



Book Review

Book Review: Atella, V.; Scandizzo, P.L. *COVID-19 Disruption and the Global Health Challenges*; Elsevier Inc.: London, UK, 2023; ISBN: 978-0-443-18576-2

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic constituted an important watershed for modern society. The experience of the pandemic influenced all economic and social activities, suggesting the need to review and rethink new ways of managing and controlling zoonotic infections. The book provides a complete and accurate analysis of the pandemic event, providing answers to many questions about its origin, spread, and management by government systems, and finally proposes some solutions to prevent and help us be better prepared for the recurrence of new pandemic crises. Above all, it provides methods to manage pandemics more effectively.

Keywords: COVID-19; viruses; healthcare; bioeconomy; One Health

In a world where normality was a given, the COVID-19 pandemic triggered an earthquake, shaking the foundations of our existence. Its sudden appearance drew a clear line in contemporary history, marking the beginning of an era of unprecedented uncertainties and challenges.

In this scenario of profound disorder and uncertainty, the book *COVID-19 Disruption and the Global Health Challenges* is a guide to navigating these troubled waters. Through detailed analysis and examination of a vast range of scientific sources, but also of the most diverse typologies, it is the result of research and reflection in which the authors try to offer a complete picture of the pandemic, examining its possible origins, its rapid spread, the strategies adopted to manage it, and its economic impact and possible long-term consequences.

The book focuses on five key points: (1) interdisciplinary analysis; (2) the capacity for planning, governance, and crisis management; (3) the difficulties of government systems in making effective decisions; (4) the need to develop more rational forms of governance and of consensus building based on effective and transparent communication; and (5) the importance of generating a holistic approach to health, which considers the interconnections between human, animal, and environmental health.

All of these aspects are treated precisely and effectively in the five parts of the book. More generally, the book addresses the issue of health as a peculiar public and “common” good, a global resource that intersects human behavior and social choices in a complex and pervasive way and is shared with rivalries and complementarities by all members of a community. Interestingly, the book delves into how different social dynamics intertwine with pure epidemiology and economic epidemiology. In fact, while pure epidemiology focuses on the biological and medical aspects of contagion, economic epidemiology considers how economic choices and behaviors influence the spread of a disease. For example, the book explores how economic policy decisions, such as lockdowns or subsidies for people in quarantine, affected people’s behavior and, consequently, the spread of the virus. In addition, it analyzes how collective behaviors, such as the use of masks or social distancing, were influenced not only by health guidelines, but also by social perceptions and cultural norms.

The book does not photograph the present, but tries to provide a horizon of hope and a direction to face future challenges. Zoonotic viruses constitute a small fraction of



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the “virosphere”. It is estimated that at least 10^{30} viruses are present in our oceans and that every second they are responsible for 10^{23} infections and cause diseases in numerous marine organisms, thus influencing the composition of marine communities capable of modifying all biogeochemical cycles [1]. As evolutionary dynamics have changed over the course of the pandemic, epidemiological and biological factors will continue to influence viral evolution and zoonotic spillovers will continue to pose a threat.

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Reference

1. Sandaa, R.-A. Burden or benefit? Virus—Host interactions in the marine environment. *Res. Microbiol.* **2008**, *159*, 374–381. [[CrossRef](#)]

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