

Transcript of Interview with Manasvini Anjaria, Andrew Panos and Jacqueline Kranick

Interviewee: Manasvini Anjaria, Andrew Panos, Jacqueline Kranick

Interviewer: Manasvini Anjaria, Andrew Panos, Jacqueline Kranick

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Location (Interviewee):

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Abstract: This is an informal interview conducted among three college students from Northeastern University, after taking a course on the history of global pandemics. They discuss their perspectives on COVID and how it has affected their lives, they also compare the COVID 19 pandemic to past pandemics.

Manasvini Anjaria 00:00

Today is December 7, 2021. It's 1:31pm. And we're conducting an interview on our views of COVID-19. After learning about pandemics, my name is Manasvini and I consent to be interviewed.

Andrew Panos 00:10

Hi, my name is Andrew and I also consent to being interviewed.

Jacqueline Kranick 00:13

My name is Jackie and I also consent to being interviewed.

Manasvini Anjaria 00:18

So Jackie, how has your college experience been, despite the pandemic?

Jacqueline Kranick 00:22

My college experience has been pretty good. And I'm really happy that I was able to do a lot of my classes in person. But one thing that's been kind of scary is like, I'm in a sorority. So there are a lot of events where I'm surrounded by other people, and I'm not wearing a mask. So that's one thing that kind of makes me a little concern. And there's no way of really avoiding that. But other than that, I've felt like I've been pretty safe in college, even though there's been a pandemic. What about you, Andrew?

Andrew Panos 00:46

So despite the pandemic, overall, I've had a very good experience my first semester here at Northeastern, thankfully, the pandemic hasn't really hindered my ability to meet new people and make new friends, which was definitely something I was a little bit concerned about before coming to school. In terms of my classes, most of them were in person, which was a huge plus. It's interesting, because a lot of my classes started offering a remote option for students like midway through the semester, which I actually really liked that more classes were giving

us that option. So that was something nice. But overall, I felt really safe here with the weekly COVID tests and mask wearing still so yeah. What about you Manasvini?

Manasvini Anjaria 01:26

Yeah, like you said, Andrew, I think at Northeastern, we've been very cautious and as a very, like cautious and anxious person about this kind of thing. I like that we get the weekly test on we're all wearing masks indoors, everyone's vaccinated. I think another good thing that's come out of this pandemic, if you want to look at the bright side, is I also like the fact that we have a lot more flexibility in our classes, like all my classes are in person, but almost all of them also have the option to attend remotely and teach professors are a lot more flexible about allowing students to not come in if they're feeling sick, obviously, and things like that. And I also think I've been able to do all the things I would want to do otherwise to just with a mask, so that's really great.

Jacqueline Kranick 02:05

Okay, Andrew, how is learning about past pandemics affected your perspective on the current pandemic?

Andrew Panos 02:09

So learning about past pandemics has certainly changed my perspective on the pandemic today, I think it was fascinating to see the inevitable repetition of history and some of the similar patterns that emerged during each of the main pandemics we studied. In the past, people often turn to religion and beliefs in an attempt to control the spread of disease. But today, we have science, technology and medicine, to combat outbreaks. So I think my biggest takeaway from this class is the ongoing conflict we have between our ability to treat and prevent diseases, and our global interconnectedness that actually allows pandemics to happen way more frequently than in the past. So like, yes, we may now have the wherewithal to create vaccines and medications to play against pandemics. But the way the world is set up today dramatically increases the likelihood a pandemic will occur in the first place. So I think that was kind of my my biggest thing that I learned from taking this class. What about you?

Manasvini Anjaria 03:08

I completely agree, Andrew, I think my biggest like perspective shift was the fact that I realized that this pandemic was inevitable. Like, I think everyone a lot of lay people were very shocked when COVID hit and we really just did not know what to do or where it came from. And obviously, we still don't really know where it came from. But I think this class makes it much more evident that it was inevitable. Because as we saw with the past, pandemics, as the world got more industrialized and more modern, they started happening even more and more. And we of course, live in a very, very modern world where everything is interconnected. So I think that's my biggest perspective shift that I saw that this was in fact, like, a long time coming, I guess. And I've just learned that history truly does repeat itself, like you can really see just everything is mirrored in our current pandemic. What about you, Jackie?

Jacqueline Kranick 03:56

I totally agree with what everyone else said. But I also thought like, I thought like mask wearing and the controversy over vaccines, I thought that was like kind of a new thing. And one thing that I learned in this class was that like, in the past, people wore masks, which I just did not know at all. And like I remember reading in one article that like celebrities in Hollywood, like wouldn't want to wear masks because they were so scared of not being recognized. And so I thought that was really interesting. And then also with like, Zabdiel Boylston creating

the vaccine, like all the controversy around that. I didn't know that that existed, but I thought that was really cool. Because that really like applies to what's been going on today.

Andrew Panos 04:35

Okay, so minus for the how does this pandemic compare to past pandemics? How have humans learned from their prior experiences with pandemics?

Manasvini Anjaria 04:44

I think like I said, the last question, this pandemic has a lot of similarities. It's almost the same minus like the virus and the disease behind it. And in my opinion, I would say that humans honestly haven't learned from past pandemics, I think that technologically and scientifically, we've come very far. Like for COVID, we came up with a vaccine so quickly it was in under a year, and it's already being given out. And now we're on booster shots as well. But other than that, I feel like humans are very much in the same spot that they were before. Before there were these like anti mask protests, and people go and get to calculation and vaccination, all these things. And you would think that after we've progressed so far, we wouldn't be there anymore. But again, we see people going against vaccination for thinking it's fake, things like that thinking the entire pandemic is fake. And even politicians are now telling people that like, Oh, we don't have to listen to these mandates. It's fake all these things. So people as a whole, I don't think I've come too far. And I do see a lot of similarities between COVID and all of our other past pandemics. What about you, Jackie?

Jacqueline Kranick 05:49

Yeah, I completely agree. I feel like we have like the potential to learn so much more. But we just haven't made much change in how we respond to pandemics. And I like remember reading about how, like, in the year 2000, I think this, like a bunch of organizations got together to make a plan about how they would respond to pandemics. And then when one actually like hit, not much was like done, and it just like there was not an effective response. And then also, like a country in West Africa, like a bunch of countries in West Africa, set goals, to spend a certain amount on like hospitals and things like that. And like when Ebola was hitting, they just like did not reach those goals. And so the problem was just so much worse than it could have been. What about you, Andrew?

Andrew Panos 06:32

I think regarding the evolution of modern medicine, totally humans have made and continue to make so many breakthrough scientific discoveries, which actually enabled us to truly gain some power over pandemics in the first place. But in terms of our political response in our socio political responses, I think we still have so much work to do, there are still so many barriers, whether economic, economical, political, etc, that's preventing us from getting a hold on diseases before they become pandemics. So I think we definitely still have some, some more progressing to do in the future.

Manasvini Anjaria 07:08

Kind of similar to the last question. But Jackie, how do you think we've progressed in response to pandemics? And also what do you think we can do to minimize future pandemics?

Jacqueline Kranick 07:17

I think in the future, we can just make sure that everyone stays super clean, and that we prevent people from living in super overcrowded housing spaces. And I'd say like in the future, just make sure that people are more

willing to like respond to mask mandates and getting vaccinated. Because I think that's been like one of the biggest issues and I think in the future that people will understand how much of a difference it makes if people just work together and do what needs to be done to like get the disease to go away. What do you think, Andrew?

Andrew Panos 07:45

Um, to minimize future pandemics. I believe that the most important thing we do is, is coordinate internationally. I think we need a well funded World Health Organization. And I think that's one of the things that was kind of lacking during COVID. Also, I think we as a society, like you said, we need to, you know, heed to the advice of scientists when they tell us what we should, what we as citizens can do to control the spread of pandemic diseases. I definitely think we've progress and our responses to pandemics but in the future, we still have some work to do. So what do you think, Manasvini?

Manasvini Anjaria 08:26

I think one of the huge progressions we made during COVID That wasn't seen during any other pandemic was huge, like worldwide, countrywide lockdowns. And I think that was definitely really effective. Like we saw the curve completely go down every time we had a full like lockdown. And I think if we keep using those to our advantage, and using science to our advantage, and actually listening to the professionals, then we can absolutely minimize future pandemics as much as they are inevitable. I think COVID showed us that as long as we're willing to band together like you guys said, we can make it not so much of a hassle like people just have to listen to the science, wear masks, isolate themselves, and I think we would be able to do really well in response to a pandemic next time.

Manasvini Anjaria 09:09

Thank you for listening