the problems with alcohol relate not to the use of a bad thing, but to the abuse of a very good thing^{xiii}.” It is for this reason that the pressures on policy makers to let the economy run unrestricted continue with intensity^{xiii}.

This parallel dynamic can be used to better understand and anticipate the way human nature will react to Covid-19 policies. The ineffectiveness and externalities of Prohibition from 1920 to 1933, and the improved, more effective approaches to alcohol regulation that have been taken since then, offer guideposts for those setting Covid-19 restrictions. By the end of Prohibition, policy makers learned that “We have tried to govern too largely by means of law

tendencies which in their nature do not easily admit of objective treatment and external coercion^{xiv}.” This is perhaps even more true in Covid-19 restriction policy, because the activity being restricted is even more fundamental to human nature: connecting with others, seeing friends and family. In this case, just as with alcohol policy, external coercion alone is not sufficient. The public must be educated on the costs (i.e. increased infection, sickness, and death) to social interaction and must internalize the need for changed behavior.

This is not to say that regulation should not be vigorously pursued – or that educational campaigns and private, individual action alone are enough. Both are required in Covid-19 policy, just as both are required to achieve temperance in alcohol consumption. In the opening pages of *Toward Liquor Control*, the authors reflect that, “Temperance movements have come and gone; organized efforts for moderation, backed by moral suasion, have had their day; but in all the long struggle with one of the most difficult human problems law has remained our chief weapon in trying to curb the social consequences of excess^{xv}.” Regulation is a pillar to achieving temperance in both alcohol consumption and volume of social interaction during the Covid-19 pandemic. This regulation must be balanced with public information campaigns. ‘Education is a slow process, but it carries a heavier share of the burden of social control than does legal coercion^{xvi}.’ Regulation is only as effective as it is enforced, and ‘social acquiescence’ is necessary.

The objective of alcohol policy is temperance, the prevention of abuse of a freedom. This is complicated to achieve and is very different than the maximization of the economy that is typically prioritized. In the Covid-19 pandemic, all market interactions took on a parallel dynamic of tension with public health objectives, which alcohol regulators have a long history of understanding and engaging. Covid-19 policy makers should learn from alcohol regulation that a

combination of regulation and public education is required to achieve temperance in the volume of social engagement that the public chooses.

III. Parallel between prohibition and lockdown policies

Human nature rebels against restriction^{xvii}. Just as underground activity ballooned during Prohibition, people during the pandemic have gathered outside of regulated spaces^{xviii}. During Prohibition, policy makers recognized that unenforced regulation is equivalent to no regulation. The increased lawlessness during Prohibition is one of the key reasons the 18th Amendment was repealed, and Covid-19 regulators should learn from those lessons^{xix}.

Mass rebellion against Prohibition restrictions led to significant increases in disregard for laws and institutions. In his forward to *Toward Liquor Control*, John D Rockefeller Jr. noted, “In the attempt to bring about total abstinence through prohibition, an evil even greater than intemperance resulted – namely, a nation-wide disregard for law, with all the attendant abuses that followed in its train^{xx}.” Alcohol regulation was so ignored that in 1926, bootleg liquor sales were equivalent to the entire US federal budget that year^{xxi}. Illegal liquor consumption was big business and led to the institution of organized crime. Even the Church was in on it, as sales of sacramental wine, given a legal exception to Prohibition in the Volstead Act, soared^{xxii}. In reference to the importance and challenge of enforcing liquor laws, President Hoover noted in his inaugural address, “Our whole system of self-government will crumble either if officials elect what laws they will enforce or if citizens elect what laws they will support. The worst evil of disregard for some law is that it destroys respect for all law^{xxiii}.”

Those setting Covid-19 policy would do well to take note of this history lesson, as the parallels between Prohibition and Covid-19 restrictions are strong. Pandemic restrictions have

largely taken the form of unenforceable ‘mandates’ and guidelines. Unenforced, these regulations have been disregarded by many. Restrictions regarding business operations are enforceable and have been enforced, including mandates to close stores or to socially distance within stores. However, restrictions regarding personal behavior, like whether to gather with friends in homes, have only been followed to the extent individuals believe the restrictions to be in their own best interest, not because the government has commanded it.

Shifting guidelines and high profile cases of politicians ignoring their own policies have exacerbated the public’s fatigue with following restrictions. In *Toward Liquor Control*, that authors observed that in Prohibition,

Makeshift and improvisation have far too often been the tools employed. Public irritation and impatience have greeted the progress of each new system of control and, frequently, before the system has had an opportunity to prove itself one way or the other a new system has been devised and put into operation^{xxiv}.

This describes Covid-19 response as well, particularly in the earlier half of the pandemic. Elected officials make regular pronouncements, a mix of legal orders and optional pleas, leading to confusion and disregard of guidance and policy. Not even the politicians always follow these orders and pleas^{xxv}, which increase popular disregard of politicians and policies alike. As an example, in the state of Virginia, Governor Ralph Northam instituted or modified regulations related to Covid-19 at a rate that has varied from every other day (in March and April 2020) to every two to three weeks (Fall 2020)^{xxvi}. The frequent changes in guidance have left the public frustrated and less trusting of policy makers. This is a dangerous result, the effects of which have been seen in the jump in infection in late 2020 and early 2021.

The solution to the inoperability of these mandates is to let communities regulate themselves. When big changes are called for or desired, the people must be allowed to accept them on their own without having it forced upon them. Businesses and citizens alike also need information to prepare to comply with new rules. Crafting policy to protect public health is a challenge for lawmakers at all levels. However, the importance of being close to those who live under the mandates begs the question: Which lawmakers are best suited to make those decision? Again, America's solution after Prohibition provides answers to that question that lawmakers addressing should heed.

IV. A State-Based State of Mind

After the challenges of the Prohibition era, alcohol policy successfully moved from regulation at the federal level to state control. As the 21st Amendment gave way to a state-based regulation, states were able to experiment and flexibly choose systems that could be supported and enforced in their communities. Eighteen states chose systems of state monopoly^{xxvii}, while the other states chose varying models. The different approaches states and localities took were more aligned to local popular opinion, which led to increased compliance and respect for the law.

The transition to state-based regulation of alcohol significantly reduced violence. Under Prohibition, the homicide rate rose from 6 per 100,000 prior to 1920 to 10 per 100,000 by 1933. This increase in crime took the form of increased altercations with law enforcement and the rise of organized crime syndicates that capitalized on the demand for illicit alcohol^{xxviii}. With the reversal of Prohibition, the homicide rate steadily declined, returning to 5 per 100,000 by 1944^{xxix}. This quick return to pre-Prohibition crime levels underlines the effectiveness of state-based regulation in the hands of those most attuned to popular opinion. The lesson from our

nation's transition from national to state-based alcohol policy is clear: local decisions are more likely to be followed because they better reflect the preferences, histories, and cultures of communities across the country.

Just as communities in different states reacted differently to alcohol policy during and after Prohibition, they also have differing reactions to Covid-19 and its accompanying restrictions. States have set their own policies, and Governors have enjoyed more prominence and fame than has characterized recent decades^{xxx}. This approach of letting states set their own Covid-19 policies has been much maligned in the press, but based on the history of alcohol regulation, it may have been a wiser approach than its critics have suggested.

At the beginning of the pandemic, President Trump chose to leave decision making to the states rather than employ a national strategy^{xxx}ⁱ, although there was discussion that the use of emergency powers is the natural prerogative of the executive branch and the federal government should centralize the response. Left to their own devices, different states preferred different approaches. Republican-controlled state governments preferred a more laissez-faire approach, while Democrat-controlled state governments preferred greater interventions in their economy to mitigate the spread^{xxx}ⁱⁱ.

New York and South Dakota have been a study in contrasts in pandemic response policy. In the Democratic state of New York, Governor Andrew Cuomo instituted a strict stay-at-home order, limiting gatherings and imposing a \$10,000 penalty on businesses that failed to comply^{xxx}ⁱⁱⁱ. Later, his "New York Forward" plan coded different localities as "cluster zones" based on their infection rates and imposed business closures and limits on gatherings in zones where hospitalizations were highest^{xxx}^{iv}. Cuomo also instituted a mask mandate for local authorities to verbally enforce^{xxx}^v. Taking a different approach, the Republican Governor Kristi

Noem of South Dakota declined to set state-wide restrictions on business, gatherings, or houses of worship, nor was there a mask mandate^{xxxvi}.

Despite these different approaches, the citizens of both states largely approved of their governors' decisions. Governor Cuomo received high marks for his job handling the pandemic with a 73 percent approval rate^{xxxvii}, and he received an Emmy Award for his daily television briefings to update New Yorkers on the virus^{xxxviii}. Likewise, Governor Kristi Noem saw a surge in popularity in her state as a result of her Covid-19 response^{xxxix}, and she rose in prominence to become a national figure in the Republican Party^{xl}.

Empowering the states to make decisions bolsters public compliance with the law because they are more likely to respect the law if their governors, who reflect that state's values, are leading response efforts. The efficacy of South Dakota's approach in comparison with New York is debatable, and arguably South Dakota has had one of the worst outcomes in terms of Covid-19 infections^{xli}. However, based on the history of alcohol regulation and compliance, it is not necessarily the case that applying New York's policies to South Dakota would have had a better result. Plausibly, the public in South Dakota could have ignored heavier restrictions, rebelling to a point that infections could have been worse. If the federal government had imposed New York's restrictions onto South Dakota, the backlash could have damaged the ability for lawmakers to promote public health restrictions at all. The differences in state Covid-19 restrictions may frustrate public health experts who recommend heavier restrictions than some states adopted, but our nation's success with empowering states to set alcohol regulation shows that allowing variation among state-level policies can maximize compliance and ultimately minimize infection.

Similar to the way public opinion and (the lack of) building public-buy in was a critical dynamic in Prohibition, allowing states to set their pandemic policies at their own pace may have ultimately led to wider public acceptance (and compliance with) those policies. Many Midwestern Republican states initially refused to implement mask mandates. However, after an increased public pressure and well-publicized studies on the efficacy of mask mandates^{xliii}, some Republican states did adopt them^{xliii}, including those who originally rejected such policies. If the federal government had imposed a mask mandate on these states earlier in the pandemic, those populations may have settled into resistance. State-based alcohol regulations have proven resilient, and state-based Covid-19 restrictions may prove similarly resilient, increasing long term ‘temperance’.

V. Conclusion

With a new, more contagious virus variant spreading and violent crime rising in the US^{xliv}, the need for an improved Covid-19 policy is apparent. In the face of increased crime^{xlv}, the unintended consequences of the past ten months of inconsistent and unenforced Covid-19 policy should be taken seriously. Our nation’s experience with Prohibition and the return of regulation to the states’ control shows that nation-wide impositions can lead to disregard for that regulation, while a state-based regulatory regime increases compliance and can be more responsive to community needs. The federal government, especially as a new administration is about to begin, should consider these factors as it sets its own Covid-19 policy. State-level regulation is most likely to maximize compliance, and therefore minimize virus spread.

Governors and other state-level leaders setting pandemic policy should learn how to handle the tension between maximizing the economy and public health from alcohol regulators who have been doing this for over a century. Instead of policies framed as ‘lockdowns’, leaders

should consider messages of ‘temperance’ in regard to social contact, with an emphasis on compliance. They should remember from the history of alcohol regulation that unenforced laws are equivalent to no laws and should more vigorously enforce the guidelines they set. If these lessons are taken into account, 2021 may turn out less terrible than its predecessor for all Americans.

ⁱ Foreman, A. (2020, December 18). *The Martini’s Contribution to Civilization*. WSJ.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-martinis-contribution-to-civilization-11608328230?page=1>

ⁱⁱ World Health Organization. (n.d.). *Alcohol Overview and Facts*. https://www.who.int/health-topics/alcohol#tab=tab_1

ⁱⁱⁱ DiSalvo, D. (2019, June 15). “*Deaths Of Despair*” *From Drugs, Alcohol And Suicide Have Reached A Record High, Warns New Report*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/daviddisalvo/2019/06/14/deaths-of-despair-from-drugs-alcohol-and-suicide-have-reached-a-record-high-warns-new-report/?sh=579522f97098>

^{iv} Richards, S. E. (2020, September 29). *Why our minds can’t make sense of COVID-19’s enormous death toll*. National Geographic. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/09/why-minds-brains-cannot-make-sense-coronavirus-enormous-death-toll/#close>

^v *COVID-19 Cases, Deaths, and Trends in the US*. (2021, January 7). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days

^{vi} *Cases and Deaths from COVID-19 Virus Pandemic*. (2021, January 7). Worldometers. <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

^{vii} Bunis, D., & Rough, J. (n.d.). *List of Coronavirus-Related Restrictions in Every State*. AARP. Retrieved January 5, 2021, from <https://www.aarp.org/politics-society/government-elections/info-2020/coronavirus-state-restrictions/>

^{viii} Bauer, B. K. L. E. (2020, September 18). *Ten Facts about COVID-19 and the U.S. Economy*. Brookings Institute. [https://www.brookings.edu/research/ten-facts-about-covid-19-and-the-u-s-economy/#:%7E:text=During%20the%20COVID%2D19%20recession,income%20shock%20\(Monte%202020\).](https://www.brookings.edu/research/ten-facts-about-covid-19-and-the-u-s-economy/#:%7E:text=During%20the%20COVID%2D19%20recession,income%20shock%20(Monte%202020).)

^{ix} Bauer, B. K. L. E. (2020, September 18). *Ten Facts about COVID-19 and the U.S. Economy*. Brookings Institute. [https://www.brookings.edu/research/ten-facts-about-covid-19-and-the-u-s-economy/#:%7E:text=During%20the%20COVID%2D19%20recession,income%20shock%20\(Monte%202020\).](https://www.brookings.edu/research/ten-facts-about-covid-19-and-the-u-s-economy/#:%7E:text=During%20the%20COVID%2D19%20recession,income%20shock%20(Monte%202020).)

^x *Tracking the COVID-19 Recession’s Effects on Food, Housing, and Employment Hardships*. (2021, January 6). Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/tracking-the-covid-19-recessions-effects-on-food-housing-and>

^{xi} Fosdick, R. B. and Scott, A. L. (1933). *Toward Liquor Control*.

^{xii} *Abraham Lincoln’s Temperance Address of 1842*. (1842).

<http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/temperance.htm>

^{xiii} Starns, J. C. (2017). *The Dangers of Common Ownership in an Uncommon Industry*. Center for Alcohol Policy. <https://www.centerforalcoholpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/The-Dangers-of-Common-Ownership-in-an-Uncommon-Industry.pdf>

^{xiv} Fosdick, R. B. and Scott, A. L. (1933). *Toward Liquor Control*.

^{xv} Fosdick, R. B. and Scott, A. L. (1933). *Toward Liquor Control*.

^{xvi} Fosdick, R. B. and Scott, A. L. (1933). *Toward Liquor Control*.

^{xvii} Bélanger, J. (2020, December 9). *What Motivates COVID Rule Breakers?* Scientific American.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/what-motivates-covid-rule-breakers/>

^{xviii} Murphy, V. (2020, November 13). *Coronavirus is no longer seen as high risk by many – and that’s undermining control measures*. The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-is-no-longer-seen-as-high-risk-by-many-and-thats-undermining-control-measures-149026>

-
- ^{xix} *The Volstead Act*. (2017, February 24). National Archives. <https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/volstead-act>
- ^{xx} Fosdick, R. B. and Scott, A. L. (1933). *Toward Liquor Control*.
- ^{xxi} Liebhold, P. (2020, January 17). *100 years later, was Prohibition good for anyone?* National Museum of American History. <https://americanhistory.si.edu/blog/volstead>
- ^{xxii} Liebhold, P. (2020, January 17). *100 years later, was Prohibition good for anyone?* National Museum of American History. <https://americanhistory.si.edu/blog/volstead>
- ^{xxiii} Yale Law Avalon Project. (1929, March 4). *Inaugural Address of Herbert Hoover* [Press release]. https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hoover.asp
- ^{xxiv} Fosdick, R. B. and Scott, A. L. (1933). *Toward Liquor Control*.
- ^{xxv} Williams, J. (2020, December 19). “*Do as I Say*”: *Anger as Some Politicians Ignore Virus Rules*. US News and World Report. <https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2020-12-19/do-as-i-say-anger-as-some-politicians-ignore-virus-rules>
- ^{xxvi} Virginia Governor’s Office. *Virginia Governor Ralph Northam - News Releases*. Retrieved January 5, 2021, from <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/news-releases/>
- ^{xxvii} *Alcohol Monopoly States: Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC)*. (2019, October 30). Alcohol Problems & Solutions. <https://www.alcoholproblemsandsolutions.org/alcohol-monopoly-states-alcoholic-beverage-control-abc/>
- ^{xxviii} Parkinson, H. (2019, February 27). *Prohibition and the Rise of the American Gangster*. National Archives. <https://prologue.blogs.archives.gov/2012/01/17/prohibition-and-the-rise-of-the-american-gangster/>
- ^{xxix} Thornton, M. (1993, July 17). *Cato Institute Policy Analysis No. 157: Alcohol Prohibition Was a Failure*. Cato Institute. <https://www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa157.pdf>
- ^{xxx} Scher, B. (2020, April 2). *Coronavirus vs. Governors*. POLITICO. <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/04/01/coronavirus-state-governors-best-worst-covid-19-159945>
- ^{xxxi} McCaskill, N. D., & Ollstein, A. M. (2020, April 7). *Trump administration tells states to step up as governors plead for aid*. POLITICO. <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/04/05/white-house-trump-funding-states-coronavirus-165783>
- ^{xxxii} Goodkind, N. (2020, May 22). *States with the least coronavirus restrictions all voted for Trump*. Fortune. <https://fortune.com/2020/05/22/coronavirus-restrictions-states-lockdown-stay-at-home-shelter-in-place-covid-19-red-blue-states-trump/>
- ^{xxxiii} *New York State on PAUSE*. (n.d.). New York State. Retrieved January 7, 2021, from <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/new-york-state-pause>
- ^{xxxiv} *Cluster Action Initiative*. (n.d.). New York State. Retrieved January 7, 2021, from <https://forward.ny.gov/cluster-action-initiative>
- ^{xxxv} McCloy, A. (2020, April 16). *NY Governor issues face mask mandate, says re-opening economy could take 18 months*. WRGB. <https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/ny-governor-issues-face-mask-mandate-says-re-opening-economy-could-take-18-months>
- ^{xxxvi} Treisman, R. (2020, December 3). *Midwest: Coronavirus-Related Restrictions By State*. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/11/847413697/midwest-coronavirus-related-restrictions-by-state#south-dakota>
- ^{xxxvii} Reisman, N. (2020, October 2). *Poll: Voters Continue to Approve of Cuomo’s Handling of Pandemic*. Spectrum News Central NY. <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/central-ny/ny-state-of-politics/2020/10/02/voters-continue-to-approve-of-cuomo-s-handling-of-pandemic>
- ^{xxxviii} Rosen, C. (2020, November 24). *Andrew Cuomo Accepts Emmy Award as Coronavirus Cases Continue to Rise*. Vanity Fair. <https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2020/11/andrew-cuomo-emmy-award>
- ^{xxxix} Sneve, J. A. L. (2020, October 28). *Polling: South Dakotans like Noem’s handling of the pandemic*. Sioux Falls Argus Leader. <https://eu.argusleader.com/story/news/politics/2020/10/28/south-dakota-kristi-noem-argus-leader-argus-leader-ke-lo-tv-poll/3751878001/>
- ^{xl} Analysis by Chris Cillizza, CNN Editor-at-large. (2020, December 9). *How Kristi Noem turned her state’s failing coronavirus strategy into a national platform*. CNN. <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/12/09/politics/kristi-noem-south-dakota-2024/index.html>
- ^{xli} Citroner, G. (2020, November 20). *North Dakota Has One of the Worst COVID-19 Mortality Rates in U.S., Here’s Why*. Healthline. <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/north-dakota-has-one-of-the-worst-covid-19-mortality-rates-in-u-s-heres-why>
- ^{xlii} Boodman, E. (2020, October 23). *Study: Universal mask use could save 130,000 lives by February*. STAT. <https://www.statnews.com/2020/10/23/universal-mask-use-could-save-130000-lives-by-the-end-of-february-new-modeling-study-says/>

^{xliii} Stanley-Becker, I. (2020, November 18). *Adopting mask mandates, some GOP governors give up the gospel of personal responsibility*. Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/mask-mandates-republican-governors/2020/11/17/9f0638fa-28da-11eb-8fa2-06e7cbb145c0_story.html

^{xliiv} Campbell, J. C. (2020, August 17). *Violent crime soars during pandemic as confidence in police takes a hit*. CNN. <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/08/16/us/violent-crime-soars-confidence-in-police-takes-hit/index.html>

^{xlv} Campbell, J. C. (2020, August 17). *Violent crime soars during pandemic as confidence in police takes a hit*. CNN. <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/08/16/us/violent-crime-soars-confidence-in-police-takes-hit/index.html>