

★ **The Contagion Next Time**

Sandro Galea

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In *The Contagion Next Time*, Sandro Galea calls for improving public health—including the public's understanding of public health—following the revelations brought about by Covid-19.

The book's overriding question is of how to best prepare for health emergencies in the future. It looks beyond vaccines and medical care to focus on the political, environmental, and economic factors that contributed to the Covid-19 crisis. Using scientific data and historical anecdotes, it demonstrates that health involves more than medicine. For instance: life expectancy has been linked to socioeconomic and social changes, and these same factors contributed to Covid-19's devastating impact, during which low income and Black families were more vulnerable.

These analyses are sobering in their implications. Racial inequalities and climate change are factored in for how they impact public health, too, resulting in a balanced perspective. The book also acknowledges positive outcomes in the world's response to Covid-19; it notes that trends lead to skewed perceptions, as with media overemphasis on violent crime at the expense of reportage on chronic conditions that led to far more casualties, such as kidney and heart diseases.

Galea's reasoned, thoughtful approach mixes idealism and practicality. To effect positive change, the book calls for empathy, shared responsibility, and looking past immediate crises to focus on their underlying causes. This work concludes with a warning about learning the right lessons for the next major health crisis—as with the Delta variant.

Not just a medical but a social prescription for change, *The Contagion Next Time* is a researched, passionate call for collective action for the common good.

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