

AMA Journal of Ethics®

November 2024, Volume 26, Number 11: E890-891

ART OF MEDICINE

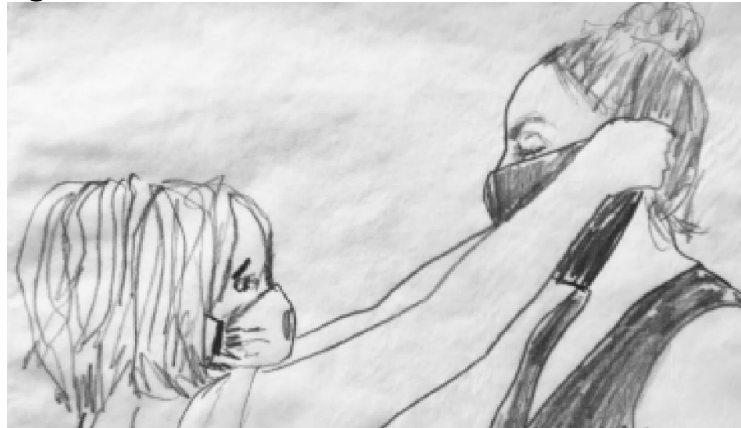
Our Masks

Megan Hildebrandt, MFA

Abstract

In this short animation, the artist and her daughter discuss wearing masks during the COVID-19 pandemic. Her daughter's statements reveal one way a child processed growing up with masks and masking.

Figure. Still from *Our Masks*, 2021



[Click here to view the video.](#)

Media

Hand-drawn still from an animation.

This animation depicts a conversation between my daughter, June, then 9 years old, and me. We discuss what it is like to **wear masks nearly all the time**, and she talks about which styles of mask she favors. One key theme that recurred in conversation with friends and colleagues during the COVID-19 pandemic was disruptions in the everyday lives of our children. My family's goal during this period was to maintain, as much as possible, a sense of calm and safety in our children's lives.

In this animation, June's voice and **lived experience of the COVID-19** pandemic are given the same importance and weight as mine. This equality is important to represent ethically and aesthetically, perhaps as a correction to when we fell short, culturally, by not always listening closely to how our children were feeling during those years. Looking

back now, many of us consider possible “learning losses” our children suffered during those years spent learning remotely.

Perhaps other mothers find themselves and their own children in conversations like the one represented here in hand-drawn animation.

Megan Hildebrandt, MFA is an associate professor of practice in the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Texas in Austin. She received her BFA from the Stamps School of Art & Design in 2006 and her MFA in studio art from the University of South Florida in 2012. Hildebrandt has exhibited nationally and internationally, including at the Painting Center, New American Paintings, the Baltimore Museum of Art, Arlington Arts Center, HEREarts Center, Latitude 53, Johns Hopkins Medical Center, the LIVESTRONG Foundation, Hyde Park Art Center, the Torpedo Factory, and Collar Works.

Citation

AMA J Ethics. 2024;26(11):E890-891.

DOI

10.1001/amajethics.2024.890.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Author disclosed no conflicts of interest.

The viewpoints expressed in this article are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the AMA.