

Human Progress

DOOMSLAYER

a newsletter that cuts through the gloom



Project | [Wealth & Poverty](#)

Grim Old Days

Our managing editor Chelsea Follett has embarked on a new project to deromanticize the past.

Drawing from the best historical scholarship, [Grim Old Days](#) will serve as a collection of anecdotes and statistics demonstrating what life was really like for our ancestors.

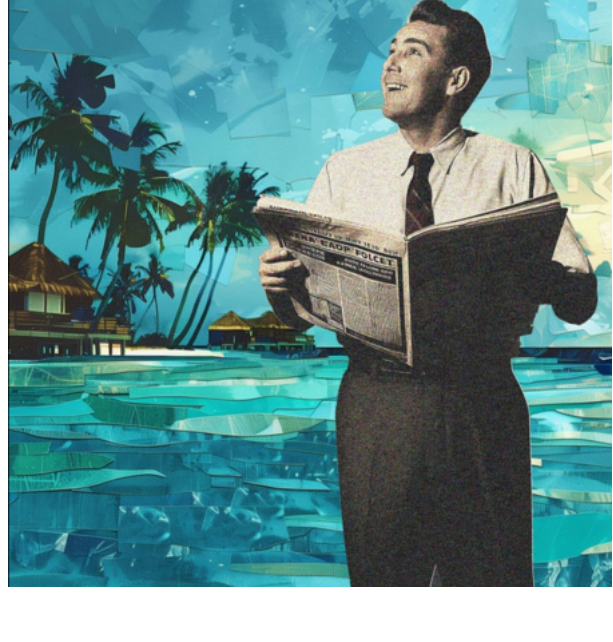
The [latest issue](#) investigates a paradox: for all the cultural variation in pre-industrial societies, the people living in them led remarkably similar lives.

Explore the project

Blog Post | [Natural Disasters](#)

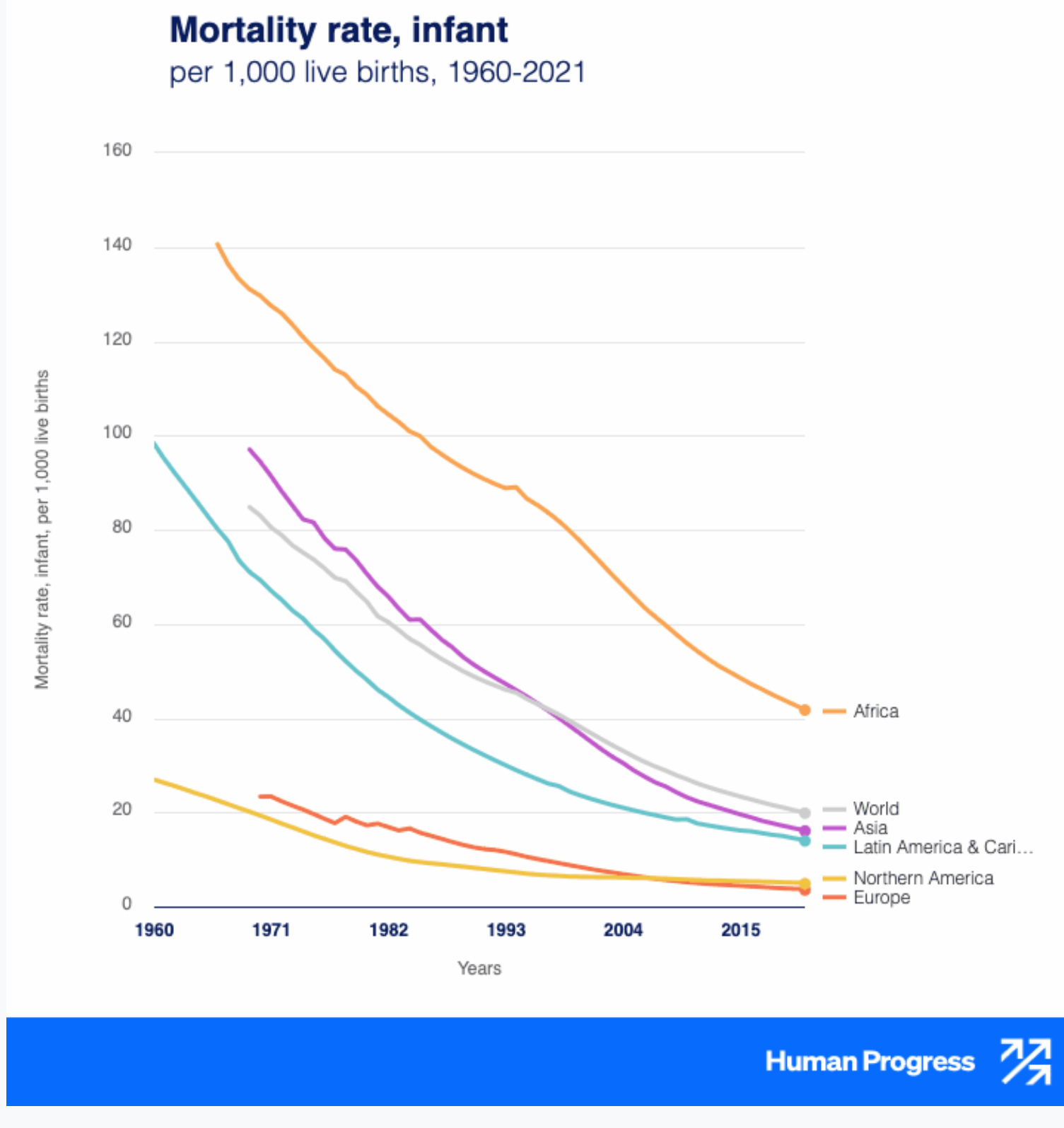
Floating on Hyperbole: The New York Times' Take on Low-Lying Islands

For decades, activists have invoked shrinking islands as examples of the “existential threat” of climate change.



But most of these islands are stable or growing—especially those home to significant populations.

[Read more.](#)

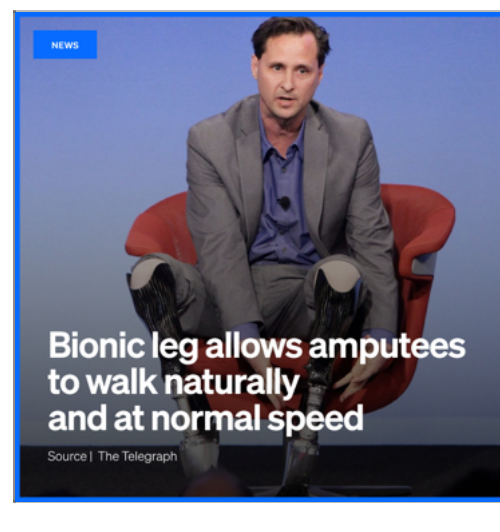


One of the grimmest aspects of the old days was how few people got to live in them.

In pre-modern societies, around 300 out of every 1,000 babies born died before reaching their first birthday, and around 500 died before reaching adulthood.

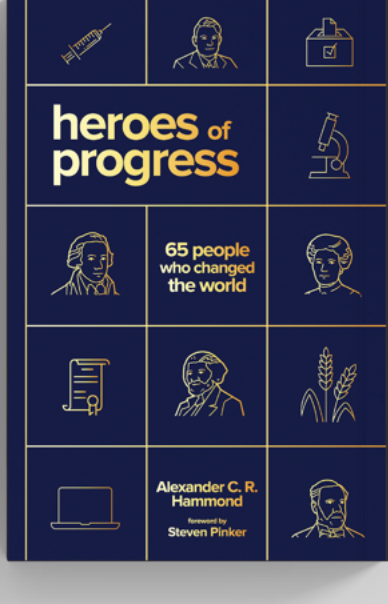
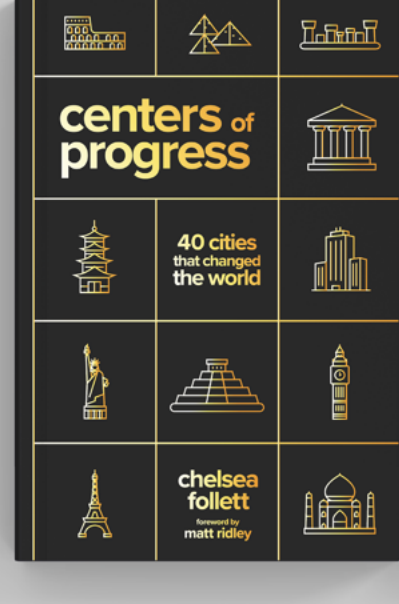
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