360°

Masking our Personhood

JUNE 18, 2021 | RAEGAN ALPAUGH

https://youtu.be/MwxAMZkbCqY?list=TLGGvWQnECEkNNEyMjAzMjAyMg

Expert Contributor Roger Scruton's Personal Page

Mask mandates are finally lifting, bringing us one happy step closer to the normal human interaction we've longed for since early 2020. The COVID experience has reminded us of what it means to be human and appear as one.

Who would have thought a mask covering our nose, mouth, and chin could possibly destroy our entire presentation as human beings? Who knew that we would so completely miss the smile of total strangers on the street or in a grocery store?

Well, Roger Scruton did—and no doubt would've weighed in on the impact masks have had on our human interaction. Sir Roger had been writing about the importance of the human face for many years.

In the video above, Scruton asks us to revisit the concept of the person. He further explains in his book "Soul of the World" that the face actually plays a distinct role in our personhood:

"The concept of the face, I argue, belongs with those of freedom and responsibility as part of the interpersonal understanding of the world. That is to say, in seeing an array of features as a face, I do not understand it biologically, as the invisible film that encases another brain and lets in, through eyes and ears, the information that the brain is processing. I understand it as the real presence, in our shared world, of *you*."

According to Scruton, the eyes are not the only window to the soul, but the entire *face* is. Now mask-less, we are opening that window once again—and our humanity is surely thanking us for it. The face expresses the essence of our personhood and far more communication than our language.

As Steve Kelley suggests below, dogs get it.

So, why don't we all join the party with Rover, as able and desired?

© 2022 Praxis Circle. All rights reserved. Printed from https://praxiscircle.com/blog/masking-our-personhood/

(By Steve Kelley, whose always clever work we have already referenced here and here!)

© 2022 Praxis Circle. All rights reserved. Printed from https://praxiscircle.com/blog/masking-our-personhood/