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Motivations for California Mask Maskers during the Novel Coronavirus Outbreak

In March of 2020 California experienced an ad hoc homemade mask making revolution during the novel coronavirus crisis. Hearing stories of impending personal protective equipment (PPE) shortages, rationing, re-using and the medical community going with less than the protection required to serve safely on the healthcare battlefield opened up the hearts of many crafters/crafters-to-be in communities across the State of California.

Who were these saints of making and what motivated them to become a new breed of spontaneous maker/volunteer? Their swift activation to respond to virtual pleas from concerned doctors, nurses, and other health care staff, resonated. Many also recognized the face covering needs of our vulnerable public and essential workers (i.e., store clerks, cleaning crews, mail carriers, etc) which was both thoughtful and practical, organized often online, and by whatever means necessary given many were on Stay at Home orders in California.

During the Spanish Flu of 1918 volunteers from the Red Cross sewed masks and gowns in Boston with effort and great skill. Our own call to action over 100 years later in California's crafting/maker community came just as swiftly, only this time minus an organized entity to coordinate distribution efforts. Even before it was a formal recommendation from Health Officers in California for the public to protect

themselves, and well before hospitals were accepting handmade masks, makers were in full swing sewing their hearts out for all of our essential works, family and friends.

This study (conducted summer of 2020) will include an anonymous 10 question survey administered via Google Forms and shared with mask makers to better understand what motivated them to volunteer during the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis. Further, insight from the results may give the emergency management community clues into how to utilize spontaneous volunteers in the future to promote whole community participation.

Presentation Theme: Motivations for Volunteerism - Whole Community Participation

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