

# 4.29: Scientific and Ethical Failures of COVID-19 with Dr. Zeb Jamrozik

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| Season | 4               |
| Type   | Plenary Session |

## We Discuss:

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- Introduction [1:17]
  - Public health [3:00]
  - Precautions [13:00]
  - Vaccine mandates [18:05]
  - Trials [23:00]
  - Trust [30:00]
  - Models [47:00]
  - Liberty [54:24]
  - American Academy of Pediatrics [1:00:00]
  - Duty and conscious [1:08:00]
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## Plenary Session 4.29 Show Notes

### Overview

#### Conversation with Dr. Zeb Jamrozik

- [YouTube](#)

- [Watch this conversation on YouTube](#)
- **Introduction [1:17]**
  - [Dr. Zeb Jamrozik](#) is a bioethicist and internist at the Monash Bioethics Centre and the University of Oxford
    - He has served in World Health Organization Ethics Working Groups on a variety of infectious disease-related issues.
- **Public health [3:00]**
  - [Great Barrington Declaration](#)
    - [Martin Kulldorff, Ph.D.](#)
    - [Jay Bhattacharya](#)
  - There are multiple factors to consider when talking about ethics and public health
    1. Freedom
      - a. If we keep individuals confined and secluded at home, we are engaging in a potentially hazardous intervention.
        - i. We should only strive to do so when the public health advantages justify it
    2. Fairness
      - If we impose blanket interventions in which everyone has to suffer, it would have a negative impact on young healthy individuals
  - Metrics
    - If we're going to strive to reduce COVID fatalities, we should know that they nearly always occur in adults over the age of 50 (Many of them are seniors above the age of 70)
      - As soon as you've decided that death will be your metric, you will prioritize the interests of elderly people above those of younger ones
        - That's a major issue of fairness
- **Precautions [13:00]**

- Getting Back to Normal Is Only Possible Until You Test Positive
    - By Alexis C. Madrigal
  - Dr. Jamrozik's interpretations:
    - The reality is that if we want to live with other human beings and animals, in some cases, we're going to catch infectious diseases
      - We shouldn't moralize being infected with the disease
        - Why?
          1. Just to interact with other people gives you a risk, and you just have to accept that risk
          2. Almost every infectious disease is unfairly spread across the population
          3. It's inevitable that everyone's going to get infected sooner rather than later (in regard to SARS-CoV-2)
- **Vaccine mandates [18:05]**
  - The standard view in bioethics is that mandates should be a last resort because it's a major restriction on liberty
    - As compliance is increasing, you obtain a marginal benefit from forcing individuals to get vaccinated and the harms of various kinds increase
      - The harms of these vaccines are also non-trivial
  - Doctors must be honest with parents about unknown risks of COVID-19 emergency vaccine
    - Vinay Prasad; USA Today
- **Trials [23:00]**
  - Trial design
    - We should be ethically interested in endpoints that involve harm and reducing harm by our interventions
      - We also need to set how many people do we need to involve to actually get useful information

- Trust [30:00]



Rochelle Walensky, MD, MPH   
@CDCDirector



Masks can help reduce your chance of [#COVID19](#) infection by more than 80%.

Masks also help protect from other illnesses like common cold and flu. Wearing a mask- along w/ getting vaccinated- are important steps to stay healthy. [#WeCanDoThis](#) [@HHSgov](#) [vaccines.gov](#)

**WHY DO I  
STILL NEED TO  
WEAR A MASK?**

0:32 964.1K views

Why do I still need to wear a mask?

10:33 AM · Nov 5, 2021 · Twitter Media Studio

485 Retweets 2,139 Quote Tweets 1,210 Likes

[Source](#)

- Precautionary principle



Source

- **Models [47:00]**

- One of the most urgent requirements in this area is to develop a code of practice or an ethics of modeling

"If the model produces a really catastrophic outcome, as they often do, then there's a strong temptation for highly restrictive, highly harmful, sometimes authoritarian responses. And we need to be mindful that it can be that that kind of technocratic thinking can be very powerful, but that it doesn't necessarily match up with society" - Dr. Zeb Jamrozik

- Some important questions are:

- What will it cost for us as a society to implement those things that are just the the variables in the model?
- Who will benefit and who will be harmed?
- Who's going to bear the mental health harms of kind of lockdown and school closures?
  - Even if the models produce an accurate measure of what the virus is going to do, that's only one thing that matters

- **Liberty [54:24]**

- Throughout history, you will read many people who would face death over loss of liberty
  - But among a group of people, the value of liberty has been subordinated to safety-ism

**'Those who do not move, do not notice their chains.'**  
**Rosa Luxemburg**

- That said, there are things that matter more to people than safety
  - That's one of the reasons why we always said in pandemic planning documents that the restrictive measures need to be as less restrictive as possible
- **American Academy of Pediatrics [1:00:00]**

| *"There is no zealot like a convert."*

- We've taken a lot of steps to kind of reduce the spread of infections, and we should only do things that actually work
  - Once we've taken a whole range of steps already, every additional thing that we do is only making a tiny difference
- **Duty and conscious [1:08:00]**

| "My obligation is on my deathbed, I dare not feel as if I could have said something and I chose not to say something out of self preservation or out of 'because it will advance my career.'" - VP

- People have been living in fear for a long time, and fear generates anger
  - We need to be able to calm that down by living in hope
- **Other people mentioned:**
  - Neil Morris Ferguson

- **Other literature mentioned:**
    - [Throw Away Your Mask After COVID Vaccination?](#)
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Plenary Session is a podcast on medicine, oncology, & health policy.

Host: Vinay Prasad, MD MPH from University of California, San Francisco.

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