

SPECIAL REPORT

June 2020 Report on SAYAS (members) response to the corona virus

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The COVID-19 pandemic has presented an unprecedented global challenge. In their own personal capacities, various SAYAS members also wrote informative articles on the impact of the virus:

Knowing what the science says is important towards adequately dealing with the [#CoronaVirus](#) pandemic. SAYAS alumna **Prof Lisa du Toit**, Associate Professor: Pharmaceutical Chemistry, University of the Witwatersrand, explores this in: Debunking 9 popular myths doing the rounds in Africa about the [#CoronaVirus](#) - <https://bit.ly/2ZV69US>

What could zoologists contribute to seeking solutions to the [#CoronaVirus](#)? Firstly, multidisciplinary research can be the cornerstone in forging links that haven't existed before. SAYAS Alumna **Prof Aliza le Roux**, Assistant Dean: Natural and Agricultural Sciences, Associate Professor: Zoology and Entomology, University of the Free State explores this further - <https://bit.ly/379Cc4X>

An interesting take on religion and suffering in reference to the [#CoronaVirus](#) pandemic as SAYAS member **A/Prof Chris De Wet** Department: Biblical and Ancient Studies at University of South Africa, addresses: 'Is Disease God's Punishment? Theological Perspectives from the Bible and Apocrypha' - <https://bit.ly/2XMre2p>

-A/Prof Chris De Wet also participated in a podcast with two historians from Princeton University on COVID-19 and historical disease studies, on the theme: 'Fact, Fiction, or Both? A Discourse Approach to Historical Disease'. Invited podcast interview (by Lee Mordechai and Merle Eisenberg) for the Infectious Historians Podcasts, hosted by the Department of History, Princeton University, 20 May 2020. Listen at: <https://bit.ly/2Yag4Ds>

-A/Prof Chris De Wet also participated in a video lecture on historical pandemics and COVID-19, the details under the title: "The Care of the Soul in a Time of Plague: John of Ephesus's Reaction to the Justinian Plague (ca. 543/44 CE)." Invited video lecture for the AIEP-IAPS peer-reviewed YouTube Channel, premiered 9 May 2020. Listen at: <https://bit.ly/2Ulf95>

One way of viewing a crisis is as an opportunity to pursue and contribute to a better future. SAYAS member **A/Prof Sudesh Sivarasu**, Associate Professor - Biomedical Engineering, Head of Medical Devices, Division of Biomedical Engineering, University of Cape Town notes that their philosophy has been to collaborate closely with other innovators in an effort to create technologies that are appropriate to our African context - <https://bit.ly/30yTIOO> [#CoronaVirus](#)

Despite its best efforts, the government's social protection system has largely fallen short of meeting its primary objectives in the ongoing [#CoronaVirus](#) emergency response to ensure urban food security, says SAYAS member **Prof Philani Moyo**, Director of the Fort Hare Institute of Social & Economic Research, University of Fort Hare- <https://bit.ly/2N8tD0W>