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## ART OF MEDICINE

### I Am Not Your Ballot

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#### Abstract

This drawing considers masks' transformation from an evidence-based public health measure to a political symbol during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure. *I Am Not Your Ballot*



#### Media

Digital drawing with Procreate.

COVID-19 has played numerous roles in American social and cultural **polarization**. Politicization of masks, in particular, illuminates how a legitimate public health intervention has been transformed into a daily source of conflict about the appropriate nature and scope of individual persons' freedom to act (even when informed by false, dangerous health beliefs) and the appropriate nature and scope of collective government and institutional legitimacy and authority. Polls indicate a widening gap between Democrats and Republicans over masks use.<sup>1</sup> Just as the voter does in this drawing, so each of us uses a mask to signal our own stance on whether and how to confront a common, invisible enemy to which we are all, but not equally, vulnerable.

### References

1. Bird R, Ritter Z. Is the media creating division on COVID-19 health practices? Gallup. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/312749/media-creating-division-covid-health-practices.aspx>. Published June 23, 2020. Accessed July 13, 2020.

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