

# We Must Punish the Unvaccinated

Shôn Ellerton, June 1, 2022

*Bullying and harassment is a bad thing, but not for the COVID-unvaccinated.*



More than five months ago since writing this, I predicted that, perhaps, we would all stop fearing COVID and learn to live with it, like any common cold or flu by the month of July. Unfortunately, July is fast closing in at less than two months away and it looks like there is no sign of any let up in many parts of the world, mainly those countries which either have dictatorial regimes like China in which the act of ‘saving face’ is more important than admitting the futility of achieving COVID-zero, or those countries which have a massive vested interest through the sales of vaccines.

I recently came back from an extended trip to the UK to visit friends, relatives, and family. For more than two years, unless you had special permission due to exceptional circumstances, Australian residents were not allowed to leave *or* return to Australia, although celebrities and asylum seekers seemed welcome to enter the country during that time. Whereas Sweden and other Scandinavian nations have been learning to live with COVID for quite some time and lifting restrictions, England did so as well, followed more recently by Wales and Scotland. From some of my many discussions I had with those in England and Wales and taking note of how people in general are reacting, it seemed that the general sentiment is that the pandemic is over. Although specific precautions are strictly maintained whilst entering hospitals, clinics, and care homes, as I found out when visiting my father in hospital. Those who felt that they wanted some additional protection masked themselves up, but most seemed accepting that one’s choice to wear a mask should not be questioned and likewise, neither should anyone be questioned when *not* wearing a mask.

Despite robust attempts by the political leaders of the UK to divert the topic of ‘partygate’ and ‘beergate’, in which politicians clamped down on rules for locking up the population during the pandemic but yet, found it amongst themselves that it was okay for them to party on, the people seemed genuinely angry on the overall handling of the pandemic. Many went further to suggest that they were duped with mixed messaging, much of it illogical, now coming to terms with the idea that countries like Sweden, who were treated as outcasts by much of the global community during 2020, have vindicated themselves as being the true winners of the pandemic. There are, of course, others who maintain in self-denial, that Sweden tried to kill off their old people focussing only on that first ill-fated month in which Sweden *did* get it wrong and to conveniently ignore its handling of the pandemic during subsequent months.

In any case, travelling in the UK during this time was the closest time I felt things were back to normal. And it was liberating to say the least. However, on my return to South Australia and entering immigration hall, I was greeted by an official in immigration that I had to put my mask on. Clearly, despite restrictions supposed to have been ended during mid-April, mask paranoia is still alive and well in Australia.

However, I hadn’t thought how bad things were until I got back. Much of the Australia seems gripped with a form of, what I could only loosely describe as a mental sickness. A nasty, belligerent, and vindictive sickness of a sort I never ever could have conceivably believed would ever happen. I wish to state what this is lest we forget over time and lessening the detrimental impact it had over others.

Let me explain.

Some companies and industries have banned their employees from working until they receive at least two doses of the vaccination for COVID. Most tend to comply for fear of losing their jobs; however, a good number refuse to do so. They are forced under threat of being sacked as they are considered a medical threat to others by being unvaccinated, although there is scant evidence to support this. Moreover, some of these policies extend the ban to those working remotely, which is utterly illogical and absurd.

The state of South Australia had *not* mandated our industries, apart from a very few including the health sector, to be vaccinated for COVID; yet, COVID committees were set up by those in the senior ranks to determine what course of

action should be taken to establish 'safe' working environments with respect to COVID. Many took to making their own medical decisions by requesting their employees to submit their vaccination status. Nonetheless, those not complying got sent reminder notices threatening to take more rigorous action.

Essentially, businesses not at all related to anything medical or health-wise, took it upon themselves to enforce their own policies mandating COVID vaccinations for their employees. Those continuing to refuse are told to either resign or take up their leave.

On my return from the UK, I was not wholly surprised to learn that a friend working in such an environment reported that several projects were critically affected by the mandate. For reasons I can only guess was to reduce the impact of eggs in faces, the policy was relaxed to allow the unvaccinated to return to work but *only if* all those working wear a mask at all times *and* submit a RATs, or lateral flow test, on a daily basis. Apart from the few already vaccinated employees who felt uncomfortable *not* wearing a mask, those who wore masks were branded the unvaccinated. Their immediate bosses were ordered to ensure that they complied with these restrictions.

It was clear from the outset that barring the unvaccinated from working remotely was purely vindictive messaging in such a way to punish rather than have any logical reason.

I then learnt that some of these bosses took the approach of 'hiding' their unvaccinated employees away from prying eyes and allowing a degree of relaxation with respect to mask-wearing. However, some took full assault at their unvaccinated employees by deliberately humiliating them by forcing them to sit in full view of them and to others on the basis that any attempt to remove the mask is drawn to immediate attention.

This is nothing short of bullying, humiliation, and harassment by ugly, reprehensible, vindictive, brainwashed, false virtue-signalling behaviour not far removed from what I consider a form of mental sickness or a brand of a new kind of corporate fascism. And while this happening, so many have been drawn into nonchalance and indifference, seeming unshaken that a medical apartheid had been established with a culture of bullying, humiliation, and harassment going so far as to find it even *acceptable* in the case of the COVID-unvaccinated.

How did we, in Australia, get to this fever point? Will this brand of mental sickness ever go away? Will there be a time in the future where those who made these dictatorial mandates and restrictions, independent from those set by government, realise that they did wrong? Unfortunately, probably not. Taking Boris Johnson and Gavin Newsom, the governor of California, as examples, seldom do those in high office get ousted by such behaviour. But we can hope that sometime in the future, more of us will gain a better reflection of what went wrong in our mindset that it seemed, somehow, okay to punish and humiliate the unvaccinated for COVID.