

A PATH FORWARD

MASK HYSTERIA: THE RETURN OF THE DEFIANT AND COMPLIANT

BY STEVEN P. DINKIN

The stories have become ubiquitous: Americans eschewing masks, despite evidence of their effectiveness in thwarting the spread of coronavirus.

Even in situations where masks are required, defiance runs rampant — all across the country.

• There's the confrontation that took place last weekend at a Costco in Hillsboro, Ore.: A store employee asks a woman to wear the mask that's dangling from her ear, but the woman refuses, claiming that a mask requirement violates her constitutional rights.

• A mask-less man fights his way into a Walmart in Orlando, Fla., shoving a store employee twice his size — even as another person offers a mask. When he finally leaves the store, the man repeatedly spits on his way out.

• A customer at a Dollar Tree store in Holly, Mich., decides to wipe his nose and face on the sleeve of an employee who tells him that masks are required.

Somehow, the unwanted sharing of bodily fluids has become a badge of honor among the defiant. To these scofflaws, neither store rules nor science seem to matter. A state-by-state analysis by the journal Health Affairs finds a strong correlation between mask-wearing and local rates of coronavirus infections. More masks correlate to



SAUL LOEB AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Maskless people attend Independence Day events at Mount Rushmore in Keystone, S.D., on July 3.

fewer cases, while more relaxed mask-wearing appears to lead to higher rates of infection. Conclusion: masks work.

Yet some state governors aren't thinking clearly about wearing masks. Recently, Gov. Kristi Noem of South Dakota hosted a "masks optional" event at Mount Rushmore that drew hundreds of attendees who sat shoulder-to-shoulder for hours. Gov. Pete Ricketts of Nebraska has threatened to withhold \$100 million in relief funds to municipalities that mandate mask wearing in government offices. And in Texas, Gov. Greg Abbott has at last reversed course, issuing a mask-wearing

mandate in most counties, as coronavirus spreads rapidly there. But the order has 11 exemptions, including churches.

Why is it so hard to persuade people to wear masks? In a recent article in Inc., Harvard psychologist and author Steven Pinker blames tribalism. Mask avoidance is a way to show support for like-minded thinkers — your "teammates" — and express anger at your perceived opponents.

I blame our selfish tendencies. Somehow, mask wearing is considered an affront to personal freedom, with nary a thought or care given to another person's freedom not to get sick. None of us finds it

comfortable, but when was the last time we waged war over the comfort of our (government mandated) seat belts?

Today, 90 percent of us buckle up when we get behind the wheel. But as Daniel Ackerman recalls in Business Insider, the adoption process was slow. A mandate requiring that all cars be equipped with seat belts took effect in 1968. Yet, by 1984, a Gallup Poll found that 65 percent of Americans still opposed seat belts as "ineffective, inconvenient and uncomfortable." Sound familiar?

Now, with mask orders, it's fallen on the shoulders of our front-line workers to get people to comply. The author of the Inc. article, Jessica Stillman, cites the closure of Hugo's Tacos in Los Angeles soon after California mandated public mask wearing. According to the owner, staff endured racist abuse, diatribes about personal liberty and physical attacks by customers who didn't want to wear a mask.

Most employees aren't trained to deal with this type of conflict with customers. And even managers may feel uncomfortable, worried about losing business.

As novel as the pandemic is, there are some tried and true communication strategies that employees and managers can use. Just the other day, I was in Vons when the store manager told a

mask-less customer to leave the store. He did. She used a measured tone, which is usually helpful in diffusing a difficult situation.

So, too, is acknowledging the person's point of view ("I recognize that not everyone believes in wearing a mask") and explaining why the policy is in place ("As manager, I need to protect the health of all our customers. Some are considered vulnerable because of their age or underlying health conditions. Thanks for understanding.") These aren't easy conversations to have. No doubt, a customer or two could be lost. But, in the end, much more will be gained.

So, what should you do, if you're mask compliant and someone else isn't? My advice: Resist the urge to confront the person. Instead, cross the street or get out of their way — an action that demonstrates the power of body language. By stepping aside, you throw the other person off balance, because they're expecting your hostility. The defiant is defeated. You — the compliant one — are in control.

And that's nothing to sneeze at. Now mask up.

Dinkin is president of the National Conflict Resolution Center, a San Diego-based group working to create solutions to challenging issues, including intolerance and incivility. To learn about NCRC's programming, visit ncrconline.com

NOTEBOOKS

From Union-Tribune reporting staff

PUBLIC SAFETY: TERI FIGUEROA

Academy to stop teaching carotid hold

SAN MARCOS

Palomar College Police Academy will no longer teach its cadets the carotid restraint, school officials announced Friday.

"Effective last week, the tactic is no longer being employed or used in the academy setting, period," Michael Andrews, director of public safety programs at the college, said in a news release. "We won't even use it as an example. It will just simply be erased from training."

The college said that Andrews was among police academy leaders around the region who raised concerns about the hold, in which the neck is intentionally compressed to cut off blood to the brain. When the restraint is applied correctly, the person can fall unconscious.

"There are many other policing tactics which, when employed properly, can be productive," Andrews said. "There is no need for this particular tactic."

Such restraints have come under renewed scrutiny following the death of George Floyd on May 25 in Minneapolis.

The move to end using the carotid restraint swept through law enforcement agencies in the region quickly after San Diego Police Chief David Nisleit announced June 1 that his department would no longer use the move.

Two days later, every major policing agency in the region — including the San Diego County Sheriff's Department — followed suit.

By the end of the week, California Gov. Gavin Newsom had ordered the state commission that oversees police training no longer allow use of the hold to be taught.

The state Legislature is considering a bill that would ban the restraint as well as chokeholds.

Police leaders have said the carotid restraint can resolve incidents before the need to use deadlier force such as a gun. Critics say the restraint as dangerous and sometimes deadly, and disproportionately used on people of color.

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RICH PEDRONCELLI AP

Shirley Weber says this unrest is like a combination of other riots.

GOVERNMENT: CHARLES T. CLARK

Shirley Weber on racial injustice

Assemblywoman Shirley Weber was interviewed for a June 27 profile in The San Diego Union-Tribune's "Phenomenal Women" series.

The profile focused mainly on Weber's early years, her career as an educator and her reluctant foray into politics.

Weber — who last year authored a high-profile bill to address police accountability — also talked at length about the ongoing protests against police brutality and racial injustice.

Here are some of her comments:

On the killing of George Floyd as a tipping point.

Weber: Having gone through the Watts Riots, Rodney King, Martin Luther King, all these riots that have existed, this is like a combination of all of them put together with the high level of frustration.

It is like a perfect storm. You have a situation where there is a pandemic and people sitting there frustrated that the government is not responding to their personal needs and they're not getting guidance from Washington. Then on top of that you have this guy on television, this man has his knee on his neck.

With the ones (incidents of police brutality or killings) in the past people could find a way to rationalize it. Even with Rodney King people would go, "Oh it was dark; you couldn't really see; was he running from police?" You justify the things that you saw even though it was absolutely horrible. You'd rationalize it. This particular death was without any rationalization, though. You couldn't rationalize how this man died, other than there was an abuse of authority and an attack on a Black man, and it fit into the

other cases you had just seen.

On the athletes who have advanced the conversation.

Weber: This is the first time the athletes have really been involved. Oftentimes one or two might say something, but when an athlete says we might not restart the NBA season because that could take away from the movement, that's whoa. You are thinking political, and you are thinking beyond yourself and your own salary.

On young people realizing they can make a difference.

Weber: It is different than what we've seen before and the whole concept that people can make a difference. They don't have to wait for you guys (news media) to validate them. These young people have phones; they can make videos, they can distribute them widely and they can organize people to come somewhere in a matter of seconds. The ability to organize and mobilize around the world is amazing, and I think it'll make a difference.

On the staying power of the movement.

Weber: I think it is a different time, a different movement. And people seem to be focused on the real cause of it, rather than just putting a patch on it. It has really rocked every corner of this state and every corner of the nation. Before, it'd hit LA, Detroit, maybe Philly, a couple of big cities like that. But now my colleagues talk about the protests and activity in their little small cities now, so they all have to pay attention.

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SAN DIEGO: ANDREA LOPEZ-VILLAFANA

City seeks artists for public projects

The city is accepting applications for a public art project that would put temporary artwork at city parks and simultaneously help artists struggling to find work because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Park Social initiative is the city's largest undertaking to commission temporary projects from local artists, officials said. It would task about 18 local artists with creating temporary "social specific" artwork for some of the city's parks.

Each artist would be given a budget of about \$15,000 that would cover the costs of design, production, transportation, installation and removal. The artwork or installations would remain for up to six months.

"Artists play a vital role in our creative ecosystem and serve as cultural connectors," said Christine Jones, chief of civic art strategies in the city's Commission for Arts and Culture. "The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on artists is projected to last for months, if not years. Because of the recent COVID-19 stay-at-home order many artists were left with few ways to ex-

hibit their work and or generate income through gig economy work."

The city's Commission for Arts and Culture launched the Park Social initiative in June. The initiative is funded by an anonymous donor and the city's public art fund.

The projects can be art installations, performance art, art events and interactive art. Sites have not been identified but would be located in each of the nine city council districts.

Artists must complete an online application and submit work samples, a letter of interest, resume, references and proof they live in San Diego County. Applications are due Aug. 3 and must be submitted online: <https://sandiego.seamlessdocs.com/ff/parksocial>.

A panel of representatives from the Parks and Rec Department, the Commission's Public Art Committee and two visual art professionals will review the applications.

The city plans to select winners by October. Work is expected to begin by December.

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

S.D.'S FIRST ICE CREAM PARLOR OPENED IN 1880S

July is National Ice Cream Month, prompting this look back through the newspaper archives for stories of San Diego's ice cream history. Many notable ice cream parlors have come and gone in San Diego, but the grandest of them all may have been the first: Isidor Louis' Maison Doree.

From an advertisement published in The San Diego Union on July 12, 1883:

GRAND OPENING ~ OF THE ~ ICE CREAM SEASON AT THE HANDSOME PARLOR OF THE MAISON DOREE TODAY

LADIES WHO ARE IN THE HABIT OF GIVING AFTERNOON AND EVENING PARTIES WILL PLEASE CALL AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH MR. ISIDOR LOUIS FOR ICE CREAM. REMEMBER: THE FINEST QUALITY OF CREAM, AND AT LOW FIGURES.

In about 1880 Isidor Louis, an early San Diego entrepreneur, opened an "oyster and ice cream saloon" on Fifth Avenue in San Diego.

Louis was not the first to person to make ice cream in San Diego, but his was probably the first successful local commercial ice cream parlor.

Later remodeled and expanded, Louis' Maison Doree — which included an ice cream parlor, soda fountain, oyster bar, "cigar and tobacco department" and private dining rooms — was located on the ground floor of Louis' Bank of Commerce building.

The establishment took its name from the grand French "La Maison Dorée" or "Gilded House" restaurant in Paris. Louis' ornate building, which housed the ice cream parlor, still stands at 835 5th Avenue in San Diego's Gaslamp Quarter.

According to a report in the San Diego Sun on April 29, 1882, those who attended the formal opening of Maison Doree were treated to a cosmopolitan venue:

"This popular establishment, the property of Mr. Isidor Louis, after having for several weeks undergone a complete overhauling, was thrown open to the public last night

amid scenes as brilliant as its name suggests," The Sun reported. "The large crowds that thronged the place were agreeably surprised at the change that has been wrought. All expected, from sundry hints thrown out by Mr. Louis, that it would be one of the most beautiful and enticing places of like nature in Southern California, but none had any thought that their most lavish ideas would be surpassed."

"THE ROOMS Have been enlarged in all quarters. The general refreshment room, 20x30, is fitted up in gorgeous style. At the right as you enter is the cigar and tobacco department, and on the counter is a fine soda fountain, costing \$800, from which, as if by magic process, may be procured a dozen different drinks. At the left of the front entrance are six small private rooms, all fitted up regardless of expense. Above the door of each is printed the name of some city, New York, Boston, Chicago, St. Louis, San Francisco and San Diego — the six largest cities in the

United States — being represented. In each room is a tasty table, with a seating capacity of four. Beautiful curtains hang IN FLEECY FOLDS At the entrance, each being looped up at either side and clasped at the top by a magnificent tasseled button."

According to Jerry MacMullen, a long-time San Diego newspaper reporter, author and historian, Louis imported ice from Lake Tahoe, 40 tons at a time, and used hand-cranked freezers to make his ice cream.

In addition to the Maison Doree, Louis also owned several other commercial enterprises. In early 1887 he opened Louis' Opera House a few blocks away on the east side of Fifth Street between B and C streets and the newspapers no longer mention the once grand ice cream parlor.

HISTORICAL PHOTOS AND ARTICLES FROM THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE ARCHIVES ARE COMPILED BY MERRIE MONTEAGUDO. SEARCH THE U-T HISTORIC ARCHIVES AT NEWSLIBRARY.COM/SITES/SDUB

