Reading Response 3

In "From Problems to Sources" from *The Craft of Research*, Wayne Booth argues that a plan is required to efficiently find sources to test a hypothesis. Booth advises first to begin with an overview of the topic, then to leverage existing sources – useful books, librarians, websites – to find new helpful sources.

In "Alone Against the Virus", Amy Kapczynski and Gregg Gonsalves argue that the outsized impact of the coronavirus can be attributed not only to recent policy decisions but also decades-long neoliberal policies. Profit-driven health care leads to an unorganized response to pandemics, public health institutions have been weakened by budget cuts, and even systems like a carceral approach to illegal immigration and lack of worker benefits bolster the spreading of viruses. The authors call for a "new infrastructure of care" not only to ease the impact of the coronavirus, but to address deeper health-related problems in America.

In "States Fail to Prioritize Homeless People for Vaccines", Lindsey Van Ness illustrates deficiencies in federal and state plans for distributing the vaccines to the homeless, which disproportionately impacts blacks. Efforts to prioritize vaccinations for the homeless have met challenges, both from politicians and hesitancy among the homeless population, but some states are making progress in addressing homeless vaccinations.

Amy Kapczynski and Gregg Gonsalves argue that deeper entrenched features of the American system have exacerbated the impact of the coronavirus. This argument is premised upon a policy-by-policy analysis of neoliberal policies; the coronavirus is portrayed as revealing social problems: "This crisis should serve as a warning… with pandemics and plagues, global warming and climate disaster waiting just around the bend, coming whether we learn their

lessons in time, or not."[1] In this framing, the coronavirus is an intervention at some point along the timeline of long-running social problems; it serves the purpose of showing us the need to address the policies of yesterday to improve the lives of tomorrow. However, I argue that this framing of the coronavirus as merely a matter of the present is unproductive in that it averts much-needed focus on how the coronavirus has actively shaped and altered current problems. While Kapczynski and Gonsalves make important steps towards envisioning a fairer future, their focus on the impact of neoliberal policies leads them to envision a future that addresses neoliberal problems the coronavirus has exacerbated and less so problems that the coronavirus has created. The authors discuss long-running issues like cut spending on healthcare, the lack of a centralized healthcare system, workers' benefits, and incarceration[2]. However, new problems posed by COVID-19, like unprecedented unemployment, an increasing reliance on technology at a time when many do not have reliable technology, and education shortages that disproportionately affect low-income and racial minority communities are not brief disruptions, but have the potential to run long into the future. New problems spawned by the coronavirus are just as much a public health concern – especially in the context of equity – in the indirect but nevertheless strong ways as is addressing prior neoliberal policies.

[1] Amy Kapczynski, Gregg Gonsalves, "Alone Against the Virus" (Boston: Boston Review, 2020).
[2] Kapczynski, Gonsalves, "Alone Against the Virus".