

The Noisy Minority | The Atlantic

By David A. Graham

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The connection between Republican political views and skepticism about COVID-19 precautions, such as mask mandates and vaccine passports, is clear but not intuitive.

While not all unvaccinated people are Republicans, nearly half of Republicans have yet to receive even a single shot, according to a Kaiser Family Foundation poll from late July. Republicans also make up the largest share of opposition to mask mandates in schools and public places, vaccine mandates at work, and vaccine passports to use services and businesses, and GOP politicians have led the charge against these ideas.

The reasons for this are not obvious. Before the current pandemic, vaccine skepticism was not disproportionately common among Republicans. Republicans are not less likely to get sick and die from the coronavirus. And, as conservative vaccine champions like to note, the current vaccines were largely developed during the Trump presidency.

One way to explain the right's resistance to precautions is anti-government sentiment, but as I wrote Thursday, the description doesn't really fit, because enforcing bans on mask mandates and vaccine requirements often requires government to flex its muscles.

[...]

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