

# Psychology Departmental Seminar

## “Weird” or “Socially Responsible”? Differences In Mask-Wearing Between Chinese And Non-Chinese Canadians Early In The COVID-19 Pandemic

Friday, September 25, 2020, 3:00 PM

For the Zoom link and passcode, please ask Jeremy Caplan

<jcaplan@ualberta.ca>

Everyone is Welcome!



The COVID-19 pandemic altered Canadians' lives in multiple ways, one of which was the new practice of mask-wearing. Although community mask-wearing is considered a normative practice in some Asian countries (e.g., Japan, China, South Korea), individuals in North America were rather ambivalent about it early in the pandemic. The present study aims to understand why Asians were more “pro-mask” than North Americans, and to promote interethnic understanding on the use of masks. This research utilizes a mixed-method approach that incorporates surveys and focus group interviews conducted from April to June, 2020, to compare (1) the frequency of mask-wearing between Chinese and non-Chinese Canadians, and (2) their reasons and underlying perceptions around the use of masks. Preliminary results indicate that in general, non-Chinese Canadians wore masks significantly less often than Chinese Canadians, potentially due to the tendency of perceiving mask-wearers as health-compromised, strange, and overreactive. As well, non-Chinese Canadians were less likely to wear masks than their counterparts for non-medical reasons, and were hesitant to regard mask-wearing as a demonstration of social responsibility because of concerns around supply and improper wear. Implications on preventative health practices and interethnic relations will be discussed.

For more information about Doris Zhang and the Intercultural Communication Lab, visit  
<http://sites.psych.ualberta.ca/IClab/>



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