

# Debate: Mask vs. No Mask - 9/9/20

Mr. Carter - 7th Grade English/Language Arts

\* Required

1. First and Last Name: \*

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2. Date: \*

.....  
*Example: January 7, 2019*

3. Period Number: \*

*Mark only one oval.*

7-2

7-4

7-5

7-6

### Five Minute Do Now:

One word answers and sentence fragments will not be accepted. Please write your answers in three complete sentences.

4. Do Now: Write about a day you'd like to forget. \*

5 points

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## Learning Target:

After completing this lesson, I will be able to read two opposing sides of an issue and, after thinking critically, will be able to use the information to develop my own personal viewpoint.

## Debate: Mask vs. No Mask Lesson:

Please read through the following descriptions and instructions. Then, complete the readings and answer the activity questions.

## Introduction:

It's a seemingly simple question that has divided experts and nations since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak: Should members of the public who aren't sick use face masks to limit the spread of the disease?

For months, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention maintained that the only people who needed to wear face masks were people who were ill or those who were treating them. That notion stemmed from the idea that basic medical masks do little to protect wearers, and instead primarily prevent sick people from spewing infectious droplets from their noses and mouths. Plus, limited supplies needed to be prioritized for frontline health workers. The World Health Organization agreed.

While the tide has turned toward a more pro-mask approach in the U.S., some experts have reservations about the policy. Cloth masks are poorly studied, and there isn't much real-world evidence to recommend medical masks to the general public. Such guidelines could also exacerbate shortages of medical masks or backfire if people don't wear their coverings properly or if they are lulled into a false sense of security.

## Instructions:

1. Read this article that argues for wearing masks. Take note of important information.  
<https://www.fastcompany.com/90525567/the-21-best-arguments-for-wearing-a-mask>
2. Read this second article that argues against wearing masks. Take note of important information.  
[https://ballotpedia.org/Arguments\\_against\\_mask\\_requirements\\_during\\_the\\_coronavirus\\_\(COVID-19\)\\_pandemic,\\_2020#Mask\\_requirements\\_are\\_not\\_necessary\\_to\\_stop\\_the\\_spread\\_of\\_coronavirus](https://ballotpedia.org/Arguments_against_mask_requirements_during_the_coronavirus_(COVID-19)_pandemic,_2020#Mask_requirements_are_not_necessary_to_stop_the_spread_of_coronavirus)
3. Fill out the form/worksheet while reflecting on the articles presented.
4. After answering all of the questions and proofreading your answers, submit the form (if participating online) or hold onto your work for a drop off at the school at a later date.

## Assignment Overview:

After reading the two opposing articles, on the subject of wearing masks to stop the spread of COVID19, answer the questions with regard to the arguments and then offer your expert opinion.

### Reference Articles:

<https://www.fastcompany.com/90525567/the-21-best-arguments-for-wearing-a-mask>  
[https://ballotpedia.org/Arguments\\_against\\_mask\\_requirements\\_during\\_the\\_coronavirus\\_\(COVID-19\)\\_pandemic,\\_2020#Mask\\_requirements\\_are\\_not\\_necessary\\_to\\_stop\\_the\\_spread\\_of\\_coronavirus](https://ballotpedia.org/Arguments_against_mask_requirements_during_the_coronavirus_(COVID-19)_pandemic,_2020#Mask_requirements_are_not_necessary_to_stop_the_spread_of_coronavirus)

**Activity Questions:**

One word answers and sentence fragments will not be accepted. Please write your answers in complete sentences and do not be afraid to let your voice be heard.

- 5. 1) In the article, "The 21 Best Arguments For Wearing A Mask," what was the strongest argument for wearing a mask? \* 2 points

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- 6. 2) Why did you feel that the argument from question 1 was so strong? \* 2 points

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- 7. 3) In the article, "Arguments Against Mask Requirements During The Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic, 2020," what was the strongest argument against wearing masks? \* 2 points

*Mark only one oval.*

Option 1

8. 4) Why did you feel that the argument from question 3 was so strong? \* 2 points

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9. 5) Based on the arguments found in the articles, what is your opinion on this debate? It helpful or harmful to require people to wear masks in public? Why? 2 points

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**Five Minute Exit Ticket:**

Reflect on today's lesson and answer the question(s) using complete sentences.

10. Exit Ticket: In your expert opinion, why do you think that people are so divided about this issue of wearing masks? What information did you find in the article that can support your answer? \* 5 points

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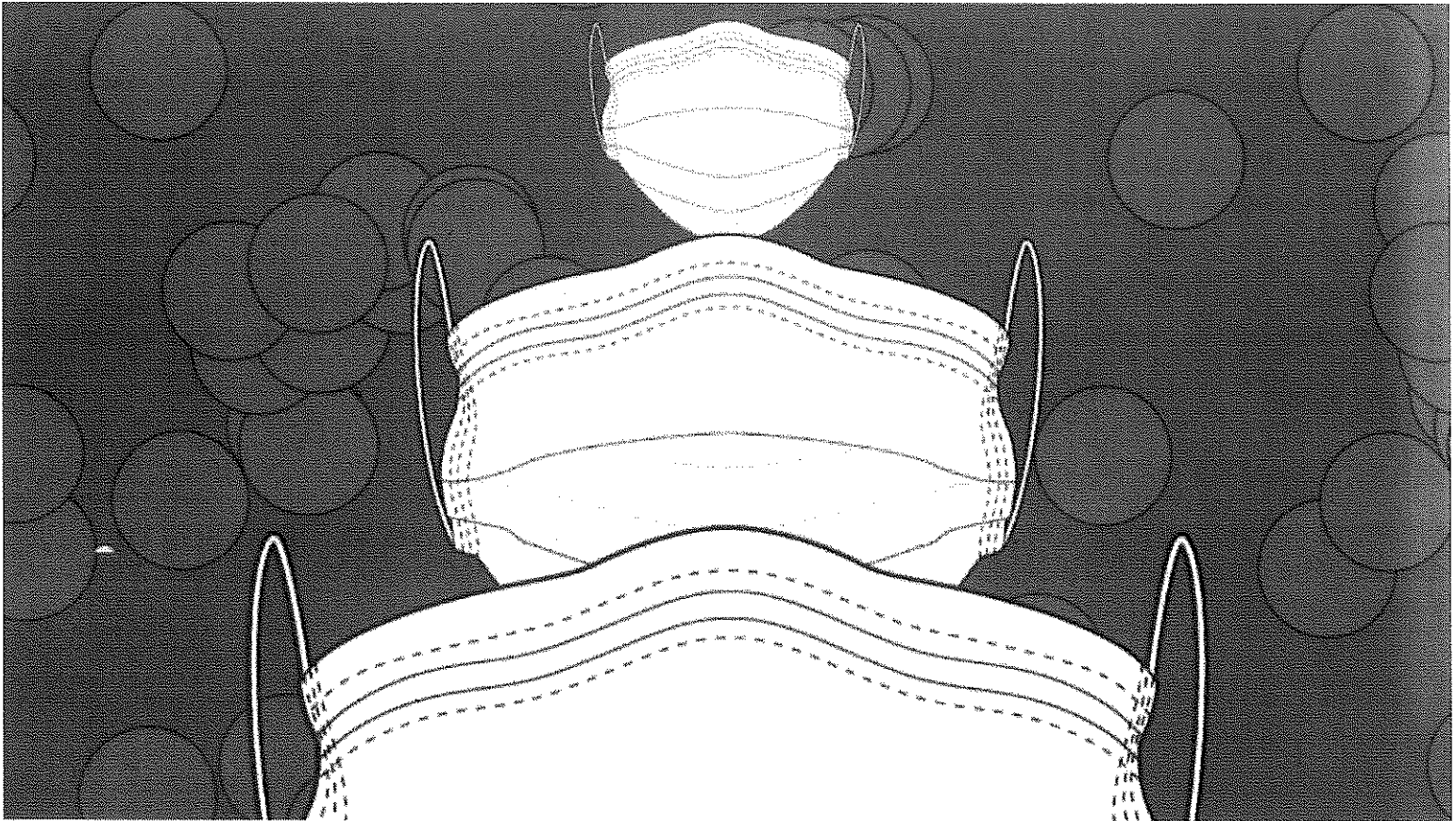
UPDATES: COVID-19

ADVERTISEMENT

07-09-20

# The 21 best arguments for wearing a mask

This is not up for debate.



[Source Image: iStock]





BY MARK WILSON

6 MINUTE READ

COVID-19 is not on its second wave in the United States. It's still on the first. In major states such as California and Texas, cases are on the rise. In fact, there were more new cases of COVID-19 reported in the United States today than on the day when many parts of the country went into quarantine.

Those of us who can stay home should still stay home. But when we're out, we can help thwart the spread of COVID-19 by wearing a mask.

Yes, there has been mixed messaging around masks. The U.S. Surgeon General first recommended *against* wearing masks in February before the CDC did an about-face in April. Now, the global scientific community agrees that wearing a mask is crucial to battling COVID-19.

Here are 21 reasons to wear a mask, addressing just about every naysaying argument imaginable. Of course, *you* already know that you should wear a mask. So share this story with someone who might not.

## **MASKS SAVED US IN PREVIOUS PANDEMICS**

More than a century ago, a nightmare plague threatened to destroy the world. Then within the decade, the Spanish flu tried again. Why didn't either succeed? In part because a doctor developed a mask, and the world began to wear it. [\[Read more\]](#)

[Source Images: onlyyouqj/iStock, 3M]

## **EVERYONE ELSE IS DOING IT**

If you aren't wearing a mask in public at this point, you are in the extreme minority. A Gallup poll discover that 86% of adults had worn a mask when out of their house in the last week. [\[Read more\]](#)

## **MASKS ACTUALLY HELP THE ECONOMY**

Maybe you don't think that you need to wear a mask for yourself or others. Okay. But what about the economy? A recent study by economists at Goldman Sachs found that wearing masks could prevent the U.S. GDP from dropping by 5%. Don't think that's a lot of money? It is. \$1,027,000,000,000 to be exact. (That's over a trillion dollars.) [\[Read more\]](#)

## **YOU CAN BUY THEM CHEAP . . .**

Some companies are charging \$50 for a mask, or more—which is absurd for a tiny piece of cloth. Old Navy has you covered with a five pack of reusable cotton masks for \$12.50. [\[Read more\]](#)

## **. . . SERIOUSLY, CHEAP!**

If Old Navy isn't your thing, that's okay! There are other inexpensive options, too. You can even get a three-pack of organic cotton masks for \$24. [\[Read more\]](#)

## **MASKS AREN'T PERFECT, BUT THEY ARE WAY BETTER THAN NOTHING**

Look, the truth is that your loosely fitted cotton or paper mask isn't guaranteed to protect you and those around you from COVID-19. Even the gold standard N95 mask—which can trap at least 95% of airborne particles passing through it—can be tricky to get sealed perfectly to your face. And without a perfect seal, there are gaps for viruses to flow in and out. But the bottom line is that masks are better than no masks. [\[Read more\]](#)

[Source Images: Komarova Anastasiia/iStock, BlindTurtle/iStock]

## **MASKS ARE A DEFENSE AGAINST LOUSY SOCIAL DISTANCING**

The sad reality is that as more people wear masks, they might start worrying less about social distancing. That's a mistake. Also, it's all the more reason to keep wearing a mask. Other people may be careless, but you're smarter than that. [\[Read more\]](#)

## **THEY'RE FASHIONABLE**

Hazmat, dystopian fashion has been on the rise on catwalks for years. Don't miss this moment to embrace coolness without looking like a try-hard in the process. [\[Read more\]](#)

## **YOU CAN STILL DRINK, IF THAT'S YOUR THING**

We get it. It's 85 degrees outside. You've got your mask on. And all you want to do is take a sip of a refreshing grapefruit White Claw. Well, grab a straw and one of these masks designed with a little door so you can still sip. [\[Read more\]](#)

## **YES, MASKS ARE ANNOYING TO CLEAN. BUT YOU CAN STERILIZE ONE IN YOUR MICROWAVE**

While you can reuse masks of all kinds, most experts recommend some sort of cleaning or sterilization procedure in between wearing. Look no further than your microwave. Following up on your good hygiene with some popcorn is optional but encouraged. [\[Read more\]](#)

[Source Image: Nerthuz/iStock]

## **EVERY MASK IS AN HOMAGE TO HIDDEN FIGURES**

Lien-teh Wu was the Malaysian doctor who proved masks can thwart airborne plagues. Sara Little Turnbull was the designer who suggested that 3M learn how to mold disposable masks that fit on your face, introducing the idea that air filters don't need to be big helmets. And Peter Tsai is the Taiwanese American materials scientist who figured out how to add an electrostatic charge to filters so they can snatch viruses from the air, even when those viruses are so small they should sneak right through the holes inside an N95. Wearing a mask is an ode to their accomplishments. [\[Read more\]](#)

## **TOTALLY GROSS: COVID-19 DROPLETS CAN TRAVEL 20 FEET**

"But I'm standing 6 feet away! I don't need a mask." Wrong. COVID-19 droplets leaving someone's mouth can travel 20 feet in a one mile-per-hour breeze. Masks can help mitigate breathing these droplets out and in. [\[Read more\]](#)

## **BAD VENTILATION IN BUILDINGS FORCES YOU TO BREATHE OLD AIR**

Many buildings in the United States have terrible air circulation. Instead of pumping in fresh air, they recirculate old air that can make us sick. Hospitals aren't exempt. Only 2% to 4% of hospitals offer negative pressure rooms, which use vacuum pressure to contain the viruses you exhale inside its doors. So don't believe for a second that your random office building manager understands epidemiology well enough to ensure your safety. [\[Read more\]](#)

## **BAD VENTILATION ACROSS MOST TRAVEL ISN'T MUCH BETTER**

Oh yeah, air on planes and cruise ships is pretty gnarly, too. Wear the mask. [\[Read more\]](#)

## **HUMIDITY ISN'T HIGH ENOUGH IN MANY BUILDINGS TO STOP AIRBORNE VIRUSES**

A major factor in controlling the spread of airborne viruses is keeping humidity between 40% to 60%. Air with this much moisture helps aerosols drop to the ground faster, rather than evaporating into smaller aerosols that can float in the air for hours at a time. Unfortunately, many buildings keep



humidity far lower than that, increasing the risk of transmission to people inside. [\[Read more\]](#)

## TWO WORDS: TOILET PLUMES

When someone flushes a toilet in a public bathroom, the urine and fecal matter inside is aerosolized into a “plume” that others in the restroom breathe in. Now, maybe you like to breathe poop! No judgment here! We just prefer to wear a mask. [\[Read more\]](#)

## EXERCISE IN A MASK? SURE!

Believe it or not, it *is* possible to exercise in a mask. But you will have to pick the right mask. Chances are, you will not be able to exercise in an N95, because you will breathe so hard, you’ll break the seal around your face (and that seal is why it’s so effective in the first place). But cotton can offer a functional alternative while exercising. And it’s still better than nothing. [\[Read more\]](#)



[Source Images: Massonstock/iStock, katyagrib/iStock, Ranta Images/iStock, wildpixel/iStock]

## YOU CAN AVOID SWEATY HOT FACE

It was a nasty, muggy Fourth of July. But my cotton mask offered notable protection while providing enough breathability to stay comfortable. We have plenty of tips on staying cool by picking the right mask and caring for it properly. [\[Read more\]](#)

## **MASKS DON'T NEED TO MEAN FOGGY GLASSES**

Masks fog glasses, yes. But with a little DIY hacking, that doesn't need to be the case. Now you can live your best mask life and actually see too! [Read more]



[Source Photo: iStock]

## **THEY CAN WORK FOR DEAF PEOPLE AND THE HARD OF HEARING**

People who are hearing-impaired often rely on lipreading to make sense of what you say. There's actually a mask for that! You just need a clear window where your mouth is. [Read more]

## **YOU DON'T WANT TO KILL OTHER PEOPLE, RIGHT?**

In light of everything we've learned about COVID-19 since January, it's important to remember one point in particular. We can be contagious with the virus for up to 72 hours before we have symptoms, over which time we can unwittingly make dozens of other people sick. COVID-19 isn't just an illness; it's a gaslighter. It makes us think we're well until, suddenly, we realize we're not. Wearing a mask protects the people around you. It is the neighborly thing to do. Because even though the U.S. has reopened, the pandemic is still infecting tens of thousands of people every day. We are not out of the woods yet.

# Arguments against mask requirements during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, 2020

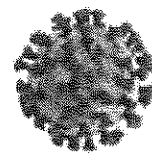
This page captures the **main arguments that have been advanced against mask requirements** during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. These arguments come from a variety of sources, including public officials, journalists, think tanks, economists, scientists, and other stakeholders. We encourage you to share the debates happening in your local community to [editor@ballotpedia.org](mailto:editor@ballotpedia.org).

There are three main types of arguments against mask requirements:

- Mask requirements are not necessary to stop the spread of coronavirus
- Mask requirements inhibit freedom
- There are other health risks from wearing masks
- Mask requirements have harmful social consequences

[Click here to read about arguments in favor of mask requirements.](#)

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**CORONAVIRUS  
COVERAGE**

## Debate over responses to coronavirus pandemic

### Debate topics

Elections • Protests • Religious service restrictions  
• School closures • State lockdowns • Testing

### Taxonomy of arguments by topic

Testing • Mask requirements • School closures •  
Travel restrictions • Lockdown/stay-at-home  
orders • Expansion of absentee/mail-in voting •  
Religious service restrictions

Email \*

SIGN UP

## Mask requirements are not necessary to stop the spread of coronavirus

### Claim: There is insufficient data to support that mask requirements effectively prevent the spread of coronavirus

- **Ashton Forbes, a plaintiff in a lawsuit challenging San Diego County's mask requirements** (*The San Diego Union Tribune*): Ashton Forbes is the plaintiff in a lawsuit challenging San Diego County's mask requirements.

"With new evidence and data coming to light regarding the science and severity of this specific virus, it has become ever more prevalent the requirement to wear a facial covering is not effective in stopping the spread of COVID-19. As such, the requirement to wear a face mask is overbroad and violates fundamental rights of both the United States Constitution as well as the California Constitution." - "San Diego resident sues county over mask orders", June 2, 2020.

### Claim: The curve has been successfully flattened in areas without mask requirements

- **Andrew Cooper, the plaintiff in a lawsuit in Nashua, New Hampshire** (*New Hampshire Union Leader*): Andrew Cooper filed a lawsuit against a mask requirement ordinance of Nashua, New Hampshire.

"The ordinance's justification that 'slowing the spread' of the coronavirus is somehow still a societal objective also ignores the fact that the entire state of New Hampshire has been wildly successful at 'flattening the curve' since it never came close to reaching the

#### Debate by state

Alabama • Alaska • Arizona • Arkansas • California • Colorado • Connecticut • Delaware • Florida • Georgia • Hawaii • Idaho • Illinois • Indiana • Iowa • Kansas • Kentucky • Louisiana • Maine • Maryland • Massachusetts • Michigan • Minnesota • Mississippi • Missouri • Montana • Nebraska • Nevada • New Hampshire • New Jersey • New Mexico • New York • North Carolina • North Dakota • Ohio • Oklahoma • Oregon • Pennsylvania • Rhode Island • South Carolina • South Dakota • Tennessee • Texas • Utah • Vermont • Virginia • Washington • West Virginia • Wisconsin • Wyoming

#### Related coronavirus coverage

Changes to elections • Federal responses • State responses

capacity of its health care system." - "Nashua resident files lawsuit over city's mask mandate", June 1, 2020.

## Claim: Mask requirements risk deemphasizing other necessary public health measures

- **Group of doctors** (*Reason*): A group of scientists and doctors sent a letter to the Editorial Board of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences criticizing a study regarding the effectiveness of masks to slow the spread of the coronavirus and saying that the study's conclusions that "airborne transmission represents the only viable route for spreading the disease" and the ineffectiveness of social distancing, quarantine, and handwashing recommendations was misleading and harmful.

"While masks are almost certainly an effective public health measure for preventing and slowing the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the claims presented in this study are dangerously misleading and lack any basis in evidence." - "Prominent Researchers Say a Widely Cited Study on Wearing Masks Is Badly Flawed", June 22, 2020.

## Mask requirements inhibit freedom

### Claim: Mask requirements are an overreach of government power and are unconstitutional

- **Philip Mauriello, Jr., an attorney representing plaintiffs in a lawsuit challenging San Diego County's mask requirements** (*The San Diego Union Tribune*): Philip Mauriello, Jr., is an attorney representing plaintiffs in a lawsuit challenging San Diego County's mask requirements.

"The requirement of Plaintiff to wear a facial covering in public when not in his residence restricts his right to travel within the County by forcing him to make a decision between wearing a facial covering which provides no medical benefit and in fact creates other collateral health risks, or remain a prisoner in his own home. Either choice violates essential constitutional rights of the Plaintiff." - "San Diego resident sues county over mask orders", June 2, 2020.

- **Brantley Lyons, Montgomery City Councilmember** (*AP*): "I think to make somebody do something or require somebody to wear something is an overreach." - "US virus outbreaks stir clash over masks, personal freedom", June 18, 2020.



## Claim: Mask requirements are a slippery slope and will lead to more government mandates, bureaucracy, and regulations

- **Molly McCann, Of Counsel with Sidney Powell, P.C. (*The Federalist*)**: "To take our freedom from us, people with anti-American agendas have to mobilize some initial quorum of consent from the population. Mandatory masking seeks to build that consent. In addition to extending the fiction that we are in an emergency sufficient to trigger the extra-constitutional authority of local and state executives, mandatory masking acts as a peer pressure-fueled signal that encourages conformity to our coming 'new normal.'" - "Mandatory Masks Aren't About Safety, They're About Social Control", May 27, 2020.

## There are other health risks from wearing masks

### Claim: Wearing masks can cause other health risks

- **Antonio I Lazzarino, medical doctor and epidemiologist (*The BMJ*)**: A letter to the editor of BMJ stated several side effects of wearing a mask.

"(4) Wearing a face mask makes the exhaled air go into the eyes. This generates an uncomfortable feeling and an impulse to touch your eyes. If your hands are contaminated, you are infecting yourself. (5) Face masks make breathing more difficult. For people with COPD, face masks are in fact intolerable to wear as they worsen their breathlessness.[5] Moreover, a fraction of carbon dioxide previously exhaled is inhaled at each respiratory cycle. Those two phenomena increase breathing frequency and deepness, and hence they increase the amount of inhaled and exhaled air. This may worsen the burden of covid-19 if infected people wearing masks spread more contaminated air. This may also worsen the clinical condition of infected people if the enhanced breathing pushes the viral load down into their lungs." - "Covid-19: important potential side effects of wearing face masks that we should bear in mind", April 20, 2020.

# Mask requirements have harmful social consequences

## Claim: Wearing of masks can generate racist reactions

- **Trevon Logan, an economics professor at Ohio State University (CNN ):** "This (wearing a homemade mask) seems like a reasonable response unless you just sort of take American society out of it. When you can't do that, you're basically telling people to look dangerous given racial stereotypes that are out there. This is in the larger context of black men fitting the description of a suspect who has a hood on, who has a face covering on. It looks like almost every criminal sketch of any garden-variety black suspect." - "Why some people of color say they won't wear homemade masks ," April 7, 2020.

## Claim: Mask wearing inhibits communication

### Additional reading

- "How face masks affect our communication " - *BBC*, June 8, 2020

## See also

- Arguments in favor of mask requirements during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, 2020
- Taxonomy of arguments about mask requirements during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, 2020
- Documenting America's Path to Recovery

