

AMA Journal of Ethics®

March 2021, Volume 23, Number 3: E285-286

ART OF MEDICINE

Water Stewardship, Health Stewardship

Tsz Yuen Au and Hiu Ting Law

Abstract

During the COVID-19 pandemic, masking and hand hygiene are key to individual and public health. Yet many people do not have access to clean water. This painting reiterates the importance of water for health and reminds us to be grateful stewards of this precious natural resource.

Figure. *Hand Hygiene*, by Hiu Ting Law



Media

Acrylic painting.

Caption

Wearing masks and keeping our hands clean are key health practices for surviving the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, for those of us without access to clean and safe water, protection against SARS-CoV-2 and other contagions is compromised.^{1,2} In the painting, one pair of hands washes under a stream of water of unknown source from above, visually suggesting the importance of water for washing and drinking and our obligations to be its attentive stewards. We don't know whose hands these are or where in the world these hands are. They could be ours; they could be yours.

References

1. Global WASH fast facts. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Reviewed April 11, 2016. Accessed September 17, 2020. [https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/global/wash_statistics.html#:~:text=Worldwide%2C%20780%20million%20people%20do,world's%20population\)%201%2C%203](https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/global/wash_statistics.html#:~:text=Worldwide%2C%20780%20million%20people%20do,world's%20population)%201%2C%203)
2. Gwimbi P, George M, Ramphalile M. Bacterial contamination of drinking water sources in rural villages of Mohale Basin, Lesotho: exposures through neighbourhood sanitation and hygiene practices. *Environ Health Prev Med*. 2019;24(1):33.

Tsz Yuen Au is a medical student at Poznan University of Medical Sciences in Europe. Other than medicine, he is also interested in photography, visual arts, and social sciences.

Hiu Ting Law is a young Hong Kong artist. She graduated from the Academy of Visual Arts, HKBU, and is currently training to be a Visual Art teacher at EdUHK. Her artworks have been exhibited in various museums in Hong Kong.

Citation

AMA J Ethics. 2021;23(3):E285-286.

DOI

10.1001/amajethics.2021.285.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

The author(s) had no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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

Copyright 2021 American Medical Association. All rights reserved.
ISSN 2376-6980