

Episode: *Author Interview: "Need More Reasons to Curb Gun Violence?"*

Guest: Jamaji C. Nwanaji-Enwerem, MD, PhD, MPP

Host: Tim Hoff

Transcript by: Cheryl Green

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[bright theme music]

[00:00:04] TIM HOFF: Welcome to another episode of the Author Interview series from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*. I'm your host, Tim Hoff. This series provides an alternative way to access the interesting and important work being done by Journal contributors each month. Joining me on this episode is Dr Jamaji Nwanaji-Enwerem, an adjunct assistant professor of environmental health and an emergency medicine chief resident physician at Emory University in Atlanta. He's also the executive director of ELND, an environmental education and improvement organization. He's here to discuss his collection of four images, "*Intentionally Retained*," "*Intentionally Fragmented*," "*Accidentally Retained*," and "*Accidentally Fragmented*," in the January 2024 issue of the Journal, [Critical Pedagogies in Health Professions Education](#). Dr Nwanaji-Enwerem, thank you so much for being on the podcast with me. [music fades]

DR JAMAJI NWANAJI-ENWEREM: Thank you all so much for inviting me.

[00:01:01] HOFF: So, to start with, what's the main ethics point that you're getting across with these images?

NWANAJI-ENWEREM: So, the main ethics focus of the article is really a reminder. We have so much knowledge and so much understanding about the adverse nature of lead and other metal exposures, but as society evolves, we must remember to revisit the mediums and the mechanisms of those same exposures. So, in the context of the images here, it remains important to recognize lead exposure from soil, from water, but if we fail to consider the possible adverse exposures from retained ballistic fragments, we may also be missing an important exposure mechanism.

[00:01:51] HOFF: And so, what do you see as the most important thing for health professions students and trainees specifically to take from this set of images?

NWANAJI-ENWEREM: So, I think it's important to recognize that environmental health and environmental science or exposure science considerations are ongoing and important actors in all fields and forms of medicine. Unfortunately, this is not always emphasized in medical schools or in residency. But of note, I and many others are working through work like this to help fill that gap.

[00:02:27] HOFF: And finally, if you could add a point to this article that you didn't have the time or space to fully explore, what would that be?

NWANAJI-ENWEREM: So, in line with the ideas that I've previously mentioned, I think it's important to emphasize that exposures do not exist in isolation. Lead exposure doesn't just walk up and say, "Hi, I'm lead. Nice to meet you."

HOFF: [chuckles]

NWANAJI-ENWEREM: These exposures exist in the areas where we live, the areas where we work, the areas where we eat. So, the specific exposure itself, yes, that matters, but if we rightly strive for holistic management, considering the total environment that that exposure lives in also matters. In the setting of gun violence specifically, we should think about some other physical or social issues that may also be risk factors or may have a substantial impact on the person's health status, both before they were shot but also afterwards. [theme music returns]

[00:03:25] HOFF: Dr Nwanji-Enwerem, thank you so much for your time on the podcast today, and thanks for your contribution to the Journal this month.

NWANAJI-ENWEREM: Thank you so much.

HOFF: To read the full article as well as the rest of this month's issue for free, visit our site, [journalofethics.org](http://journalofethics.org). We'll be back soon with more *Ethics Talk* from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*.