

Professor Phelps & Professor Worthy
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PSC 101 M/W 8AM

KNPR Assignment

The topic discussed on the February 28th, 2020 session of KNPR was the Coronavirus and how it will impact the Las Vegas community and hospitality industry. Since this interview took place, measures have been taken to protect society from COVID-19 and ultimately has led to the shutdown of all non-essential businesses in Las Vegas, including the Las Vegas Strip. The strip's closure marks the first time the city has responded in such a way since the Kennedy assassination in 1963. Colleges have transitioned from on campus teaching to remote learning. Unemployment has skyrocketed as the local, state, national and global economies are suffering. As mandated by our Governor, Steve Sisolak, all businesses that are classified as non-essential have been shut down; this category ranges from salons, restaurants, and other businesses in which social distancing is not possible. As of April 23, 2020, the State of Nevada has had 3,937 confirmed cases and 163 deaths ("Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)"). On April 22nd, Governor Sisolak introduced a 3-phase plan to reinstate business throughout the city but omitted a target date due to a lack of data that can only be obtained once the state shows a positive trend of declining cases. What once was the global powerhouse of gaming, tourism and entertainment has been temporarily reduced to a ghost town for the foreseeable future.

At the time of the original broadcast, the virus had killed more than 2,800 people worldwide and had yet to confirm a victim in Nevada. With Las Vegas' notoriety of being a popular tourist destination, there has been widespread panic noted throughout the city as citizens

struggle to cope with the uncertainty of the future. Panic buying has led stores to run out of hand sanitizer, toilet paper, and bottled water. Hundreds of thousands of citizens have been furloughed or laid off, with many struggling to pay their bills. Social media is inundated with misinformation and fearmongering as people try to cope with an exaggerated virus that is currently throwing off the global economy. As one of the only economies in the world that specifically relies on tourism to survive, Las Vegas is suffering financially.

The participants on the KNPR panel included Dr. Vit Kraushaar, a medical investigator with the Southern Nevada Health District, Brian Labus, an assistant professor at the UNLV School of Public Health, Bill Wong, a consultant and board member with the Las Vegas Asian Chamber of Commerce, and Mike PeQueen, the managing director and partner of Hightower Advisors. Each provided quality input on how this virus would impact the city of Las Vegas and deliberated some historical data that is reminiscent of previous pandemic level outbreaks. They discussed the Spanish Flu and the similarities between that pandemic and the Coronavirus, and how modern medicines and antibiotics can help change the outcome of the latter. An issue the broadcast covered was the overflow of inaccuracy being reported, such as confirmed number of deaths or certain vitamins that can help increase immunity, coupled with the fact that there is simply not enough knowledge about the virus and its effects to support claims being made. There is an ongoing gathering of knowledge of transmission and the ease of spreading the virus since many people do not have any symptoms or small symptoms of a common cold. While many people are wearing masks to help prevent contracting the virus, wearing generic masks or not properly securing a mask could potentially do more harm since it can trap moisture around the mouth and nose and cause the person wearing the mask to continually touch their face more than normal, a factor the panelists identified that increased the risk of contracting the infection.

A main issue is making sure that healthcare professionals in Nevada's hospitals are able to take full precautions in protecting themselves when treating those that are infected so that they do not succumb to the virus. A lack of proper masks and gloves in hospitals open those in healthcare to a higher risk of infection.

Within the broadcast, the speakers inform Nevadans of the best ways to evade contracting the virus that is backed by the CDC and World Health Organization, such as washing your hands with warm water and antibacterial soap for a minimum of twenty seconds. In addition to this, it was recommended to take preventative care with restricted traveling, limiting distance to others in large gatherings or clusters of people, avoid physical contact with people and limiting travel were also recommended until further details and information come to light. Many large gatherings that the Las Vegas economy relies on, such as conferences, festivals, and events are now being cancelled or postponed. The entire state of Nevada is currently experiencing a lockdown, with people quarantined inside their homes and instructed to only leave for basic necessities. This has inspired protests and outrage towards the government as people insist that the economy is being destroyed every day that places like the strip is shut down. If people do not follow these guidelines here in Las Vegas, we may be under the same crisis as Milan, Wuhan, and other cities that have basically shut down. There is a large pushback from the local Las Vegas community due to the government shut down because the people are viewing this as a freedom of action and a removal of their civil liberties; a core concept of the constitution we learned in class. These Las Vegans are opposing the Federal Governments mandate by disobeying social distancing restrictions and protesting. We have a conflicted President currently enforcing the shutdown but eager to open the economy. We have a Nevada state

Governor following the Federal shutdown protocol and we have the Mayor of Las Vegas, Carolyn Goodman, opposing the state and federal restrictions. The First Amendment allows our citizens to peacefully assemble and protest so while they are not breaking any constitutional laws, they are increasing the risk of contracting and spreading the virus by not adhering to the social distancing guidelines which could cause a further delay in opening the economy.

Works cited

Kraushaar, Vic, et al. "Las Vegas Braces For Coronavirus." *Las Vegas Braces For Coronavirus*, KNPR, 28 Feb. 2020, knpr.org/knpr/2020-03/las-vegas-braces-coronavirus.

"Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)." *Southern Nevada Health District*, Southern Nevada Health District, 23 Apr. 2020, www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/coronavirus#cases.