

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES
RONGXIANG XU COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Department of Public Health

A COVID-19 Reading List

Compiled by

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California State University, Los Angeles

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(Please excuse variation in formatting)

Bottom Lines

Four major sources of more data than you will ever need

Johns Hopkins University

<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/>

The New York Times

<https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/coronavirus>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/coronavirus>

Kaiser Family Foundation

<https://www.kff.org>

<https://www.KHN>

Kaiser Health News provides a daily compilation of health news articles from across the nation

SELECTED READINGS

I In the Beginning

- Garret, Laurie, "Grim Reapers." *The New Republic*, April. 2, 2020.
<https://newrepublic.com/article/157118/trump-xi-jinping-america-china-blame-coronavirus-pandemic>

An article written by one of the best journalists writing about infectious disease (Laurie Garrett is the author of *The Coming Plague* and winner of the Peabody, Polk and Pulitzer prizes), recapping the events that led both China and the U.S. to respond inadequately to some of the early signs of the pandemic.

II The Virus: Bats, Pandolins, Humans, and other Creatures: How it all Got Started

- Jabr, Ferris, "How Humanity Released a Flood of New Diseases," *New York Times Magazine*, June 17, updated June 25, 2020.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/17/magazine/animal-disease-covid.html>

The link between humans and other animals

- Yong, Ed, "Why the Corona Virus is so Confusing," *The Atlantic*, April 29, 2020.
<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2020/04/pandemic-confusing-uncertainty/610819/>

- For the serious learner: Attend class at Johns Hopkins University: Four presentations/modules
<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/news>

Module 1

Virology, Coronaviruses, and COVID-19

Module 2

Diagnosing, Treating, and Preventing COVID-19

Module 3

Medical Therapies and Vaccines in Development

Module 4

Epidemiology: Understanding the Spread of COVID-19

III The Pandemic in the United States: Much Ado about Failure

- Leonhardt, David, *The New York Times*, “The Unique US Failure to Control the Virus,” August 6, 2020.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/06/us/coronavirus-us.html>
- Yong, Ed, “How the Pandemic Defeated America,” *The Atlantic*, August 4, 2020
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/09/coronavirus-american-failure/614191/>
- Kambhampati, S, et al., “LA’s botched rush to reopen,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 16, 2020.
<https://enewspaper.latimes.com/desktop/latimes/default.aspx?&edit=6222e05c-09f8-4969-8c44-d1143c8ea90f>

A detailed, painful review of the clash between health and the economy in Los Angeles. A case study in the complexity and difficulties of decision-making in the pandemic.

If Los Angeles failed, with its large department of public health, a capable mayor, and a supportive governor, who, in the US was going to succeed in containing the virus?

IV Government and Politics at all Levels

- Interlani, Jeneen, “Why We’re Losing the Battle with Covid-19,” *The New York Times, Magazine*, July 14, 2020.”
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/magazine/covid-19-public-health-texas.html>

An excellent overview, focused on Texas, on the lack of appreciation for and underfunding of public health in the US, and the costly errors made by national, state and local government leadership that have left the US on track to achieve the “worst coronavirus response in the developed world.”

- Kaiser Family Foundation July poll on COVID-19 issues
<https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/report/kff-health-tracking-poll-july-2020/>

Lots of interesting info on public opinion on the virus-related topics:
Parties, Schools, Economic impacts and more

- Saletan, William, “The Trump Pandemic,” *Slate Magazine*, August 9, 2020.
<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2020/08/trump-coronavirus-deaths-timeline.html>

A vigorous attack on President Trump’s decisions putting politics over health. Most of the facts and storyline are indisputable. But some Trump supporters, certainly, would consider this biased journalism.

V **Racial and Ethnic Disparities: Social Justice and the Pandemic**

- Hooper, Monica Webb, et.al., “COVID-19 and Racial and Ethnic Disparities,” *Journal of the American Medical Association*, May 11, 2020.
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/2766098>
- van Dorn, Aaron, et.al., “COVID-19 exacerbating inequalities in the US,” *Lancet*, April 16, 2020.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7162639/>

Above, two articles on why COVID-19 has hit some racial/ethnic/income groups so much harder than others; History, social determinants of health, politics (no Medicaid), economics and much more.

- Becker J, and Arano T., “How 2 Very Different Los Angeles Hospitals Are Facing the Coronavirus,” *New York Times*. April 1, 2020.

Written early in the pandemic, this article provides a thoughtful account of two major hospitals in Los Angeles County (Cedars Sinai and MLK Hospital) and how their early experiences have been similar and different. It sums up so much about the COVID-19 disparities that were just about to unfold.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/01/us/la-county-coronavirus-hospitals.html>

- Bobrow, *Emily*, “Black, Pregnant and in Greater Peril,” *New York Times*, August 9, 2020.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/06/nyregion/childbirth-Covid-Black-mothers.html>

The public health challenge of disparities expressed through the case of one individual

VI Pandemic Economics

- The global economic impact in seven charts
<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/04/24/coronavirus-pandemics-impact-on-the-global-economy-in-7-charts.html>
- The Impact of the pandemic on healthcare workers
<https://khn.org/news/exclusive-over-900-health-workers-have-died-of-covid-19-and-the-toll-is-rising/>
- Casselman, B., “The Virus Wipes out Five Years of Economic Growth,” *The New York Times*, July 31, 2020
<https://static01.nyt.com/images/2020/07/31/nytfrontpage/scan.pdf>

VII The Pandemic In Pictures

A magnificent, not to be missed photo gallery: But be careful, once you get in you may never be able to get yourself out.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/19/world/gallery/novel-coronavirus-outbreak/index.html>

VIII Ethics: Where have all the ethics gone? (See also Racial and Ethnic Disparities, above)

- Stevis-Gridness, Marina, et.al, “As Covid Hit the World Let It’s Elderly Die,” *New York Times*, August 9, 2020.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/08/world/europe/coronavirus-nursing-homes-elderly.html>

- Becker J, and Arano T., “How 2 Very Different Los Angeles Hospitals Are Facing the Coronavirus,” *New York Times*. April 1, 2020.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/01/us/la-county-coronavirus-hospitals.html>

Written early in the pandemic, this article provides a thoughtful account of two major hospitals in Los Angeles County (Cedars Sinai and MLK Hospital) and how their early experiences have been similar and different. It sums up so much about the COVID-19 disparities that were just about to unfold.

IX Environment

- Gardiner, Beth. “Why COVID-19 will end up harming the environment,” *National Geographic*, June 18, 2020.
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/06/why-covid-19-will-end-up-harming-the-environment/#close>

Just because stay-at-home orders gave us a bit of a break on our carbon and ecological footprints, doesn’t mean fossil fuel combustion will be taking a break. This article examines President Trump’s suspension of some air and water regulations during the pandemic.

X Misrepresentation and Misinformation: Quackery and COVID-19

- Dubious COVID-19 Treatments and Preventives
<https://centerforinquiry.org/coronavirus-cure-claims/>

The web site above is regularly update by Public Health faculty member Bill London. Note that each of the 10 sections of the page is expandable/collapsible

XI Communicating (or Not) about Health

- Axios reporter Jonathan Swan interviews President Trump
<https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/04/politics/fact-check-jonathan-swain-axios-hbo-interview-trump-coronavirus/index.html>

- Morga, Adriana, “When a 10-Year-Old Translated for Her Parents on Live Radio, Thousands Recognized Themselves” KQED, July 21, 2020.

<https://www.kqed.org/news/11829745/when-a-10-year-old-translated-for-her-parents-on-live-radio-thousands-recognized-themselves>

This article points to the need for more COVID-19 info communication in appropriate Spanish (and other foreign language) formats to avail children of this “middleman” position. (The Public Health faculty member who recommended this article recalls performing this role as a young child, and still today).

XII Mental Health

- “How Doctors and Nurses Manage Corona Virus Grief,” *Scientific American*.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/interactive/grief-on-the-front-line-and-beyond/>

Grief on the front lines. An interactive piece about how frontline healthcare workers are dealing with grief. Interviews with those on the front lines.

- Taub, Amanda, “A New Coronavirus Crisis; Domestic Abuse Rises Worldwide,” *New York Times*, April 6, 2020

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/06/world/coronavirus-domestic-violence.html>

The increase in domestic violence brought on around the world

XIII Health Care Delivery: The Crisis in Hospitals

- Becker J, and Arano T., “How 2 Very Different Los Angeles Hospitals Are Facing the Coronavirus,” *New York Times*. April 1, 2020.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/01/us/la-county-coronavirus-hospitals.html>

Written early in the pandemic, this article provides a thoughtful account of two major hospitals in Los Angeles County (Cedars Sinai and MLK Hospital) and how their early experiences have been similar and different. It sums up so much about the COVID-19 disparities that were just about to unfold.

XIV Looking Back: From the Plague of Justinian to COVID-19

- Rotundi, J.P., “Five Hard-earned Lessons from Pandemics of the Past,” August 10, 2020.

<https://www.history.com/news/pandemics-lessons>

Sound familiar? The oldest of tools still in vogue

[Scroll down below this article for history-oriented options](#)

- 5 Advances that Flowed from pandemics
- When Mask-Wearing rules in the 1918 Pandemic Faced Resistance
- How 5 of History’s Worst Pandemics Finally Ended
- How America Struggled to Bury Its Dead During the 1918 Flu Pandemic
- SARS Pandemic: How the Virus Spread Around the World in 2003
- How US Cities Tried to Halt the Spread of the 1918 Spanish Flu

XV

The Future

- Schumaker, Erin, “How Experts would clean up the COVID-19 nightmare if they were in Charge,” Johns Hopkins Corona Virus home page and ABC news, August 9, 2020.

<https://abcnews.go.com/Health/forward-experts-clean-covid-nightmare-charge/story?id=72166587>

Experts discuss the way forward.

- Contact Tracing: The Solution? An expression of concern
Steinhauer, J. and Goodnough, A., “Contact Tracing is Failing in Many States: Here’s Why,” *New York Times*, July 31, 2020

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/31/health/covid-contact-tracing-tests.html>

- Nuzzo, J., “As bad as the spread of the coronavirus is, there’s reason to believe it will get worse,” *The Boston Globe*, August 6, 2020.
<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/08/06/opinion/bad-spread-coronavirus-is-there-is-reason-believe-it-will-get-worse/>

Dr. Jennifer Nuzzo is an epidemiologist and the senior scholar at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security