

# Letter: Freedom and responsibility

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A doctor died last week. Dr. Lorna Breen contracted the coronavirus and was recovering. But the trauma of seeing so many people in pain, not being able to help them, watching them die alone, caused her to take her own life. She was a victim of this horrible pandemic. I have to wonder, if more people had listened to the advice about social distancing and mask-wearing, would it have saved her patients? Would it have saved her?

Some are balking at the restrictions being placed on them, saying it takes away their freedom. They are holding rallies, standing close, bringing their children along, forgoing the masks. A video circulating on social media shows a group (including a school board member from my town) boasting about defying requests to leave a closed park, taunting the police, coughing in their direction. Is this “freedom” or is it the act of petulant children? If someone they love catches this deadly disease as a result of their actions, might they have wished they had taken the warnings a bit more seriously?

When the vice president visits the Mayo Clinic and declines to wear a mask despite the protocols, what does his arrogance say about his duty to help keep us all safe?

I remind the group planning the rallies that freedom of speech does not give you the right to shout fire in a crowded theater. Find another way to express yourselves before you're responsible for making the pandemic even more deadly.

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Weare