WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A directional lock, comprising:

a housing defining an interior space, a first opening and a second opening, wherein each of the first and second openings communicates with the interior space;

a sleeve movably coupled to the housing, the sleeve including a catch element, the sleeve being displaceable between a first displacement position and a second displacement position; and

at least one lock element disposed within the housing, the lock element having a first aperture configured to receive a core element and a second aperture to cooperate with the catch element;

wherein the lock element is movable between a first position, in which the first aperture is aligned with the first opening and the second opening, and a second position, in which the first aperture is not aligned with the first opening and the second opening, and

wherein displacement of the sleeve from the first displacement position to the second displacement position causes the catch element to at least assist or initiate movement of the lock element from the first position toward the second position at least to an intermediate position.

2. The directional lock ~~of Claim~~according to claim 1, wherein the lock element is ~~a lock washer.~~

~~3. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the lock element is~~ pivotally coupled to the housing for rotation about a fixed pivot axis~~.~~.

~~4. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims,~~ wherein preferably, a pivot axis of the lock element is movable relative to the housing.

3~~5~~. The directional lock according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the sleeve is disposed within the housing.

4~~6~~. The directional lock according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the sleeve comprises a conduit portion through which the core can pass.

5~~7~~. The directional lock according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the catch element comprises a catch arm and a catch end~~.~~, and

~~8. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the catch end of the catch element is round.~~

~~9. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein a surface of the catch end that contacts the lock element is non-planar.~~

~~10. The directional lock of Claim 9,~~ wherein the catch end is configured to catch or engage the lock element when the sleeve is displaced from the first displacement position to the second displacement position~~.~~, preferably

~~11. The directional lock according to Claim 10,~~ wherein the catch arm is narrower in width than the second aperture of the lock element~~.~~ and/or

~~12. The directional lock according to Claim 11, wherein~~ the catch end is wider in width than the second aperture of the lock element.

6~~13~~. The directional lock according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the sleeve includes at least one stop-guide~~.~~, preferably

~~14. The directional lock according to Claim 13,~~ wherein the stop-guide is configured to engage the housing so as to stop displacement of the sleeve at the second displacement position~~.~~ and/or

~~15. The directional lock according to either one of Claims 13 or 14,~~ wherein the stop-guide is configured to engage the housing so as to stop displacement.

~~16. The directional lock according to any one of Claims 13-15, wherein the stop-guide is positioned on the conduit portion.~~

~~17. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the sleeve includes a cuff.~~

7~~18~~. The directional lock according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the sleeve is displaceable from the second displacement position to the first displacement position.

8~~19~~. The directional lock according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the ~~sleeve is displaced from the first displacement position to the second displacement position during donning.~~

~~20. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the~~ housing includes a displacement slot~~.~~, preferably

~~21. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims,~~ wherein the displacement slot is an elongate slot~~.~~ preferably

~~22. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims,~~ wherein the displacement slot includes at least a first stop end and~~.~~

~~23. The directional lock according to Claim 22, wherein the first stop end limits displacement of the sleeve.~~

~~24. The directional lock according to either one of Claims 22 or 23, wherein the stop guide abuts or engages the first stop end in the second displacement position.~~

~~25. The direction lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the displacement slot includes~~ a second stop end.

~~26. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein a difference between the first displacement position and the second displacement position is a displacement distance.~~

~~27. The directional lock according to Claim 26, wherein the displacement distance is an initial displacement.~~

9~~28~~. The directional lock according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein a distance between the first displacement position and the second displacement position is a linear distance.

~~29. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims wherein the lock element is angularly movable.~~

1~~3~~0. The directional lock according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the difference between the first position and the second position of the lock element is an angular distance or rotation.

~~3~~11. The directional lock according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein linear displacement of the sleeve translates to angular movement of the lock element.

~~32. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the difference between the first position and the second position of the lock element is a function of the difference between the first displacement position and the second displacement position.~~

~~33. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the angular distance is a function of the displacement distance.~~

~~34. The direction lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the intermediate position of the lock element is between the first and second positions.~~

~~35. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the intermediate position is the same as the second position.~~

~~36. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the lock.~~

12~~37~~. The directional lock according to any one of the preceding c~~C~~laims ~~1-35~~, wherein the lock element does not contact~~s~~ the catch element in the second position.

~~38. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the catch end moves along the elongate slot during displacement.~~

~~39. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the catch end catches or pulls the lock element into activation with the core element.~~

13~~40~~. The direction lock according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the catch element comprises a catch arm and a catch end and the catch end catches or pull~~she~~s the lock element into activation with the core element.

14~~1~~. The directional lock according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the catch element comprises a catch arm and a catch end and the catch end catches or pushes the lock element into activation with the core element~~end abuts the locking element during movement between the first position and the intermediate position~~.

15~~42~~. The directional lock according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claim~~s~~ 10 or any one of claims 11-14 when dependent on claim 10, ~~wherein a first difference between the first position and the intermediate position is less than a second difference between the intermediate position and the second position.~~

~~43. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein a ratio of second difference to first difference is 3:1.~~

~~44. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims,~~ wherein a ratio of second difference to first difference is one of: ~~5:1, 4:1, 3:1, 2:1.~~

~~45. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein a ratio of second difference to first difference is one of: 2.1 to 3.9:1, or 1.1 to 4.9:1.~~

~~46. The directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, wherein a ratio of second difference to first difference is one of:~~ 1 to 5:1, 2 to 5:1, 3 to 5:1, 2 to 4:1, 1 to 4:1, 1 to 3:1.

~~47. A headgear assembly, comprising:~~

~~a directional lock according to any of the preceding claims, and~~

~~a biasing element connected to the sleeve.~~

~~48. The headgear assembly according to Claim 47, wherein the sleeve is displaced from the first displacement position to the second displacement position during donning.~~

~~49. The headgear assembly according to either one of Claims 47-48, wherein the sleeve is displaced during an initial extension of the biasing element.~~

~~50. The headgear assembly according to any one of Claims 47-49, wherein the sleeve is displaced from the first displacement position to the second displacement position during an initial extension of the biasing element.~~

~~51. The headgear assembly according to any one of Claims 47-50, wherein the sleeve is displaced from the second displacement position to the first displacement position when the biasing element retracts.~~

~~52. The headgear assembly according to any one of Claims 47-51, wherein the sleeve is displaced from the second displacement position to the first displacement position when the biasing element is fully retracted.~~

~~53. A directional lock, comprising:~~

~~a core element;~~

~~at least one lock element, the lock element having an aperture through which the core element passes;~~

~~a lock activator configured to activate, promote, or assist movement of the lock element.~~

~~54. The directional lock of Claim 53, wherein the lock activator is configured to activate, promote or assist movement of the lock element during initial displacement or elongation of the headgear.~~

~~55. The directional lock of Claims 53 or 54, wherein the lock activator is configured to activate prior to any elongation of the headgear.~~

~~56. The directional lock of any one of Claims 53-55 in combination with the features of any one of Claims 2-52.~~

~~57. A directional lock, comprising:~~

~~a housing defining an interior space, a first opening and a second opening, wherein each of the first and second openings communicates with the interior space;~~

~~a brake element defined by or supported by the housing;~~

~~at least one lock element disposed within the housing;~~

~~a core element that passes through one or both of the first and second openings of the housing and engages the lock element such that movement of the core element relative to the housing causes rotation of the lock element;~~

~~wherein the lock element is movable relative to the housing between a first position, which provides a first level of resistance to rotation of the lock element, and a second position, which provides a second level of resistance to rotation of the lock element, wherein the second level of resistance is higher than the first level; and~~

~~wherein the second level of resistance is caused at least in part by contact between the lock element and the brake element.~~

~~58. The directional lock of Claim 53, wherein the lock element is a pinion.~~

~~59. The directional lock of Claim 54, wherein the core element is a rack.~~

~~60 The directional lock of Claim 53, wherein the lock element comprises a pair of rollers.~~

~~61. The directional lock of Claim 53 or 56, wherein the core element is a filament.~~

~~62. A directional lock, comprising:~~

~~a housing defining an interior space, a first opening and a second opening, wherein each of the first and second openings communicates with the interior space;~~

~~a rack and pinion mechanism comprising:~~

~~a pinion positioned within the interior space and rotatable relative to the housing, the pinion configured to move between a first displacement position and a second displacement position; and~~

~~a rack engaged with the pinion and configured to move through the first and second openings of the housing; and~~

a brake attached to the housing,

wherein the pinion is rotatable in the first displacement position and the rack is movable in a direction toward the first displacement position relative to the second displacement position, and

wherein the pinion engages the brake in the second displacement position and the brake inhibits rotation of the pinion which inhibits movement of the rack in a direction toward the second displacement position relative to the first displacement position.

63. The directional lock of Claim 58, wherein the pinion includes a gear with teeth, and the rack has a plurality of teeth that mesh with the teeth of the gear.

64. The directional lock of Claim 58 or 59, the pinion further comprising flanges positioned on opposite sides of the gear, wherein the brake engages the flanges to inhibit rotation of the pinion.

65. The directional lock of any of Claims 58-60, wherein the pinion has an axle that engages slots within the housing, and the axle moves laterally within the slots between the first and second displacement positions.

66. A directional lock, comprising:

a housing defining an interior space, a first opening and a second opening, wherein each of the first and second openings communicates with the interior space;

at least one roller positioned within the interior space and rotatable relative to the housing, the at least one roller configured to move between a first displacement position and a second displacement position; and

a filament engaged with the at least one roller, the filament configured to move through the first and second openings of the housing; and

at least one bearing surface positioned within the housing and configured to engage the at least one roller,

wherein the at least one roller is rotatable in the first position and the filament is movable in a direction toward the first displacement position relative to the second displacement position, and

~~wherein the at least one roller engages the at least one bearing surface in the second position and the at least one bearing surface inhibits rotation of the at least one roller which inhibits movement of the filament in a direction toward the second displacement position relative to the first displacement position.~~

~~67. The directional lock of Claim 62, wherein the at least one roller includes a pair of rollers, and the filament travels between the pair of rollers.~~

~~68. The directional lock of Claim 62 or 63, the at least one roller further comprising a tread positioned on an outer surface of the at least one roller and formed from at least one of an elastomeric, compressible or tactile material.~~

~~69. The directional lock of any of Claims 62-64, wherein the pinion has an axle that engages slots within the housing, and the axle moves laterally within the slots between the first and second displacement positions.~~