

# 3.39 Public Health Messaging on COVID-19 with Drs. Julia Marcus and Stefan Baral

↗ Type	
☰ Category	

## We Discuss:

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- Conversation with Drs. Julia Marcus and Stefan Baral [1:00]
  - Social Media [2:56]
  - Isolation [17:49]
  - End of COVID [20:00]
  - Mobs [30:18]
  - Inequalities [47:02]
  - Schools [50:03]
  - Public Health [1:00:50]
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## Plenary Session 3.39 Show Notes

### Overview

#### Conversation with Drs. Julia Marcus and Stefan Baral [1:00]

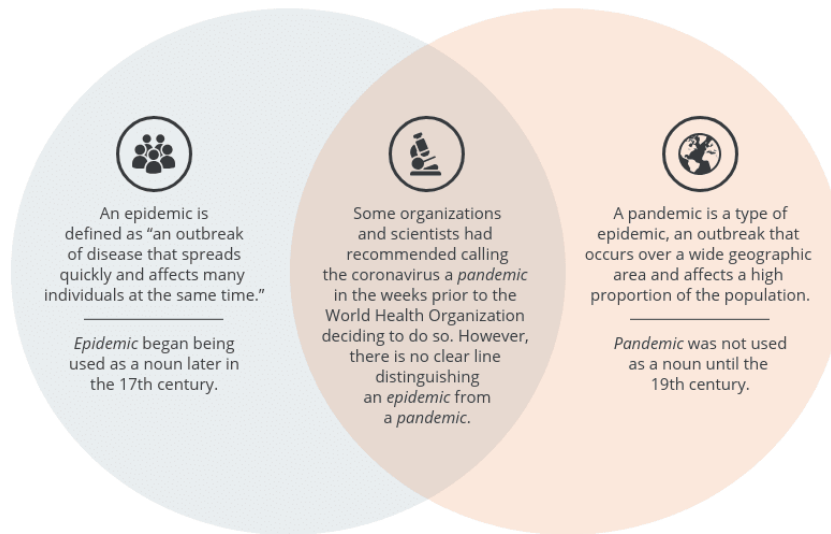
- **Introduction**
  - [Dr. Julia Marcus](#) is an infectious disease epidemiologist and Associate Professor in the Department of Population Medicine at Harvard Medical School

- Dr. Stefan Baral is an Associate Professor at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- **Social Media [2:56]**
  - Dr. Marcus points out a positive of social media which is its vast use in disseminating ideas
    - It is a great place to learn and gain knowledge from the top experts in the field in real time
      - Communication between health professionals and the public allows users to have a finger on the pulse of new policy being introduced
  - Dr. Baral points out that Twitter became a "go-to" platform for response to the pandemic
    - However, he points out that Twitter trends to the rich and educated, and that it may not serve as a good medium for people on the other side of the spectrum who hurting more from this pandemic
- **Isolation [17:49]**
  - Dr. Marcus points out that we are all lacking in-person interaction so it creates a *pull* to social media
- **End of COVID [20:00]**
  - Dr. Prasad does not see an end to COVID, virologically speaking

"I don't believe we will ever have COVID zero. I think it's going to be an endemic virus that's always gonna have some outbreaks." -  
Dr. Prasad

# 'Pandemic' vs 'Epidemic'

How do they overlap and where do they differ concerning the Novel Coronavirus?



The *coronavirus* has, unfortunately, spread now to such a global extent, and with such severity, that we have moved past the point of semantic ambiguity; the disease has taken on *pandemic* proportions.



Source: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/epidemic-vs-pandemic-difference>

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## Source

- Dr. Baral believes that COVID will have a seasonal effect with slowing towards the summer time
  - This is in part to due his belief that in the context of the amount of immunity that we have now in as well as a vaccine that there's going to be an additional wave in the winter of 2021
- Dr. Marcus points out that the "end" of the pandemic is a collective and individual perception
  - There is an epidemiological way to define the pandemic as well as a psychological component
- **Mobs [30:18]**
  - A fiasco in the making? As the coronavirus pandemic takes hold, we are making decisions without reliable data
    - Op-Ed by Ioannidis in STAT

- COVID pronouncements:
  - Great Barrington Declaration
  - JOHN SNOW MEMORANDUM

"I saw the Great Barrington declaration and the John Snow memo as both having really valuable perspectives that were not fully fleshed out and had polarized each other" - Dr. Marcus

- Dr. Baral questions the lack of *response* rather than the lack of *control*
  - e.g., Airport screenings, international contact tracing, public health response teams
    - He also points out that these pronouncements above did not focus enough on core public health principles
- The public health response to COVID-19: balancing precaution and unintended consequences
  - Baral et al.
- **Inequalities [47:02]**
  - It is known that the shutdowns will have more of an impact on minorities and people from low SES backgrounds
    - Dr. Baral points out that inequalities can happen quickly to people on the margins and take a very long time to fix
- **Schools [50:03]**
  - Dr. Marcus has uncertainty around many of the topics surrounding COVID but one thing she says about calling for school closures must come within in a broader context
    - i.e. Resources before restrictions
  - Dr. Baral points out that there has been a mismatch of sacrifices
    - Many of the sacrifices always end up stacked up on folks who were already disenfranchised and economically marginalized to begin with
      - If restrictions do take place, systems must be instilled that provide support
- **Public Health [1:00:50]**

"At the end of this is that public health ticks to its core principles of: equity, social justice and participation" - Dr. Baral

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Plenary Session is a podcast on medicine, oncology, & health policy.

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