

Reflections on Mortality Causes & Patterns

Christopher J. Ruhm
University of Virginia & NBER

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Board Meeting

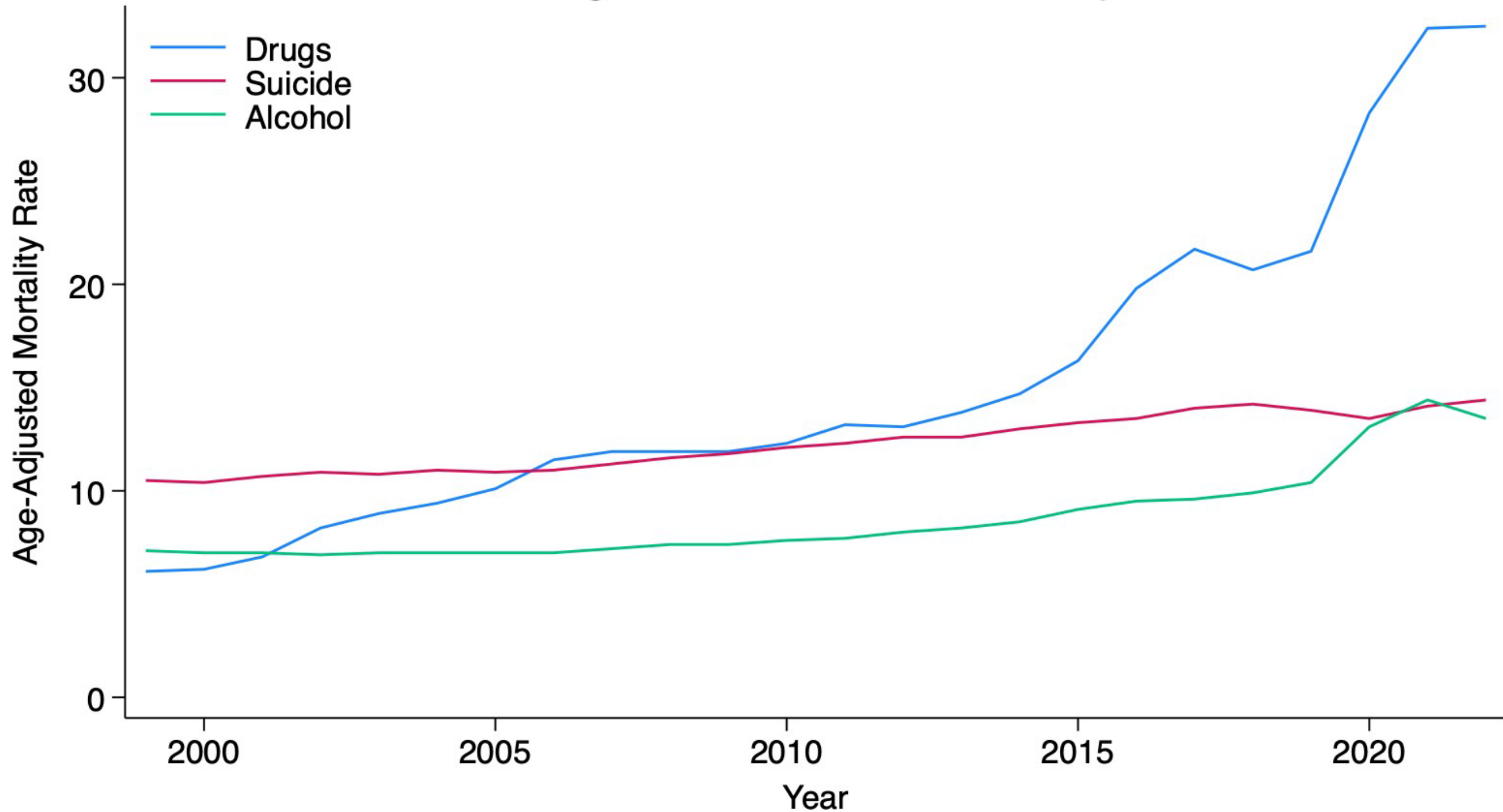
August 25, 2023

Is “Deaths of Despair” A Useful Concept?

- Case & Deaton

- Deaths from drugs, suicides, chronic liver disease (mislabelled alcohol)
- Initially proposed to explain rising mortality rates among mid-life whites
- “Despair not defined”

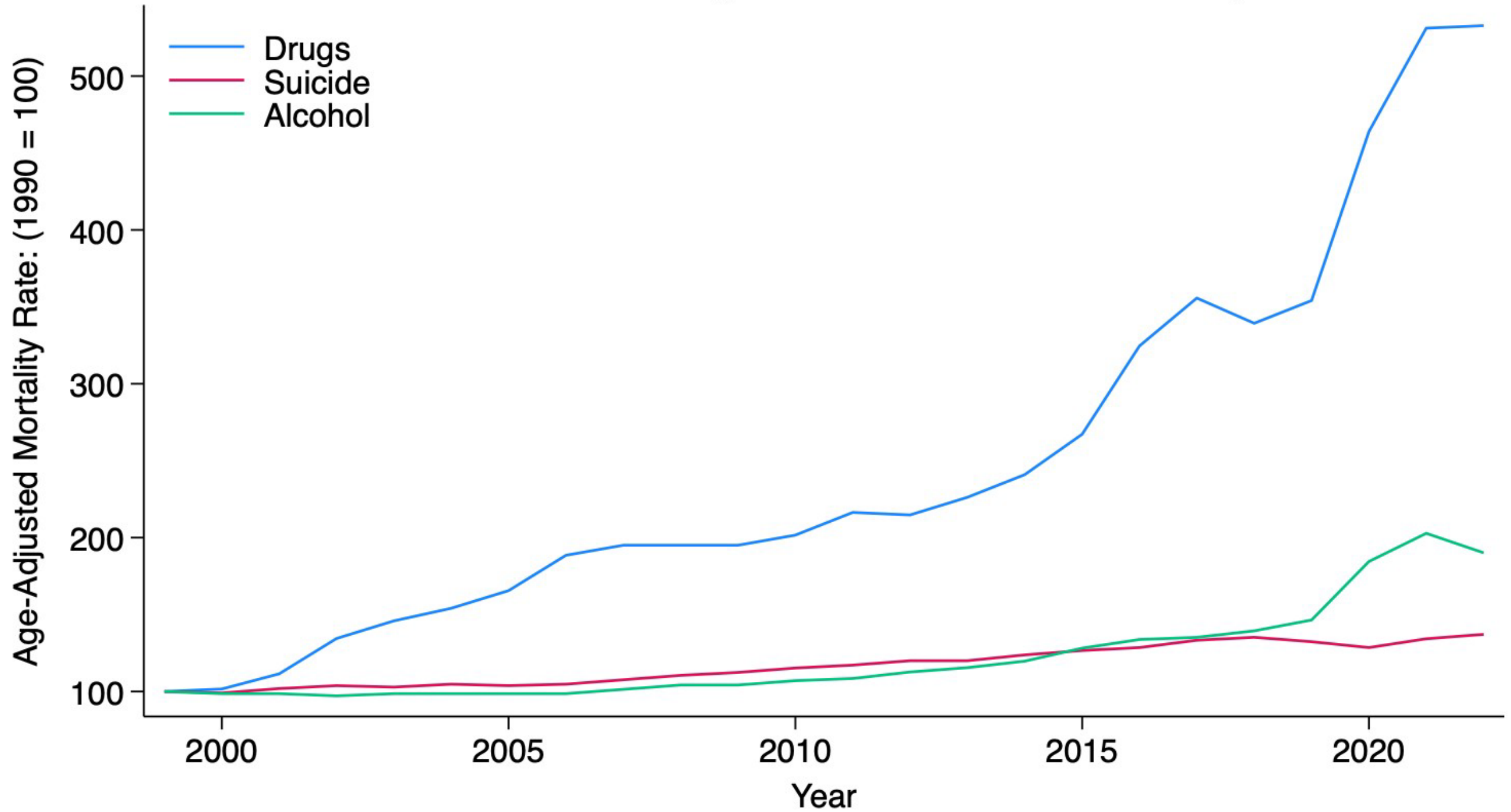
Drug/Suicide/Alcohol Mortality



Source: CDC Vital Statistics Mortality Data (2022 are provisional)

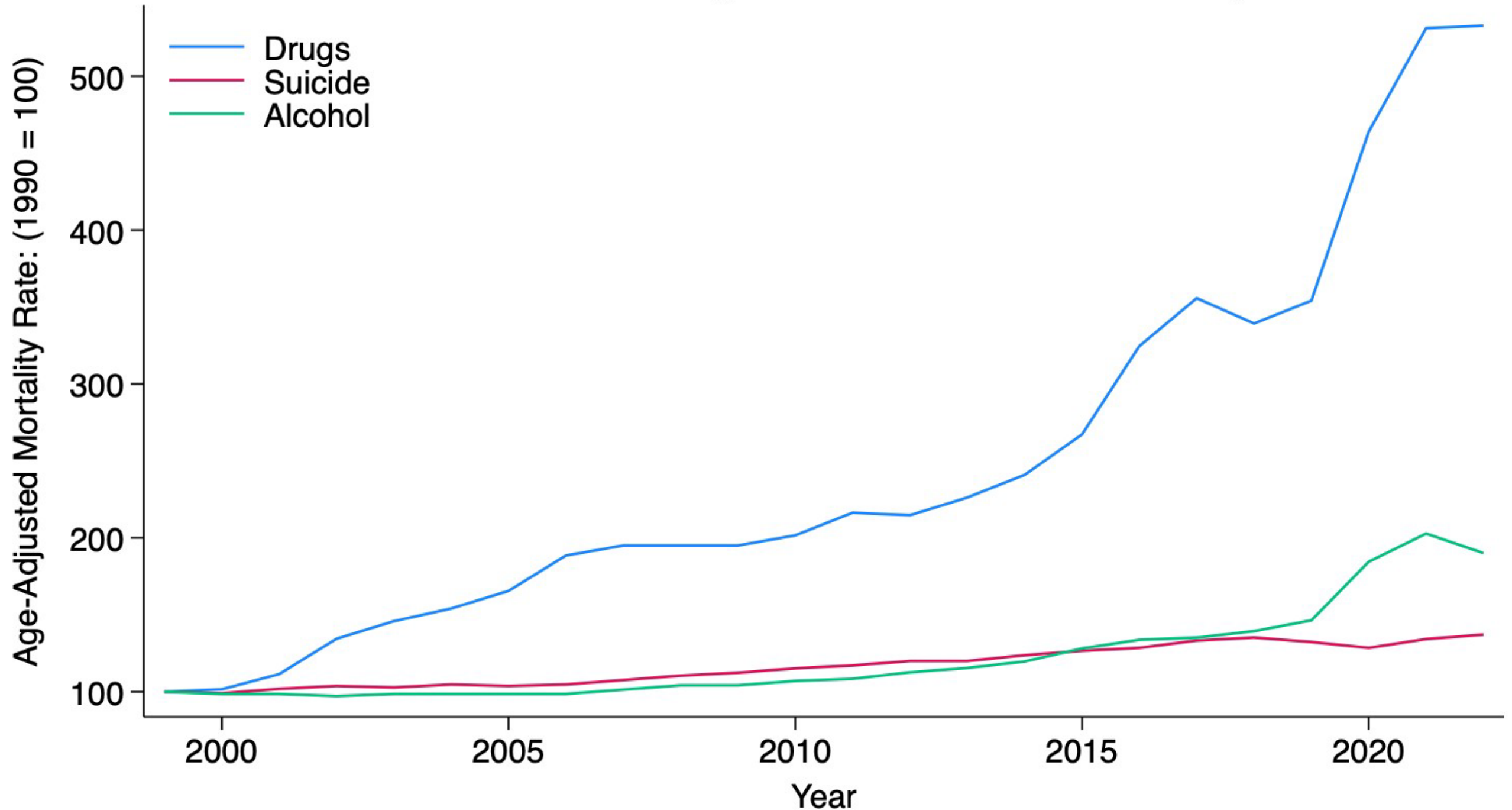
Quite different patterns
Drugs are key

Normalized Drug/Suicide/Alcohol Mortality



Source: CDC Vital Statistics Mortality Data (2022 are provisional)

Normalized Drug/Suicide/Alcohol Mortality

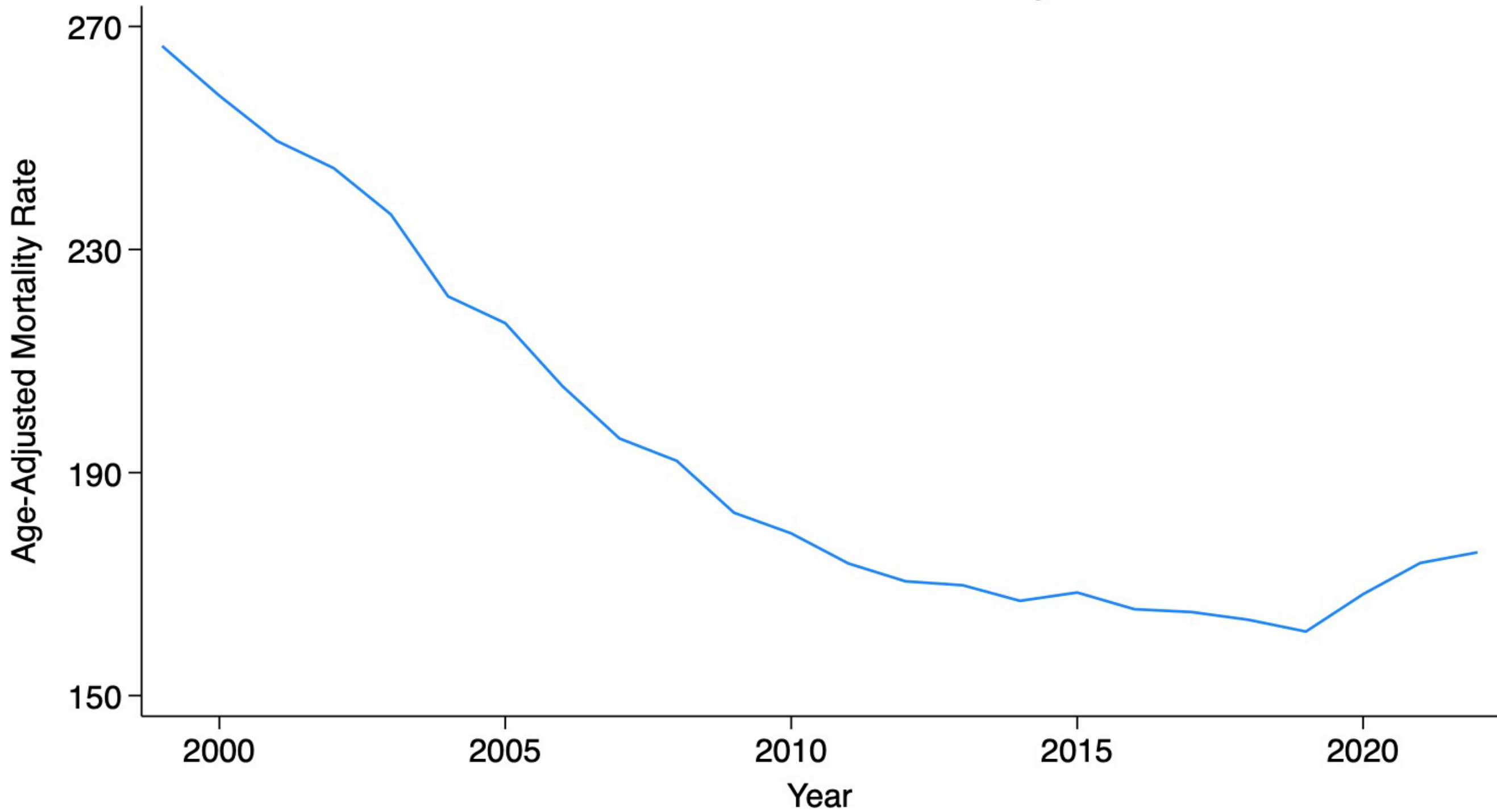


Source: CDC Vital Statistics Mortality Data (2022 are provisional)

Why weren't nonwhites affected (until the rise of heroin/fentanyl deaths)?

Why were death rates of midlife whites falling in the 1990s?

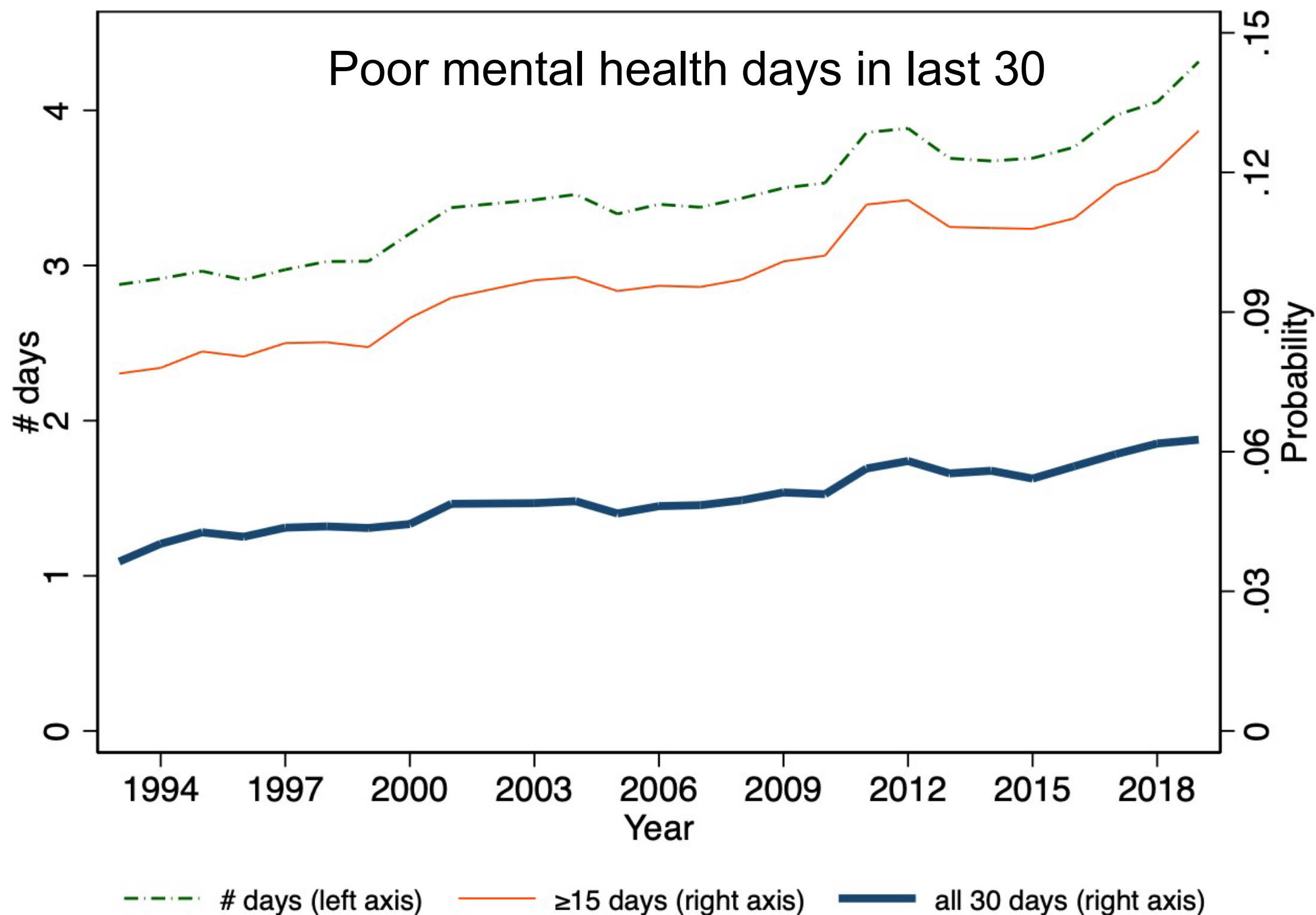
Heart Disease Mortality

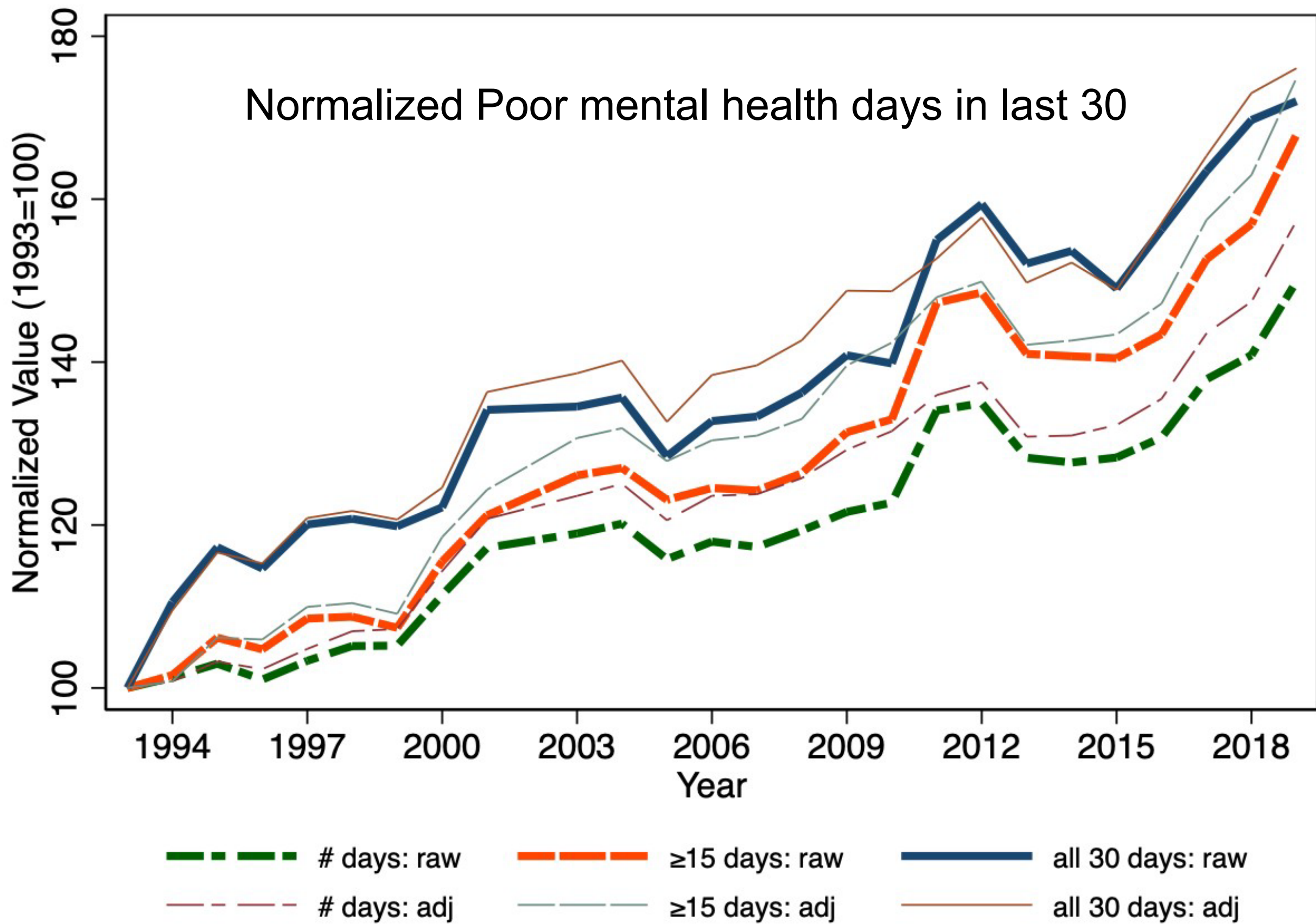


Source: CDC Vital Statistics Mortality Data (2022 are provisional)

Slowing decline in mortality from heart disease

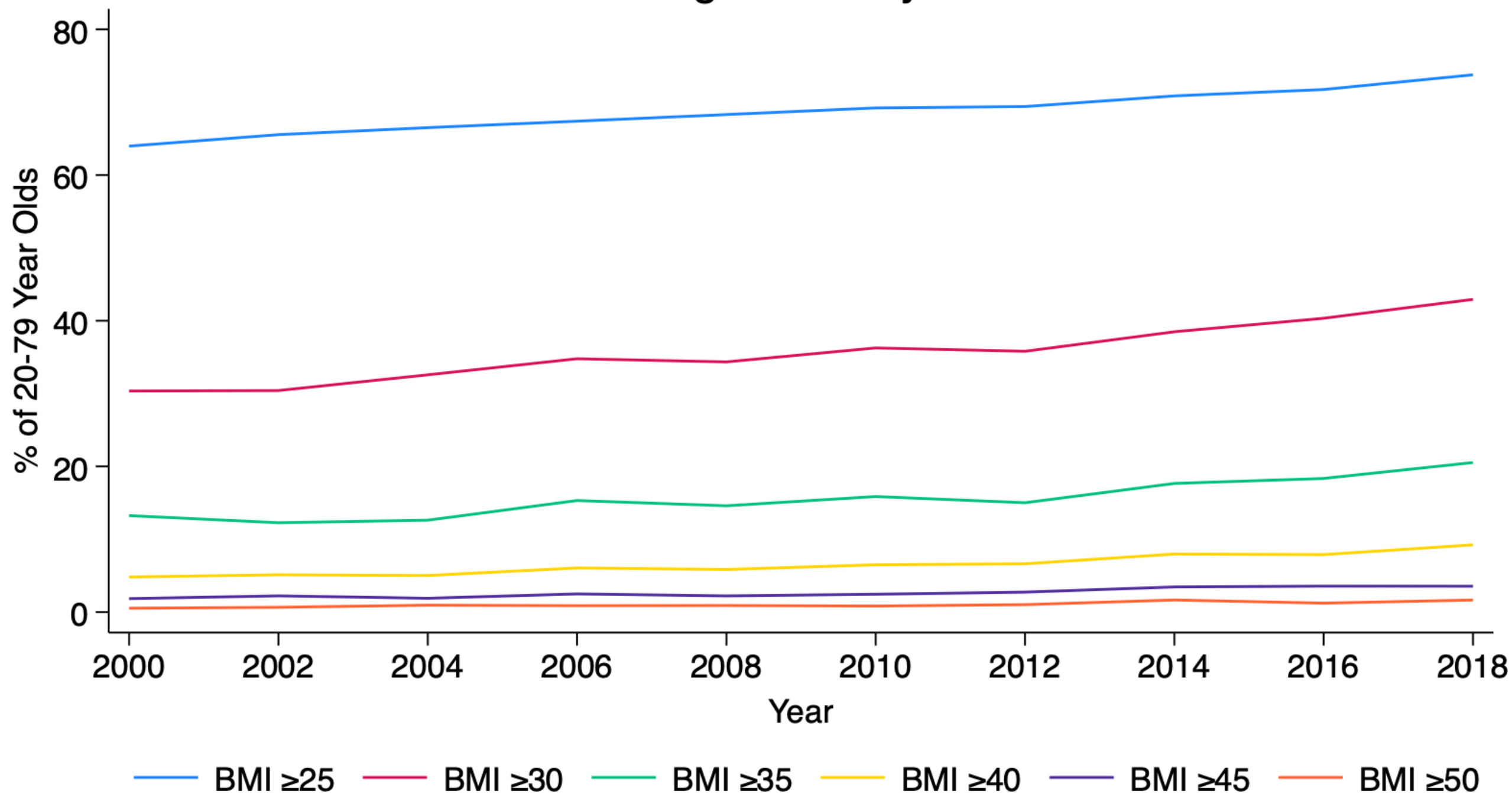
“Despair” could potentially play some role





Dangers of Rising Body Weight

Overweight/Obesity Trends



Especially at Extreme Obesity

Normalized Overweight/Obesity Trends

