



Episode 1,778: Media Targets COVID Dissidents

Guest: Jennifer Cabrera

WOODS: I guess it was bound to happen, but on the other hand, if you weren't doing anything worthwhile, nobody would be writing about you. So there was a piece of — we're going to talk about this fellow Kyle Lamb a little bit later. There's a piece in *The Miami Herald* I guess about him, and now there's a piece that appeared in *The Gainesville Sun* targeting both of you. And it's not particularly nasty towards you, but it's the typical low-IQ-reporter kind of analysis. Very, very unimpressive, let's say. There's nothing original. I could script every single thing this reporter was going to say.

And what it boils down to is unhappiness at the fact that there are dissident voices out there who are reporting on what's happening, because apparently, I guess we've been told this all here, but only epidemiologists are allowed to speak or are allowed to express an opinion on what's going on in the world right now. And I've been told repeatedly — even when I just show charts, *I say here are cases, and here's where the mask mandate was introduced*, I've been told that because I'm not a virologist or an epidemiologist, nothing I say matters. But you could just be an intelligent person and make a chart. Anybody could make a chart. It's crazy superstition that some of these people have. But anyway, we'll get into all that. Let's talk about you specifically. What's the problem with you, according to *The Gainesville Sun*?

CABRERA: So to be clear, this started with *The Miami Herald*. They published a piece on November 6th about me, and then it mentioned Kyle — so again, we'll get to that later — and then they followed up with a separate piece on Kyle.

WOODS: Okay, yeah, I've got it straight now. Okay.

CABRERA: So then *The Gainesville Sun* just basically reached out to me on I think Wednesday morning and said we're doing an op-ed on the coverage of your death certificate article. So this all goes back to some Florida COVID death certificates that my husband and I were able to examine, and I wrote an article on it. And the bottom line on the article, I don't make any medical conclusions in the article. What I say is that death certificates have a part one and part two. Part one is supposed to be a sequential account of what caused the death directly. Part two is anything else the doctor thinks is like a comorbidity or something else, maybe diabetes, that sort of thing could go in part two if it didn't directly lead to the death.

Up until March, we typically only looked at part one causes of death when you're categorizing the cause of death. And the WHO, World Health Organization still says that if COVID's in part two, it's not a COVID death. But in March, the CDC changed the guidelines so that COVID anywhere on the death certificate, even in part two, is a COVID death. So now we're counting

COVID differently than we've counted any other cause of death ever. And in fact, we found lots of — it appears that doctors are being, at the very minimum, they're giving guidance to put COVID on there if there was ever a positive test. What I mean by that is we found death certificates that said things like, in part two, "asymptomatic positive swab for COVID," or "COVID, July 2020," where it's clear that the doctor felt that they were supposed to mention it, but they didn't feel that it contributed to the death. Often it's at the end of a long list of other health conditions the person has. So this is the doctor saying they didn't think COVID contributed to the death, but we're counting them as COVID deaths. According to *The Miami Herald*, that's me making a medical conclusion or being an epidemiologist, which I don't know what that has to do with death certificates anyway.

WOODS: Yeah, nothing.

CABRERA: Nothing. But that's me going outside of my area of expertise and making judgments I'm not qualified to make. But neither *The Miami Herald* nor *The Gainesville Sun* addressed my article directly. *Miami Herald* wanted to smear me I think to get at the governor, because they want the governor to lock down Florida more, or they're unhappy at the reopening that provides a test case really to all of America of what happens when you don't lock down excessively. And what we're finding is that right now, there's a small rise in cases that's probably seasonal. Nothing crazy is going on, and it's certainly not anything more than any other state is seeing.

So anyway, I believe this is an attack on the governor, but so they went after me because they claimed the governor leaked these records. They have no evidence of that. Their article doesn't even say that; it's just in the headline. And then they found an epidemiologist to say that my conclusions were crap, because everyone knows that COVID deaths are under-counted, not over-counted. Of course, they give zero evidence for that, of course. But anyway, so then *The Gainesville Sun* reached out saying they were doing an op-ed of the coverage of my death certificates. Again, not what I wrote, but on *Miami Herald's* article on what I wrote and they were just clearly looking to smear me. So I didn't give them anything they could use. I refused to talk to them. And in fact, they did not quote me at all; they just ended up saying that my degrees are in electrical engineering and my husband's degrees are in economics, and we're not epidemiologists. And that to them is a slam dunk, apparently.

WOODS: Oh, there's so much to say here. First of all, the *Herald* and the *Sun* both speak about economics all the time, and I'm sure they haven't got a single economist on the staff, and that doesn't stop them.

CABRERA: Let me just jump in right there, because the same day — so this same columnist at *The Gainesville Sun* wrote an article yesterday that, if we would just all wear masks, it would help the economy.

WOODS: Yeah, now how is he qualified to say that [laughing]?

CABRERA: He's not, right?

WOODS: Yeah, there was a statement by I guess Redfield at the CDC some time ago, saying that if Americans would wear masks for somewhere between four and eight weeks, we could really, really get a handle on this situation. And the mask charts that we talked about last time, that you guys featured from Ian Miller on RationalGround.com really do disprove that,

because those are places that have been wearing masks for far longer than eight weeks in some cases. And if masks are that significant in the fight against the virus, even though there are many factors at work in society, not just the wearing of masks, if the wearing of masks is that significant, it should show up on the chart. It should be obvious: oh, this must be where the mask mandate was introduced. And as you and I know, that's certainly not the case.

Now, by the way, when they say "everyone knows," my friend Michael Malice on Twitter just the other day said, "'Everyone knows' is usually code for I have no idea what the blankety-blank I'm talking about," so my ears perk up when I hear that.

CABRERA: Right. I mean, I never say "everyone knows" whatever. I say, here's data, right? Here's information for you. Do you think maybe we should be asking questions about these things? And the answer is always: shut up, sit down, here's the propaganda, don't rock the boat, and we're going to ban you from Twitter or whatever if you do.

WOODS: Martin Kulldorff has been on my show from Harvard Medical School, and he just said flat-out that he — now, this is not an official survey or anything, but in my profession, I do talk to a lot of infectious disease epidemiologists, and he says the majority of them have never favored lockdowns and have always favored a focused protection approach of the sort that he and his colleagues have been advocating. So the claim that the science is all on one side is, as usual, just a bunch of political BS. And of course, the idea that the state will decide, the state ought to decide who the experts are that you listen to, is also ridiculous. But the key thing here to me is making sure that DeSantis understands that, in spite of these attacks, there is a very considerable support for him out there. And I hope the fact that Trump took the state somewhat convincingly is a message of reassurance to him.

CABRERA: I hope so too. Your point on the "listening to science" or whatever, *The Gainesville Sun* and *Miami Herald* are clearly just trying to score political points here because *The Gainesville Sun* finishes this column saying that he's no public health expert, but that's why he relies on the consensus of such experts. Well, we all know what they mean when they say consensus. And then he says, "Thankfully, our country just elected someone to the presidency who says he will base decisions on such expertise." But then he says, "Unfortunately, we still have a couple more months with a president who only listens to scientists who agree with him." Okay? He's specifically acknowledging that there are scientists who disagree with this supposed consensus. But there's a consensus.

WOODS: Yeah, what could be — it's crazy. It's just crazy. So all right, let's talk for a minute about who Kyle Lamb is, just to let people know what's happening with that. Because I don't know him. I follow him on Twitter, but I'm sure that unlike you and me, he's never been attacked by major newspapers before, and he's young and it's probably pretty disorienting for him. What exactly is going on?

CABRERA: So Kyle, — well, I would say go follow him on Twitter, but because of his pending job with the state of Florida, he's actually not posting very much, although he posted something really good this morning on flu disappearing. His handle's @KyLamb8. Anyway, Kyle just posts charts like the rest of us on a purely volunteer basis. He goes out, he finds data that nobody else could find over the weekend. We've all been looking for, everybody at *Rational Ground*, we've been looking for our prior-year hospitalization information, because we want to compare prior flu seasons to COVID hospitalizations. A lot of what we do is just putting data in context, because the media loves the headlines. But if you say 50 people died

today, and we say, well, a normal day in Florida, 500 people die, that puts things in context, right?

So anyway, Kyle over the weekend found a data set of hospitalizations from previous years that none of the rest of us had have been able to find. Kyle every day downloads CDC data and keeps an archive of it in case it goes away. So he has a personal archive that few other people have. But this is the kind of thing Kyle does. He's very organized, very methodical. Nobody's ever found — you know, if somebody does find a problem with one of his charts, he immediately fixes it. He's very careful and he does great work.

And my understanding is that the governor follows a bunch of us on Twitter, Governor DeSantis, and that he was looking for charts, someone who can make charts for his messaging, and not just for COVID but for other policy issues going forward. And he likes the work Kyle does, and he offered him, honestly, an almost insultingly entry-level job. This job pays like \$40,000 a year. I don't know why everybody's all up in arms about Kyle's qualifications, because I don't think any of them would work for \$40,000 a year. Certainly no epidemiologists or doctors or PhDs would work for \$40,000 a year. But anyway, so he offered Kyle this job. Kyle accepted the job. Kyle announced the job on Twitter. And then immediately, people started attacking him.

And really what happened with Kyle was that four people came out of the woodwork. Kyle used to cover Ohio State sports, mainly football, and in the community, if you want to call it that, of other journalists that cover Ohio State sports, there are three or four people who dislike Kyle for whatever reason. And I will tell you, a big clue is that these people have things in their Twitter bios like a "proud democratic socialist," so you know, they're not politically motivated at all.

And anyway, they contacted *The Miami Herald*, apparently, and said, *Hey, Kyle has done things* — well, my understanding is they said that he had said untrue things about Sandy Hook. And that's where the conspiracy theory, all of the thing about Kyle being a conspiracy theorist comes on. The problem is *The Miami Herald* couldn't verify that because it's not true, so they never said that part of it; they just said he's a conspiracy theorist. And that's everywhere. *The Gainesville Sun* picked that up. The headline of *The Gainesville Sun* piece: "Conspiracy theorists guiding COVID-19 policy." So first of all, they never say what we're supposedly conspiracy theorists about. And then secondly, Kyle and I are not guiding COVID-19 policy. That's ridiculous.

And so anyways, it's a bunch of people just trying to take untrue statements from politically motivated individuals who have never met Kyle, and somehow make that a story to — I really think it's to cause DeSantis to pause before reopening Florida more.

WOODS: It's funny how some things get certain people up in arms and others don't. So Scott Atlas being a radiologist, but also a public health expert, well, that's not good enough. He's got to be this or a that. And of course, they say that because he's not saying the things they want him to say. Because if you have a Zeke Emanuel, who's an oncologist and by their standards equally not entitled to an opinion, somehow that just is allowed to pass because he has the officially approved opinions. So they're never consistent. And the thing about Kyle, if Kyle had just been dutifully repeating the official line on everything, I don't think we would be having this debate about his credentials.

CABRERA: Oh, gosh, no. I mean, let's contrast the treatment of Kyle Lamb with the treatment of Rebecca Jones. Are you familiar with her?

WOODS: No, I'm not.

CABRERA: So she is — I'm sure you've heard the story. She is the geographer who worked on Florida's a dashboard and was fired. Now Rebecca, apparently the official story was that she was fired because she was insubordinate. She refused to do what she was told. She disagreed with some of the ways that Florida was calculating some of the rates they published. So just to be clear, there's different ways to calculate positive rate, and she disagreed. That's I think what it was. I mean, honestly it's unclear what it was she disagreed about.

But anyway, she was fired because she refused to do what she was told. She also has a criminal case pending against her in the courts for criminal stalking. She's just a wonderful person. And she's very nasty on Twitter to other people. But she is a hero to the media, because she implied on CNN and all over national TV that Florida Department of Health was suppressing COVID information and they were rigging the statistics. And in fact, I think *The Miami Herald* story on Kyle or some later story said something about that he was being hired to rig COVID data. So Rebecca is a hero, Kyle is a villain, and it's all about which side are they on.

WOODS: Yeah, that is exactly what's going on. Now, I want to get back to one of the things that you do on a regular basis, and that involves chronicling the death numbers every day and, in particular, making sure to focus on the actual date of death rather than the reported date, because sometimes these deaths are being reported months and months after they occurred. So I understand why we might want to do this, because if we want to get a sense of trends and where things are at the moment, well, getting a bunch of deaths from July dumped on us is just going to throw white noise into that calculation.

But on the other hand, couldn't somebody — I'm just playing devil's advocate here — couldn't somebody come back at you and say, well, it may be true that today's death number, let's say 55 deaths, isn't actually referring to 55 deaths from today or yesterday, but rather that it could be that it's taking deaths from a long time ago that have just been catalogued as COVID, but that this will all come out even in the wash, because eventually when we look back on this particular day three months from now, it'll be right back up there to some other number, and so maybe you're making a mountain out of a molehill?

CABRERA: The reason that criticism is not valid is that there's no system queue of reported deaths. If they were literally coming in and then going out at the same, like the first in, first out, then there might be some pattern to it, but there's no pattern to it whatsoever. It seems like they just, really when they were reporting old deaths, it really just seemed like different bureaucrats had stacks on their desk that they were going through in random order. You'd get them recorded for every different day. It wasn't like they got them all done for July 30th and then they got them all done for July 31st. It was completely random. So there was no pattern to it. You have to have a pattern to draw any conclusions from data.

Right now, though, we're pretty much done with the backlog. We've been done with the backlog since maybe October 20th, somewhere in there. And we're mostly getting deaths from the past 30 days. And I suspect that the number reported daily is not too far off from the actual number. I think we're at a steady state. Now, it's still going to vary because you get 20

on the weekends and 75 on the weekdays. So it's going to average out I think pretty close, because I posted yesterday on Twitter that I'm pretty sure we're going to see between 50 and 75 deaths a day going forward in Florida, because when you're testing everybody in long-term care every two weeks, as time goes on, the probability of getting a false positive approaches one. And if there's any positive test in the past, they're going to get coded as a COVID death. So the longer this goes on, the more just normal deaths get coded as COVID deaths, because there's a bigger chance for positive COVID tests over the past now eight months. But so I think we're going to end up somewhere around 50 to 75 a day, no matter what COVID does.

WOODS: Let's just say a quick thing about Scott Atlas and what he might be able to do in the remaining time he has, because you on Twitter at one point recommended one or two things that would be very helpful if they could get done. Can you share those?

CABRERA: Yeah, so it's two changes that the CDC made that I think that reverting them could make a difference. And one was this death certificate thing, that pulling out deaths that have COVID in part two and only counting deaths that have COVID in part one I think would make a big difference. And I think it's a more accurate accounting of deaths. It's still going to over-count, I think, but it's going to be a lot better for sure. And at least then, you're looking at the medical opinion of the doctor. And what was my other one? My other one was — what was my other one?

WOODS: Might it have been the PCR cycle?

CABRERA: Well, it's not that — I mean, obviously, that's one, right? If we reduce PCR to somewhere between 30 and 34, the number of cycles of amplification, you're going to get a more accurate test. But it was specifically a CDC thing. Oh, I think it was in 2009, H1N1, the first case was found in April of 2009. By July of 2009, the Obama administration said, hey, this is already so widespread, there's no point in continuing to test like crazy. There's no point in recording cases. We're just going to track hospitalizations and deaths. And I think if we stopped tracking, if we stopped making cases reportable, then we would stop counting all of these possible false positives, we would remove the incentive to massively test, and we would track hospitalizations and deaths, and that's what matters. But you have to have the deaths counted correctly with only part one deaths.

WOODS: Right, okay, now those are the things that obviously would be helpful. I wish there was a way to get through to him. You know, he tweeted the other day, just yesterday, he was talking about — I'm sure you saw this, about what Governor Whitmer is doing in Michigan, another round of restrictions, treating everybody like they're seven. And his tweet was something like, This doesn't end until people rise up. In effect: you get what you're willing to put up with. And Bill Kristol, the neoconservative commentator who has to my knowledge not been right on anything in the past 20 years — I remember his prediction for 2008 was that it would be Condi versus Hillary and that that would be the big battle. He wrote a whole book on this. That'd be the big battle of our time — although maybe I'm confusing him with Dick Morris on that. I can't remember. Who even cares?

CABRERA: Right.

WOODS: None of these — it doesn't matter. It doesn't even matter. But Bill Kristol, who's been a Never Trumper and a hysteric on the virus, came out and said, "Whoa, what is this, a call to violence from somebody in the White House? Somebody from Stanford calling for violence?"

And so Atlas actually had to clarify himself and said, "I mean things like having protests and voting and stuff. Why would your first instinct be that I meant grab some guns and run into the street?" But that's Bill Kristol for you, and I'm sure a lot of other people jumped on that. If somebody else had said, I look forward to when the American people rise up and resist this, which they've said for four years under Trump — we need people to rise up and resist — nobody said, "Oh, my gosh, you're calling for violence."

CABRERA: And they were, to be fair. I mean, what do you call Antifa except the —

WOODS: Yeah, true.

CABRERA: No, exactly. There was an example just a couple days ago in Denmark. They were going to put in a whole bunch of new restrictions, and there was such an outcry that they decided not to. That doesn't happen in America. In America, about half of us are literally begging for more restrictions and more lockdowns, and the rest of the people as far as I can tell, just want to be left alone, keep their head down, not get in trouble, and they're just going along because they don't want to lose their businesses, they don't want to lose their jobs. And the problem is that the vocal ones are the ones begging for more lockdowns, and our side needs to be more vocal. Lockdowns are not harmless. They have many, many victims. People are dying and people will die in future years because of what happened this year, because of lost jobs, lost businesses, depression, whatever else, all the side effects of lockdowns. They're not harmless, and we need to speak up.

One of the big stories right now is hospitals are overwhelmed, right? Well, somebody came out today and said one reason hospitals are overwhelmed — everybody says it's not because there's no beds. And even the doctors, they're like, there's plenty of beds. We don't have enough staff. The staff are overworked, they're exhausted, etc. They're quarantined, so we don't have enough. One of the problems that hospitals are having is that when kids are not in school, moms who are nurses and doctors can't work. Especially the low end. I guess doctors probably figure it out, but nurses, they just don't work. And we're very low on nurses right now, because their kids are not in school. This all cascades into all aspects of society. Our economy and our society, we can't change one thing and expect nothing else to change.

WOODS: Yeah, that's the astonishing thing. I know that there are people who must be smart enough to understand the repercussions of this, but it's incredible how many people I run into on social media who I think genuinely have no idea about the collateral damage. I just can't believe that they actually know about it. So I finally got sick and tired of explaining it to them every single time, so I wrote up a blog post called "Death by Lockdown," and I just link to that every single time somebody comes at me saying that I want to kill people. And I just say, well, looks like you guys have a pretty massive head start on me. And you might say, Woods, you should try to be more persuasive than that. But at this point, I can tell right away the kinds of people who are reachable and the kinds who are not. And the kinds who are not are doing a lot of damage, and the people who are on the fence need to see those people being rhetorically pummeled mercilessly. I don't see what else I can do.

CABRERA: Yeah, same. You can tell as soon as somebody — the first question — well, usually the second. Sometimes the first question on Twitter I'm willing to answer, and as soon as they come back and they're not honestly engaging with my argument, I'm done. But you're right, we have to have references that we point to, charts, articles, whatever, so that other people can see what's going on.

What I found is that people, my friends, people that are very smart who even understand medical things or whatever, they realized early on that they were being lied to about COVID, that nothing that the media was saying matched what they were seeing in the world around them. As a result, they just tuned it all out, and they literally don't know anything about COVID. They're just trying to get through their day.

And I'm trying to reach those people, to say, hey, please start asking questions, please try to look at your why do we have large case counts? What are the problems with the PCR test? How are we counting COVID hospitalizations? How are we counting COVID deaths? Don't just take the numbers coming at you. Ask the questions. And everybody who starts honestly asking questions ends up saying: this is insane and we need to stop this and you need to be telling your elected representatives to stop this. There needs to be an outcry. Especially with all of the northeastern states and will all over the country relocking down right now? It's insane.

WOODS: I want people to feel like they can oppose all this and be morally beyond reproach. Because that's I think what's intimidating to a lot of people that you're bad. And also a lot of people just, frankly, are not courageous enough to stand against a narrative that is repeated by the entire society in lockstep. And I don't mean the entire society. I guess I mean opinion molders and celebrities.

CABRERA: Yeah.

WOODS: And that also gives the impression that everybody thinks this way, because every Hollywood actor thinks that way and every editorial writer thinks that way. So probably everybody thinks that way. No, they don't. No, there are a lot of us who don't.

CABRERA: Honestly, a ridiculous amount of the conservative media is even in lockstep with this. It's just very, very frustrating.

WOODS: Very.

CABRERA: It's a tiny bit of us trying to get the truth out. And yes, it takes a ton of courage. Most of the big COVID accounts are anonymous, because if they disclosed their identities, they would lose their businesses, they would lose their jobs. It's ridiculous. As someone who's out there under my own identity, I get a lot of attacks, and it does take a lot of courage. And just, please, people, have some courage. You're on the right side here.

WOODS: And honestly, what would it take to get you to buck up and have some courage if not this? This is nothing any of us could have anticipated at the beginning of the year, that they would handle it this way, it would be such a fiasco, that they would actually have the nerve to take this and claim that it's all science when five minutes of analysis from us pokes every hole in that imaginable.

This Friday in Melbourne, Florida, there's going to be a gathering of state legislators from around the country, about 100 of them, and a number of us are going to be talking to them, and I'm going to be talking to them about this issue. And I'm actually going to have a physical handout, even in this age of the internet, I'm going to have a physical piece of paper I'm giving all of them, telling them these are the resources you need and these are the accounts you need to consult – and yours is going to be on there – every day to stay informed about

what's going on. Because each of you is going to go back to your home state and be a champion for those silenced voices out there, the people whose dreams and aspirations and livelihoods have been ruined, whose savings have been decimated. The people who are dying of loneliness, you are going to be their spokesman, because if not you, then it's no one. If it's not you, then it's no one. And you're going to get a lot of hate from the people who want the mainstream narrative repeated, but those people already have their state legislators. You are going to be the voice of the voiceless. And I'm going to be sending them out to go do that. And that makes me feel like, again, even with the limited reach I have, I'm doing everything I possibly can with it. And that's how we all need to think: with whatever reach you have, what can you do on behalf of the cause of getting life back to normal?

CABRERA: Right, that's excellent. And back to the science, in my response to *The Gainesville Sun* I linked to the CDC 2017 document on how to deal with a pandemic. It specifically says that you would not do any of the things we're doing. That is an official policy document that we just turned our backs on and then claimed it was science. And it's ridiculous. And people need to understand that. They need to go read that document. I mean, nobody wants to go read bureaucratic documents, but I pulled out some quotes in my piece. And it's so obvious that we turned our back on everything we knew about pandemics. Just going on to state legislators, I have reached out to my state legislators and said, *Hey, if any state legislator in Florida wants to understand COVID, I will talk to them. They can ask any question they want.* No response.

WOODS: Yeah. Yeah, but I think I think maybe — well, I'm going to be having Cliff Maloney on my show this week. He runs Young Americans for Liberty, and he tells me that across the country, his organization helped to get a whole bunch of sane state legislators elected. We're going to be talking about that. He counts 176 of them. Now, that's a drop in the bucket, but the thing is, if each state has just one, that guy or that woman is going to get a huge amount of media attention. You just have to be one. This really is a case of where that one voice can actually make a difference. I mean, one of the things that made Ron Paul a special congressman was that he was willing to vote 434 to 1. If he thought the thing was unconstitutional, he would just vote no. Now, if the vote is 403 to 32, nobody really cares. But if it's 434 to 1, there's always some curiosity. Who was that one? And why?

So in this case with COVID, if you're that one and you just won't shut up, no matter what they throw at you — because you're just a state legislator. If you don't get elected again next time, who cares? Your life goes on. It's not like you're a US senator or something. It doesn't matter. You go back to your life, whatever. You can be a little bit older. And so I hope that happens. So RationalGround.com is the website people should follow for you?

CABRERA: Yes, and my personal Twitter is @JHaskinsCabrera. I'm also on Parler @JenniferHCabrera. I personally find Parler very clunky, but I know a lot of people like to be there instead, so there I am. Not as much, just the daily def stuff really.

WOODS: I haven't gotten over to Parler yet, but I don't want to be the last one there, so I know I need to do it. And everyone's telling me the same thing about the user experience, so I hope that gets worked on. But anyway, thank you so much for your time. I'm going to put everything you just said, we'll have your Parler, your Twitter, and RationalGround.com, on the show notes page, TomWoods.com/1778. Well, thanks for doing what you're doing. I appreciate your time today.

CABRERA: Thank you so much.