

RESEARCH PAPER

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Analyzing an episode of the podcast – 'TED Talks Daily' addressed by Jennifer. B. Nuzzo where she talks about various ways to prepare our society for the next pandemic.



ACTION PLAN

In this individual project, I will be writing my views on an episode of the podcast – ‘TED Talks Daily’ where the speaker speaks about the changes the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about in everyone’s lives and suggests ways to prepare ourselves and the world for the next pandemic.

Source: [20 Best Podcast to Listen To](#)

Episode of the Podcast: [ways to prepare society for the next pandemic | Jennifer B.Nuzzo](#)

WAYS TO PREPARE FOR THE NEXT PANDEMIC

'TED Talks Daily' is a podcast that posts daily talks by various people about different social issues and developments happening around the world. What if we treated the risk of pandemics the same way we treat the risk of fires? In one of its eye-opening talks, infectious disease epidemiologist Jennifer. B. Nuzzo talks about the current pandemic and suggests different ways to prepare ourselves and the society for the next pandemic. She breaks down the data we need to gather when facing possible danger, the drills we need to ready ourselves and the defenses that could keep future threats at bay.

She starts off by reciting an incident that occurred in Baltimore, 1904. A lit cigarette was left in the basement of a six-story building. Within half an hour, a fire had formed and grew to an uncontrollable state. Local firefighters were

quickly alerted and overwhelmed, so crew came in from the neighboring cities. But there occurred a problem. When they arrived, they couldn't hook up their hoses because in 1904 there were over 600 variations of hose coupling on hydrants in the United States. The fire destroyed more than 1500 building and 2500 businesses. The burnt district, as it was called, spanned more than 80 blocks. Fortunately, just a few people died but that was probably a function of luck because the fire broke out in a business district that was uninhabited on the weekends.



Later, the speaker goes on to tell why the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904 is important. To this day, it is one of the largest urban conflagrations in the US history. In today's money, the toll of this one event is upwards of three billion dollars. But the Great Fire is remarkable not just for its tolls but for what happened afterwards. Witnessing that devastation that was caused by a single unattended cigarette made way for massive change in how Baltimore and the rest of the world

protected itself against fires. First, data was beginning to be used to make buildings safer and to improve the way to respond to fires. Second, a culture of fire safety was created. And the third thing was that fire defenses were developed and upgraded. What I feel is that, by the speaker reciting this incident, it grabs the audience's attention and they become curious to know more.

Jennifer, at one point says that it won't be possible for anyone just to go back to how it was in 2019 before the pandemic. I agree with this statement because as we are two years into the pandemic, things have had to change a lot for the greater good.

She then says that she first came to Baltimore 17 years ago to study infectious disease outbreaks, and even then, way before the COVID-19, it was abundantly clear that the risk of us experiencing a highly dangerous pandemic was high and increasing rapidly. By the year 2000, the number of emerging infectious disease outbreaks that was occurring was four times greater than in the 1940s. In the last 17 years, we have witnessed a string of events that have each exposed

vulnerabilities in how we respond to infectious diseases, and they have challenged us in ways that should have made us concerned enough on how we would survive when the big one hit.

The speaker reveals that when she first heard about COVID, as an epidemiologist, the work started to increase. Most of her work was focused on other countries, helping places develop the tools they needed to stop the spread of the new disease. But that's when it became clear that US and other countries were not taking the steps it needed to take to protect everyone from the unfolding pandemic. There were a lot of reasons to be worried about. Due to budget cuts, there were fewer public health workers than we needed. Hospitals weren't ready for a surge of patients, and this was causing disruptions in global supplier of personal protective equipment and medicines. But nations didn't heed these alarms. Today, our culture of safety around infectious diseases is in total disorder. We finally have vaccines which are lifesaving tools to end the pandemic. If we thought about pandemics the way we thought about fires, what we would do would be to try to learn as much as possible about the

vulnerability during COVID and work to ensure we are never again left so unprotected. Jennifer says that action in three areas would be required. Data, drills, and defense.

First, a system would be developed to ensure we have the data we need to know when and where there's a danger and how to tackle it in the best way while protecting ourselves. Next time there is a concerning outbreak in the world, we wouldn't just sit and wait for people to catch the disease. We should go out and start looking for infections so that it could be detected as early as possible. We should start analyzing the cause and spread of the infection, if any, and learn about what activities and places would get people sick instead of just saying 'Stay home, stay safe' for 2 years. Developing Data Standards would help so that data of one place can be compared with data of another place.

The speaker then talks about the second area of action which would be to start building a culture of safety among communities and organizations to protect ourselves and others. Everyone would have access to In-Home tests so that we can get to know if it is safe for us to work or to see family.

We would use every flu season as a drill. The speaker then goes on to say that it may seem impossible that a culture of safety could be built around infectious diseases but all we must do is trust each other as all of us want to protect ourselves and our families. It cannot be done if we wait until the next crisis to hit.

The third area which is addressed by the speaker is to build our defenses against such diseases. A strong community should be built comprising of highly skilled public health professionals who would work day in and out to make our communities healthier and be ready to respond in an emergency. Economic defenses such as policies that provide financial and social support to people who need to stay home due to illness can be implemented.

If these three basic ways can be implemented by all nations, then we would have a much better chance of keeping the next pandemic threat to a manageable level without letting it ruin our society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Help from the Internet:

- www.ted.com
- [20 best podcasts for teens](#)