

Reflective Paper

I was written down by my RA for repeatedly not wearing a mask on our floor. That is the truth -- and I accept it. The consequences (which are currently slim due to this being my first offence) were brought on me by myself and no one else. In fact, I was almost surprised at the level of peace with which I accepted this news -- it was simply fair.

UCLA has set these mask-demands for a few simple reasons: to stop the spread of COVID-19, publicly conform to the popular agenda, pleasing it's ... , and legally protect it against various litigious suits. That is really it, no crazy hidden reasons or anything deep.

I do not necessarily disagree that wearing masks minimizes the risk of spreading Covid-19, or any other disease for a matter of fact, but, at the same time, I am also a believer in calculated risk. Every day, living our normal day-today-lives, we risk the same lives we live. Somehow (some may blame the click-seeking media or the current liberal government) the COVID-19, while a very serious issue, has become disproportionate in many's minds. We seem to have forgotten that people die from the flu and various other diseases every year and that the average age of death from COVID-19 is higher than the average age of death itself. The chances of me (or anyone around me) dying from Covid are minimal relative to the risk of a fatal car accident on our drive home. Moreover, when people choose the dorms, they are well aware of the bacteria hotbed that it is, and take that risk upon themselves. People who don't want the additional risk of being sick should simply not live in the dorms.

Additionally, in my view, the mask mandate is mostly an outview "look! We are making an effort! You can't sue us!" thing as people wear masks in class, outside, and in the halls during the week, but as soon as the weekend comes around people seem to forget about COVID, attending big packed parties, sharing drinks, and guess what -- not wearing masks. What's the point of forcing it where it barely matters that when it matters, nobody cares.

The situation had no impact on my life and no impact on the life of those around me. Really -- none. It is probably riskier for me if I chose to cross Gayley at night or eat the food at De Neve. Nothing happened

To end the story, I do recognize that wearing a mask in the building is only a small inconvenience for me and hence I won't fight it -- my focus is on becoming a theoretical computer science, not irritating bogged-about-everything politically addemaant person. That being said, I get the people who do choose to fight back, as, in some form, the mask and vaccination matter is a restriction of personal liberties and believe that this, as many things unacceptably are, slippery slopes which lead far away from the end of the slide. Again, though, I do promise to wear my mask because writing this essay was not too much fun. Lastly, as I try to not take life so seriously, I'll end with one last sentence in the words of the great Dylan: "it's alright, Ma, it's life, and life only."