

Modified version of letter from John Raven, *eyeonsociety.co.uk* submitted to *The Psychologist* 24 March 2022.

### **Unethical and unscientific stance of letter protesting relaxation of lockdown measures.**

Re A 'perilous and politicised' pandemic response? (*The Psychologist* April 2022 news p12-13), I am glad there is a question-mark at the end of the title. The article relies on a letter, signed by 3000+ people, which appears at [tinyurl.com/2p95emdn](https://tinyurl.com/2p95emdn). My position is that the stance taken by those who wrote the letter is not only seriously unethical (Allen<sup>i</sup> concludes from an extensive review of the international literature that something of the order of 150 life-years have been lost for each life-year saved by the Lockdown measures) but reflects pervasive acceptance of widespread abuse of science, logic, and authority<sup>ii iii iv</sup>. The model of “science” deployed in the studies cited in the letter is a form of reductionist science in which it is considered legitimate to ignore most of the effects of whatever variable it is that is to be/has been manipulated<sup>v</sup>. To be considered acceptable as a guide to policy, researchers must, at the very least, make a serious attempt to evaluate *all* the intended and unintended, desired and undesirable, short and long term, personal and social consequences of the proposed intervention. Thus, the nature of the “evidence” required to answer the questions that lie behind the position adopted by those who have signed the letter needs to be much more comprehensive (that is to say, more grounded in *systemic* science) than they seem to think.

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<sup>i</sup> Allen, D.W. (2022) Covid-19 Lockdown Cost/Benefits: A Critical Assessment of the Literature. *International Journal of the Economics of Business* Volume 29, 2022 - Issue 1 p 1-32

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13571516.2021.1976051> Earlier, more comprehensive, non paywalled, version at <https://www.sfu.ca/~allen/LockdownReport.pdf> But see also: UN food program (2020) [1] *Global report on food crises* <https://www.wfp.org/publications/2020-global-report-food-crises>. [2] *Risk of hunger pandemic as coronavirus set to almost double acute hunger by end of 2020* <https://www.wfp.org/stories/risk-hunger-pandemic-coronavirus-set-almost-double-acute-hunger-end-2020>. <https://www.wfp.org/news/wfp-chief-calls-urgent-funds-avert-famine>. [https://unglobalcompact.org/take-action/20th-anniversary-campaign/covid-related%20hunger-could-kill-more-people-than-the-virus`](https://unglobalcompact.org/take-action/20th-anniversary-campaign/covid-related%20hunger-could-kill-more-people-than-the-virus)

<sup>ii</sup> Raven, J. (2020, July). *Some abuses of “science”, logic, and authority illustrated from responses to the COVID-19 threat and especially in the Dynamic Systems Models being used by policy consultants*. <http://eyeonsociety.co.uk/resources/Abuses-of-Science-and-authority-COVID-19.pdf> Also available at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343127688\\_Some\\_abuses\\_of\\_science\\_logic\\_and\\_authority\\_illustrated\\_from\\_responses\\_to\\_the\\_COVID-19\\_threat\\_and\\_especially\\_in\\_the\\_Dynamic\\_Systems\\_Models\\_being\\_used\\_by\\_policy\\_consultants](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343127688_Some_abuses_of_science_logic_and_authority_illustrated_from_responses_to_the_COVID-19_threat_and_especially_in_the_Dynamic_Systems_Models_being_used_by_policy_consultants)

<sup>iii</sup> Bhattacharya [Bhattacharya, J. (21/11/2021). Interviewed by Peter Robinson (Hoover Institution): *What Happened in 19 Months of COVID*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zG7XZ2JXZqY>] argues that the failure to take account of the wider effects (belatedly being considered) arose from a failure of the *political* process. That is, of course, true. But that is not my position. My position is that it arose, at least in part, from a failure in the *scientific* process – although we are still left with a further (sociocybernetic?) question “How come this network of processes was introduced virtually overnight in most countries of the world?”

<sup>iv</sup> It also illustrates how effective the government/Main Stream Media have been in creating a climate of fear which has led to endless destruction of civil liberties and human rights.

<sup>v</sup> This assumption lies at the heart of “the experimental method” and thus at the heart of the form of science that has contributed so much to the, now widely visible, perilous state of the planet.