

# SCOPE

2019



SCOPE 2019



# Editor's Note

During medical training, students are often taught that medicine is more of an art than a science. This concept can be puzzling to anyone whose educational focus has been consumed by medical facts and clinical knowledge, but it's a valid observation. Even the most science-minded individuals can identify the similarities between these disciplines. There is something innately human about both art and medicine.

*Scope* is a publication where these specialties intersect. The magazine was created to foster an outlet for our SIU School of Medicine community to share their talents and serve as an inspiration to us all.

We would like to sincerely thank the authors, artists, staff and faculty who contributed to the 2019 edition of *Scope*. They have produced a vibrant volume full of creativity and artistry. We hope you enjoy it!

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# Kathryn Waldyke, MD

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Faculty, Physician Assistant program

## Eclipse II: Day Of

Hot and sunny,  
Clear and bright—  
Perfect day for it

Thirty of my  
Closest friends—  
In my yard we sit

Or lie down flat  
On towels—  
Face up to the sky

Waiting, watching  
For the start  
Who'll be first to spy

A slight shrinking  
Of the sun?  
Please protect your eyes!

I've got plenty—  
Twenty pair—  
Glasses that look geek

Don't be stupid,  
Gaze without  
Until we're at peak

That peak—O Wow!  
Just past two  
What we want to see

The diamond ring!  
Fiery rim  
Solar jewels for free

The world gets dark  
Crickets sing  
Even chickens roost.

Coyotes howl—  
Kidding?! No  
We heard them cut loose

Too soon it's done;  
Sun creeps back;  
Darkness cooled the breeze.

Glasses back on  
To look up;  
Crescents under trees

Hear the traffic  
On the road  
Starting to pick up

Soon friends pack up  
Hop in cars  
Can't you stay to sup?

Gotta get to  
Here or there  
With the multitude

Gonna be a  
Lot of cars—  
Hope folks aren't too rude

All too quickly  
Back to life  
Like it never was

Most amazing  
Sight in life!  
But it is, because.



**Selenophilia** - loving the moon & finding it  
soothingly captivating

Digital Photograph

# Lacey Rokita

Student, Class of 2020

THIRD PLACE, ART



**Blurry Vision**

Watercolor and Ink



## Beyond Bedside

“Hello Mr. Travers, how are you doing? My name is Iko, I’m a second-year medical student, and I’m here to take a comprehensive history and physical exam of you tonight,” I said briskly, with the brightest smile I could muster up at 12:30 AM on a Monday night.

The patient slowly turned away from the blaring TV and squinted at me with his icy blue eyes. “So are you actually asking me how I’m doing? Or are you just going to continue spitting out stupid rhetorical questions?” he snarled.

I lowered my smile and sighed. Great, this was one of those patients.

If you were to go to a thesaurus and look up the exact opposite of the word “serene,” I guarantee that it would say “Emergency Department.” I had been walking around this place with my physician mentor since 1 PM. From 1 PM to midnight, patients had collectively decided to siege the Emergency Department like a scene out of Lord of the Rings. After midnight, the department suddenly turned silent as patients trickled in at a snail’s pace. I hadn’t actually planned on staying this long into the night. My school wanted me to conduct a 45-minute comprehensive history and physical exam, but my mentor wanted me to wait until the Emergency Department calmed down a bit after midnight. Once it did, he sent me in to see the only patient left in the department: Mr. Travers. So here I was, praying for someone with the patience to sit through 45 minutes of my presence, yet standing in front of an 85 year old man that looked like he would rather prefer to kill me with his spork for interrupting his midnight episode of “Golden Girls.”

“Um...no, no I’m sorry, of course, how are you doing tonight, sir?”

“Well, I’ve been stuck in this bed for the last three hours, the doctor and nurses are complaining about me outside where they think I can’t hear them, and this pineapple Jell-O tastes like a giant booger in a cup,” shaking the food tray lying next to his bed. “So overall, how am I doing tonight? Not so great, kid.”

Well, this is off to a great start, I thought sarcastically. However, I had to hand it to him, Mr. Travers wasn't necessarily wrong about any of his complaints. Sitting alone in a cold white room, far away from home, with only the TV to keep him company didn't sound like fun. His callousness certainly hadn't made him any friends in the Emergency Department either. Last but not least, the hospital food regularly made Taco Bell look like a Michelin Star establishment.

"Well, I'm sorry to hear that, Mr. Travers. Let's start with what brought you into the hospital today. I saw that you came in to see us because you were having some chest pain? Can you tell me a bit more about this? When did it start?"

"I told all of this to the nurses and doctor, why are you asking me the same crap over again?" he growled.

"Well sir, I'm a medical student, and my school wants me to learn how to take a history and physical exam. I really appreciate your help with this," I said, giving him a big smile. "Now, can you tell me more about the chest pain? Was it a dull ache? Or, um, maybe was it more sharp and painful?"

"Was what painful? The chest pain, or sitting here talking to you?" he replied. My face turned red, and my smile turned into a grimace. Upon seeing my reaction, Mr. Travers grinned from ear to ear. He was absolutely relishing this.

"Okay, I understand that you're frustrated, but there is no reason to take it out on me. The doctors, nurses, medical staff, and I are all just trying to help you, and if you don't get that —," I began exclaiming. Mr. Travers raised his hand and sharply cut me off, "Alright, alright, calm down there bronco. I'll play ball and answer all of your questions and do your little physical exam if you do something for me afterwards."

"What?" I said, cautiously.

"Get. Real. Not a single person in this hospital has talked to me like an actual person since I've arrived, and it's getting on my nerves. Look, I'm basically discharged and ready to leave, but I still have about an hour to kill until my ride gets here to pick me up from the hospital. So, if you just sit your heinie down, cut the shit, and talk like a real human being, I'll give you whatever you need."

I paused for a second, then sat down. I can't sit here forever just talking to this Dollar Tree version of Clint Eastwood. I have that exam to

study for, I thought, but he's definitely going to give me a hard time unless I go along with his plan. "Okay, fine, sounds good to me."

"Alrighty then, listen up carefully, because I'm not going to repeat myself," he said, clapping his hands together. He sat up in the bed, looked me in the eyes, and fired away, "My chest pain started 3 hours ago while I was taking a walk outside. It was a sharp pain in the middle of my chest that radiated down my left arm. I'd rate the pain as a 7 out of 10 when it first started. The pain got worse when I walked faster and better with rest. Once the pain started, I immediately took one tablet of 0.4 mg nitroglycerin, finished my walk, and drove myself to the E.D. to be evaluated. The pain completely went away within five minutes of taking the nitro. After getting to the hospital, my EKG showed no changes and my Troponin came back normal. In terms of past medical history, all I've got is Coronary Artery Disease that was diagnosed ten years ago. I take Atorvastatin 10 mg daily, Warfarin 6 mg daily, and one baby aspirin daily. This is my first ever episode of angina since being diagnosed with C.A.D. I don't have any drug-related allergies, and I'm up-to-date on my immunizations. If you want to be a bigger pain in my ass and ask about social history, I don't smoke, I don't drink, I'm not a druggie, I don't care for coffee, I eat my fruits and veggies, I take walks for exercise, I retired from the Navy twenty years ago, and I ain't telling you diddly swat about my sex history. Get all that?"

I sat there, stunned for a few seconds, before spontaneously breaking out into a smile. "Smartass," I muttered, before realizing what I had just said. "Oh my God, I'm so sorry, that's not what I mean, I'm so sorry –," but my apologies were drowned out by Mr. Travers' booming laughter.

"Oh stop your sorryin', you said exactly what you meant! At my age, I appreciate someone finally being straightforward and honest with me," he said. "Now that I've answered all of the questions that you were going to ask me, are you ready to have an actual conversation?"

"Not quite sir, we still have to do the physical exam," I said. He began to object, but I cut him off, "A deal's a deal, Mr. Travers." He nodded begrudgingly and let me poke and prod him for twenty minutes. After I was done, I slung the stethoscope back around my neck and said, "Alright Mr. Travers, all done. You held up your end of the deal, time for me to hold up mine." I grabbed a nearby stool and sat down next to him.

"Oh thank God. I got to tell you, that was the slowest physical exam of my life. I swear, I could feel my arteries clogging up all over again," Mr. Travers grumbled.

“Well sir, I’m just a medical student, I’m still working on my speed –,” I started, but was interrupted by a loud groan from Mr. Travers.

“Listen Iko, if you call me ‘sir’ or ‘Mr. Travers’ again, I swear to God I’m going to fling this pulse ox off my finger and at your head. My name is Earl.”

“Earl?” I chuckled and sat back, “That’s a pretty ‘old man’ name right there.”

“Well that’s not a very professional thing to say, young man,” he warned, but with a twinkle in his eye.

“You wanted to get real,” I said, grinning and shrugging. “Now, I have to ask about how you rattled off your entire history in ten seconds. How did you know every single question that I was going to ask you?”

“Well, this isn’t my first rodeo, kid. I’ve asked all those questions more times than I can remember. I served as a US Navy Combat Medic for longer than you’ve been alive. I’ve been around the world to more countries than most people would see in several lifetimes. In fact, most of my last tour was around your ancestors’ country.”

“What do you mean?” I said.

“Iko’ is an Indonesian name, right? I was deployed to Java in 1994 to help out for that terrible earthquake and tsunami. I got to meet a lot of good folks. Some of the toughest people I’ve ever met,” he said with a far-off reminiscent look in his eye.

“Yeah, my parents came to the U.S. in 2001. My dad worked as a taxi driver, and my mom cleaned houses for some extra cash. With my two sisters and me to support, the five of us barely scraped by. My parents never stopped working hard, and nearly 17 years later, they’ve eventually created one of the largest taxicab companies in New York. They’ve been able to put both of my sisters through law school and are helping me pay for medical school too,” I said, smiling proudly. “‘Tough’ doesn’t even begin to describe them.”

“Hmm,” he grunted. “Your parents must expect a lot from you,” he noted.

I took a moment and quietly thought about that question before answering, “My parents expect exactly as much as they should from me. They didn’t cross the Atlantic Ocean to have their kids struggle financially and socially like they did. They made countless sacrifices, sacrifices that allowed me to aim high enough to be a doctor. Mom and Dad

have taken care of me for so long; one day, when I'm more financially stable and they're older, I hope that I can take care of them too."

"That's nice," he noted. "Kids should appreciate their parents more."

"What about you, Earl? Any kids?" I inquired.

He scowled and said "What, are you blind? Do you see any here in this room?"

The air suddenly turned tense. "I'm...I'm sorry," I stuttered.

"No, why are you sorry? I have three worthless kids. All of them were contacted by the nurses from the hospital, and none of them cared enough to come see their old man. They should be sorry!" His voice was booming with anger, but his eyes betrayed an ocean of sadness beneath.

"I understand that I wasn't always a good father, but...it's like they just stopped caring once they left the house. My wife Margaret would call them once a week and hear nothing but their answering machines in return. She'd sit by the phone every afternoon, hoping that at least one of them might call back. She ended up dying of a stroke, sitting in that same rocking chair, just waiting for them to call her back. My children didn't even read a proper eulogy at their mother's funeral, for God's sakes. All three of them just stood there, staring at me like I was a piece of their past that they would best prefer...forgotten." His voice was cracking now, wavering under the weight of his sorrow.

"I just wanted to talk to you because you remind me of my son. Out of the three, he was always the kindest to me, but now he's all grown up too. Happy in his bubble of a suburban house, a perfect job, perfect wife, and perfect kids...there's no room for me there. None of the kids ever care anymore. None of the doctors cared today. None of the nurses cared. None of the technicians cared. Nobody ever cares. Everyone just talks through me, like I'm a sheet of glass, waiting for me to either go home or just die."

The room filled with a deafening silence. I struggled to speak, at a loss for words. I looked up at Earl, and he refused to meet my gaze, coping with his emotions while seemingly embarrassed for his outburst. I took a deep breath, carefully thinking of my next words. The man had bared his heart to me, he deserved a proper response.

"Earl, I'm sure that the medical staff did their best, but I can't speak for them or the experiences you had with them today. I certainly can't speak for your children either. However, I can assure you of this: I

care.”

“Oh please, Iko. You only ended up walking into my room out of necessity,” he mumbled.

“Maybe, but I ended up staying in your room out of interest,” I said. He slowly turned and met my gaze.

“Look, I have lectures and schoolwork that take up most of my afternoon, but my day usually gets freer after 5 PM. You were in the Navy for twenty years, and I’m guessing that you have a ton of crazy stories about your old sailor days.” I ripped a yellow page out of my notepad, and handed Earl my pen. “I’m not going to let you kick the bucket without telling me all of them,” I said with a grin.

A few minutes later, a nurse walked in saying, “Mr. Travers, your taxi is here. Let’s get you home!” As I walked out of the room, I nodded at Earl and he slowly nodded back.

I gathered my stuff and said goodbye to my mentor. As I was walking out, a nearby nurse glanced at me and said, “Wow, you were in there for a while with Mr. Travers. That old grouch must have given you a pretty hard time, huh?”

“Eh...he’s not so bad,” I said. I looked down at the yellow note in my hand, with Earl’s phone number scrawled on it, and smiled.

## **How Many Notebooks Does One Person Need**

There is no limit to the number of notebooks  
I require

There is no visit to an office supply store  
From which I will return empty-handed

My house is an anti-library, shelves stacked  
with bound but empty pages,  
Coffee mugs filled willed with leaking pens and  
Half-sharp Ticonderogas

In my house I dream of blue ink soaking into  
Thick, thirsty vellum  
And the pink eraser dust that is the product of  
The writer's hand.

You can see that I have everything I need  
to do the work that must be done  
to do the calculations that must be made  
to write the stories that need to be told

I am just waiting now  
for someone to give me  
permission to speak.

# Amanda Ross, MD

Resident, Institute for Plastic Surgery



**Milk Drunk**

Acrylic on Canvas



## **When Words Are Gone**

You stare at me.

You're wondering where I went.

I'm here!

I can't tell you – the words are only in my heart, not my mouth.

Can you see the love in my eyes?

Don't go. I need to love you for just a minute or two.

I hold you in my heart.

I remember all the yesterdays.

When did I leave?

Tell me about you. Tell me about me.

When did I leave?

You kiss my cheek.

I see a tear when I reach for your hand.

I'm still here!

You know. You smile!

# John Grace, MD

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Alumnus, Class of 2000

## Tomorrow

I glimpse the ending of my days,  
And know that there are better ways,  
To spend this breath that I have left  
Than cursing plans that I have made.

I feel the coming of the night,  
And sense these bones within me fight,  
To find a rest beyond the test,  
Of constant gray before the white.

I hear the coming of your dawn  
And see the stones you set upon,  
I hope and pray that you may stay,  
Upon this road when I am gone.

# Helen Moose

Faculty, Family and Community Medicine

SECOND PLACE, ART



**Maine Flowers**

Lithograph

# Lauren Williams

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Community



**Fierce**

Digital Painting

## The Snarly Yow

A Mongrel, a Mutt

stray and stinking dog  
on the side of the road

a snarl, a tangle, a foul beast  
black fur, black and coarse  
like coal ash stinking of salt and sulphur  
the nose hair singe of  
burnt rubber brakes on  
tire licked asphalt

It likes

It likes to smile  
a wet smile, wet breath  
wet dog tongue searching

lapping, slurping saliva  
between tangled fish bone teeth  
tracing the damp air behind  
fear hot fingers

grasping, grabbing for

and then gone.

A Mongrel, a Mutt

with red receding gums, red eyes  
red like old autumn leaves  
moth wing thin, composting  
like cold dark river silt  
fish scales flaking on wet wood  
the insides of your neighbor's cat  
rotting sourly behind the concrete shed.

It likes

It likes to follow, follow  
at heel at  
your heels  
with the wet dog tongue,  
tasting, testing, snapping  
at the pant leg, the car door

hot breath, hot entrails  
steaming in headlights.  
A Mongrel, a Mutt

It likes to follow, to find

to hide

to hide in your blind spot, fault spot

It likes your dead spot.

**It likes you**

## **Ozzy**

Dawn rising, rays of uninterrupted bursts of light.  
Awaiting the day, sensitivity to smells and sounds.  
Has his obscure sense of self been found?  
Pushing his weight with all of his might,  
Will his teeth sink in, will we feel his bite?  
Terrified, anxious, panic-stricken abound,  
Teeth digging in, throbbing in agony, he must go to the pound!  
Overcome with emotion, exhausted of spite.

Awareness of the past, realization of the present, a future of blight.  
Loving without limits, won't let him down.  
Consciousness of this situation, weighing me down.  
Soft golden fur, wet cold nose, anguished amber eyes of sight,  
Loving this animal, awakened to do what's right.  
Digging deep inside myself, strength to be found.  
Standing firm in belief, fist to the ground,  
A life worth living is always met with a fight.

# Marie Varnet

Student, Class of 2019

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— [ Drift

Charcoal on Paper ] —



## Mildly Autistic

He had always known that he was different. Or, at the very least, had been highly suspicious of it. Some boys run. Some play. Some laugh. And some cry.

He thought.

And he planned.

And he connected his plans with his thoughts. And he saw the world through these connections, random pieces trying to stick together, thousands of puzzles sorting by the second.

He hit the accelerator and the car sped up...and so did his mind. The brain was always going fast, faster than needed most of the time. In the car, he could lay off the gas, maybe apply the brakes, but his mind wasn't like his car. Mental coasting wasn't an option.

Most of his thoughts were *without* feelings. They were analysis. They were patterns and computations, crisscrossing lines of reason. His world was numbers, formulas, and architecture. Everything made sense.

He did *have* emotions. And he *could* access them. He could display them if required—for effect or...communication. And he could read the feelings within others quite accurately. But this was a deliberate process. Being *emotional* was unnatural, a tedious labor requiring intense concentration.

However, this current situation represented a *considerable* improvement over childhood. Life had gotten much better. The first step had been the biggest—realizing the world didn't understand him.

“How do you feel, Tim?” a drama teacher asked many years ago.

After a brief analysis, Tim answered, “I feel happy.”

It was the truth.

In that moment, Tim *did* feel happy. But...his answer didn't *feel* happy. Tim didn't smile when he said it. He didn't engage the emotion of *happiness* in his reply. So his true and honest message of contentment did not get conveyed.

“Well, you don't *seem* very happy,” the teacher responded.

This frightened Tim. He *knew* things were about to go badly. They always did at times like this. Whenever feelings got involved, someone got mad, mad at him. He was never sure why or how to prevent it, so he usually froze. His *lack* of interactivity was often misinterpreted as obstinance.

“Are you *even* listening to me?” The teacher glared, stood up, and walked intensely towards him.

Tim’s paralyzed gaze fixated on the floor. He was scared but he did not show it. His eyes did not water. His arms did not shake. His voice did not waiver. In fact, he slightly chuckled when he spoke, a nervous twitch that was immediately perceived as flagrant disregard.

“You don’t know how to listen!” The teacher sprayed the words. Tim felt the small, unintentional droplets of saliva mist over the side of his cheek. “Go to the office until you can learn some respect.”

Tim walked calmly toward the door, avoiding eye contact while most his classmates smirked. Tim generally made little eye contact. He made less when frightened. He *appeared* defiant.

“I don’t need you.”

“I don’t care about any of you.”

Tim conveyed these messages while walking calmly out of class. He conveyed them by his failure to engage the feelings within the room. Humans interpret a failure to acknowledge emotional discourse as an uncaring act. Tim hadn’t learned that yet. He didn’t *mean* to say, “I don’t care about you.” He wasn’t trying to be disrespectful. He was genuinely afraid and wanted to fit in.

If someone had asked him, “Tim, do you care about your classmates?” Tim would have flatly answered, “Yes.” And he would have meant it but no one would have believed him because Tim’s flat *yes* gave the impression that he really didn’t care.

What Tim didn’t know in those days is how you’re supposed to say, “I feel happy.” But he would learn.

He would learn that you’re supposed to say, “I feel happy,” with a smile on your face. And not just any smile, it has to be a genuine smile, what researchers call a *Duchenne Smile* after the French physician Guillaume Duchenne, who studied physiology of facial expressions more than 200 years ago.

He would learn the difference between a forced smile and a *Duchenne Smile* is the involuntary contraction of two muscles surrounding the eyes—the *orbicularis oculi*. These muscles pull the cheeks up-

wards, providing the “crow’s feet” wrinkles so many anti-aging creams espouse to vanquish.

The *orbicularis oculi* are involuntary muscles. You cannot flex them intentionally. They are only activated by accessing happiness while smiling. You have to channel *real* happiness, even for a moment, if you want to take a convincing photograph.

It took Tim a long time to learn how to pose for pictures. He learned you have to find a happy memory. Access it intentionally. And then purposefully run that happiness through your face at exactly the moment the photographer quips, “Say cheese.”

It was a deliberate process but it was *not* fake. Tim felt happy and he was accessing *real* memories of joy. But the *accessing* and *expression* was conscious and unnatural. His *modus operandi* was functional communication without emotional conveyance or reception.

Tim learned to pose for photographs around the age of 10. At 15, he learned to access and display compassion when people were sad. He never quite figured out how to show a girl he was interested. Thankfully for him, he came across a beautiful and kind woman who was somewhat enamored by his intellectual analyses of rodent mating rituals.

One of Tim’s greatest accomplishments was learning to keep his mouth shut during discussions. For the longest time, he was under the impression that every discourse was an open forum of facts without emotional connection. The only thing that mattered was the logical connectedness of the argument. His responses were calculations and analyses.

This caused him to frequently miss emotional undertones and fail to respond with appropriate concern during intense discussions. He didn’t understand why you couldn’t discuss religion, politics, abortion, or any topic with anybody. His coolness could be mistaken for arrogance and sometimes he would relentlessly bombard people with proofs and arguments, eventually causing them to concede, withdraw, or most likely, make some excuse, and then suddenly stop hanging around him. He later learned it made him look like a know-it-all who didn’t care if people were tired of hearing him speak or hurt by what was spoken. There were a lot of years of psychotherapy, a lot of journals, a lot of analysis of himself and others. Tim would constantly explore how he felt and how others made him feel. With time, his expertise into emotions improved. He learned to read them. He learned to access them. And most importantly, he learned to consciously turn them on in appropriate settings.

It hadn't been easy. There had been a lot of nightmares through the process, a lot of tornadoes.

When something bad is happening and you don't know how to fix it, you try to figure it out in your dreams. When you feel you have no control, you dream about problems without solutions: an exam you don't study for, a natural disaster you cannot stop, a fall into an empty space.

Tim dreamt about purple tornadoes. He would see seven or eight of them at a time, far off in the distance, slowly moving toward him. The moment he saw them, he knew they were coming for him. No matter where he ran, no matter what he did, they were coming — all of them together.

Purple is an unusual color, chromatically and emotionally. It is a strange, unsure mixture of two strong but opposite hues—red and blue. It carries neither the strength nor definition of either. It is fire *and* water, rage *and* sorrow. It is oddly intense and almost impossible to read.

Tim pulled into his driveway, walked up to the front door, accessed a little happiness and said, “Honey, I’m home.”

His wife rounded a corner and gave him a warm hug and he intentionally processed all of the affection it contained.

“I love you,” he told her, and, even after all these years, his delivery was a little blunt.

But that didn't matter to her.

And that made Tim very happy. It had been a long time since he had seen any purple tornadoes.

But they still showed up from time to time.

## Christine Todd, MD

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Faculty in Medical Humanities and Alumnus, Class of 1993

### FIRST PLACE, POETRY

*Note: A sestina is a verse of six stanzas of six lines each, where the last word of the lines are repeated in every stanza in a prescribed order. The poem closes with a three-line couplet that contains the end words.*

## Iowa

I hear your mother's voice in your voice  
As I drive towards the river  
Talking on the phone, still  
In the middle of a decades-old discussion, the bridge  
That connects our youth to now. We cry and yell  
But never end it, just put in on pause for the time being.

People like us are made up of words at the cores of our being  
And have never gotten past the thrill of discovering our voice  
Which we use to comfort, deride, soothe, yell  
About injustice, or chant the name of one state when we cross a river  
Until we switch to chant the next state midway across the bridge  
A tradition we began as kids on car trips and continue still.

I remember your mother in the midst of our youth, and I still  
Think of us as kids and her as the elder being  
But of course now we're as old as she was, and the bridge  
We discuss is about how to reach her, locked up with a fading voice  
And uncooperative body. As I drive towards the river  
I learn her speech therapist has been teaching her how to yell

And because she always aims to please, she has learned to yell.  
I imagine the therapist wheeling her around the clinic, still  
Triumphant with surprise. I travel to the river  
For a visit to you both. Talking over the phone isn't the same as being  
Together, seeing you, hearing her new voice  
As we take her on a long drive and cross the bridge

The Fred Schwengel Memorial Bridge,  
Named after her great uncle. We'll cross it, she'll yell  
And thrill us with the 90-decibel ability of her voice  
We drive down the valley of green hills that still  
Guard the way to Iowa. She admits to being  
Embarrassed to call the Mississippi "her river."

But of course it is your river  
And from the bridge  
It is silent, and life being  
Cruel in what it asks you to endure you yell  
You give the river, beneath us still  
Your breath, your anger, your joy, your voice.

The river beneath the bridge goes on being  
And your voice is still here,  
and you are still here, so you yell.

## **Brave**

Brave men once said that they shouldn't have to hide their deeds,  
While lying in bed hidden amongst the weeds.  
They were tall in the tales of all they'd done,  
And short on admitting the times they'd run.  
Loud in their boasting of what they'd do,  
But barely a whisper when the time came to.  
Brave in pageantry,  
Basking in glow,  
Cowards in gallantry of the soul.

# Paul Rockey, MD, MPH

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Former Faculty

## A Dying Frog

“I think you’ll look like a dying frog,” she said.  
“I’ve seen them on their backs  
on top of a pond.  
Listless.  
Sun on their bloated bellies.  
They spread their legs, flex their knees, and kick  
in a final spasm of life, to find cover under a lily pad!”  
Not a bad way to go, I think, as I swim laps  
on my back, with arms sweeping like  
I’m making angel wings  
in new snow.  
Kicking my legs in unison  
like a dying frog, lap after lap, in chlorinated water  
at five each morning, eight hundred meters,  
twenty laps, thirty minutes.  
But, I’m not dying!  
Not yet.  
I’m keeping  
muscle tone in my legs, for two more months,  
before the orthopedic surgeon replaces my right knee  
with a cross linked polymer and titanium joint  
so I can walk and stand  
pain free  
and perhaps run on the beach  
this summer, with the warm August sun on my back!





— [ **Eye Contact**

Digital Photograph ] —

# Helen Moose

Faculty, Family and Community Medicine



**Mary of King's House**

Lithograph

## **Prairie Fire**

Black smoke,  
looms over the fields,  
Like dark rainclouds.  
In the distance, I see  
A bright orange flicker.  
I'm drawn to it.  
I can't look away.  
It pirouettes down the field,  
Performing an intricate ballet,  
Incited by the gentle breeze.  
Tall crops quickly fall,  
To its destructive dance.  
And it eats away  
At everything in its path.  
Nothing is left behind,  
Except an ugly, charred land.  
But the ending is beautiful.  
Because soon the crop is back,  
Standing taller than before.

# Tom Ala, MD

Faculty, Neurology



— [ **Graffiti** Digital Photograph ] —

## **A Divide So Wide**

You hear it every day.  
How did we get so  
far apart this way?  
The left cannot see  
what the right was.  
The right cannot do  
what the left does.  
If she says yes,  
He unquestionably says  
no.  
So in a world so  
divided which way do  
we go?  
“They” want to hastily  
close up any unoccupied  
space. But there’s  
“them” that want to  
go at a much slower  
pace.  
Don’t want to hear  
it. “No!”  
So in a world so  
divided which way

do we go?  
We stretch. We reach  
for our peaks.  
We look in the eyes of  
someone who speaks.  
We listen  
We use our ears  
and find common  
ground. My interests  
and opinions may  
differ from yours.  
But there are  
possibilities to be  
found.  
We use our differences  
to teach and learn  
that the world is  
full and round and  
free. It’s not just  
for me. It’s not just  
for me. It’s not  
just for me.

# Shea Sims

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Staff, Education and Curriculum

## Greenbrier

He thought he'd get away  
away with it  
with me

He thought he was without me  
out from under me

He couldn't feel  
my weight on his back  
his neck  
his neck unlike my neck  
which snapped  
like a dry winter branch

The sound of it  
sudden and splintered  
crispy and crackling  
pork skin in the skillet  
I'd made for supper

He put me  
in the ground  
the cold ground before my mother  
could kiss me again  
like she had when I was born

like when I died

He could not see me  
my eyes wells of worms  
wells of weeds

wells of rage

He thought he'd get away  
away with the little death  
with little me

He thought that he could  
get away with rage  
get away from

justice

by putting me  
in the ground

my body in the ground

in the dark  
in a box  
in a dream

where mothers' dream  
where my mother dreams  
where she knows

she knows me

and she promises me  
he'll know me

he'll know justice  
can't be put  
in a box

## **The Enemy Within**

Another friend is gone too young;  
I don't know what to say.  
One day the dread word "cancer" stung—  
Too soon they've gone away.

Slowly cancer took their function,  
helpers had to step in more;  
as it moved them t'ward the junction  
Of Life Road and the Shore

with waiting boats to Hereafter,  
bobbing upon the waves.  
Sometimes happy waves of laughter  
defying looming graves.

Other times cold waves of terror,  
Loom large, cruelly taunting—  
With their lifeplans made in error,  
undone business, haunting.

Milder waves can rock them sometimes—  
as in a mother's arms.  
Yet urgently the boat's clock chimes  
late hours and alarms

When finally they're sailing on  
toward the Great Beyond,  
we stay and watch until they're gone  
and stare out o'er the pond,

and try to get a glimpse of where  
departing loved ones go;  
we're feeling that it is not fair  
the living cannot know.

*For Charmaine and Mary*

# Stephanie Short

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Student, Class of 2021

## Obfuscation of Self

it wasn't for her allure—but it was

encroaching upon the integrity of her honesty, kindness, empathy

the image of sex, the fire of light

to obfuscate that which was within

to cheapen what it meant to experience her in her entirety—in her most raw form

we experience and perceive not by mere stimuli but by the weight of our baggage and by the tinge of that which we wish to never experience ever again. So can we ever? really...feel what is in front of us? Or is it a mere incarnate of our mind's eye?

Special to many, yet sacred to none—this is how she floats. A vestige of the fantasies and desires of those who have tasted her presence—but never indulged to the extent of fusion.

She craves, but she won't tell.

Far too smart—far too damaged. She takes the consolation of being an object of sexual longing, as to never let her soul be truly vulnerable in the presence of another,

Insatiable, she'll stay.





**Corduroy**

Digital Painting

# Christine Todd, MD

Faculty in Medical Humanities and Alumnus, Class of 1993



— [ **Hisako**

Watercolor ] —

## **Hisako**

It means “flower” in Japanese. She was born in 1900 to a family that traced its roots back to the Tokungawa Shogunate of Japan. Being rich and aristocratic in prewar Japan meant she grew up wearing fur coats and smoked cigarettes out of long holders before she was ten years old. She served as a handmaiden in the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, where she learned strict rules about manners, hierarchy, proper language, hygiene and culture.

The fall of the shogunate and the rise of the emperor meant her family’s name didn’t mean anything by the time she was old enough to get married, and under circumstances that have never been revealed to her grandchildren, she married a shop keeper in a rural fishing village. If her name was in decline, Tomyo was determined that his be ascendant. He learned English and ordered his clothes from Regent Street in London. He learned Russian and read Tolstoy. He organized the town’s fishermen into a union. He wrote poems. He strove.

Hisako did not strive. She was used to another kind of life and she was angry that it was gone. She had a son, who died when he was run over by the first Model T to rattle down the street of the town. She had four daughters. She taught them rules of etiquette and proper language, hygiene and culture. She hid their western clothes and dressed them in kimonos instead.

Tomyo abandoned them all to run off with a 16-year-old Geisha Girl, so she raised her daughters by herself during the Second World War. She had a stroke when she was 56, which paralyzed her right side. She went to live with the only daughter still in Japan – the others had all married American servicemen and left. Rumiko was a dutiful daughter in the way that Hisako understood – reserved, mannered, chic. Rumiko had a copper belt that accentuated her narrow waist. She wore it every day. If it got tight, she stopped eating until it loosened.

Rumiko died of breast cancer, and Hisako got a green card to come to America. My father carried her up the stairs of our suburban Chicago house on his back. She lived in my brother’s old room and my mother

cared for her until she died. Hisako made her slow way down the halls for meals, dragging her bad leg and holding on to the wall for balance. She was a good eater. She couldn't talk much because of her stroke, but she could smile at me, and nod happily when I played my clarinet or guitar for her.

My mother found this approval of me particularly galling. As my adolescence progressed, I had shown a strong tendency towards Anglophilia and Lefty politics instead of feminine manners and delicate restraint. "Tomyo's Girl," she'd say to Hisako, pointing at me. Hisako would laugh and shake her head. Whatever I was, she liked me.

Hisako died in 1988. In her life, she went from a Samurai's daughter to an immigrant, from the Imperial Palace to a Chicago suburb. Her story is amazing to recount, but I always thought I could see it all just by looking at her – traditional, spare, frank and composed, covering her bad hand with her good one, ready for the next thing life had in store.



**Winter Pines**

Hand-quilted Wall Hanging

# Alan J. Scharrer, MD

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Alumnus, Class of 1986

## Stars

Grandpa lived by himself in the old but very well kept home at the end of Walnut Street. His favorite dog had died one year ago and he just didn't have the strength to get a new puppy. Sure, he could adopt an older dog from the local rescue center but...

Grandson lived two blocks over and one street down with Grandpa's youngest daughter as well as his Dad and his two older sisters. They all were so busy. All except Grandson. Grandson, now 10, loved to spend time with Grandpa. He would try to come over every day if he had his homework done, didn't have soccer or baseball and if his Mom said it was OK to ride his bike.

Daughter saw her Dad every few weeks but she was so busy with her job, the twins now that they were in high school, and spending time with husband. Grandpa had an older daughter but she moved to another town with her children and he rarely saw her. She would call sometimes on holidays. Grandpa understood all of this, but Grandson, well, he was different.

He was so happy to see Grandpa. He looked a bit like Grandpa when he was that age, but maybe Grandpa liked to think that. When they were together, time just spun away. They wouldn't do much other than go for a walk or play card games... and talk. Grandson was full of questions and was genuinely interested in details. They would sit for hours, like two old souls, on the front porch, just talking. Grandpa loved these times and soaked them up and held them close.

Their very favorite time was lying on the floor of the large living room with all the curtains closed and the light off. Several years ago, Grandpa had completely re-plastered the ceiling into an oblong dome then painted it black. Youngest daughter thought that he was beginning to slip but left him to what she thought were his eccentricities. Grandson knew differently. Grandpa had purchased a high quality star projector.

He would turn it on and the ceiling would suddenly become the night sky, mirroring the sky above the town. It was fantastic. It was his and Grandson's little secret and it was wonderful.

One evening, as they lay there, Grandson asked, "Where did Grandma go?"

"Several years ago, after she turned 62, she just decided that she was done with all of this," Grandpa replied.

"Did she stop liking us?" Grandson asked.

"No, no, no. She probably still loves all of us. She just was done being wife, mother, Grandma and done with this house and town." Grandpa replied.

It was quiet for a time as they watched the stars above them rotate. Sometimes, Grandpa used his red laser pointer and picked out constellations and stars. Grandson would try to remember the names but they were big and funny sounding. He always tried and Grandpa helped, appreciating his sincere effort. Tonight though, they just watched them slowly move in the deep darkness of space and quiet. It was like they were floating in space at times.

After a very comfortable quiet, Grandson spoke. "Where did Grandma go?"

"I don't know," Grandpa responded. "One morning, like I did for many, many mornings, I got up early, quietly left the bedroom and went downstairs. I let Dog out and started the coffee. I waited until it was brewed, then carried our mugs upstairs, hers with just a dash of cream and mine plain. When I carefully opened the door with my foot like I had done so many, many times before, I noticed that her side of the bed was made up. It was like she hadn't slept. I looked in the bathroom, then the closet but she wasn't there. I called her name but she didn't respond. I heard Dog barking so I left the coffees and went downstairs and let him in. The garage – yes, I'm sure she's out there. I opened the door. Our car was gone. I stood there, slowly turning around, not sure what to do," Grandpa explained.

Just then, the Big Dipper, then the North Star were in their view. Grandson could not remember their names. Grandpa didn't ask, just circled them with his pointer. They laid there and watched them rotate

through the sky as they had this summer. Grandson could almost hear the crickets chirping like he remembered when they were outside months ago, even though snow now covered their favorite viewing spot on the lawn.

Grandson could hear Grandpa slowly breathing next to him. He thought he might have heard Grandpa choke a bit but knew he probably imagined it. Grandpa was strong and always happy. He didn't have trouble breathing.

"There it was, literally sitting right next to the coffee pot. I never even saw it. I guess I just wasn't looking. It was a torn half sheet of notepaper from her private journal that she had been keeping for two years. I never looked at that book because she never told me I should."

Grandpa continued, "Anyways, written in her beautiful handwriting... she was so beautiful.... Sorry, I swallowed funny. Anyways, one word was written on that scrap. It simply said 'Goodbye.'"

Quiet returned. Grandpa really must have swallowed funny, Grandson thought. He was breathing really funny. Grandson decided to wait to talk more until he could hear his breathing return to normal. Hey, is that the star group that looks like a bow hunter?

"Oh my, look at the time, I told youngest daughter that I would have you in bed by 9 so you would be ready for your soccer tournament in the morning!" Grandpa suddenly realized. "Let's go upstairs. You get ready for bed and I will get the toothpaste on your toothbrush," Grandpa said.

Grandson could do all of this himself and had to at home. But he liked when Grandpa helped. After he was done, Grandpa and he said a prayer, thanking God for their whole family and all of their blessings. He then tucked Grandson in, kissed him on the forehead and told him to go right to sleep. Grandpa went back downstairs. The whole house went quiet again. Grandson liked the quiet at Grandpa's house. His sisters were always on their phones or playing that music where everyone yells.

Grandson realized that his favorite pocketknife had fallen out of his pocket. It must be in the living room. Grandpa had given it to him when he turned 8, and said his Granddad had given it to him when he turned 8. He always slept with it. His Mom didn't like it but let him.



He slowly snuck out of his room and went downstairs, trying not to make noise. Unfortunately, the third step from the bottom always creaked no matter how you stepped on it. He froze and intently listened. Grandpa must have gone to bed already. He slowly moved across the entryway to the living room. The projector was still on and there was Grandpa lying on the floor, watching the stars moving across the man-made sky.

Without even looking, Grandpa said, “Grandma and I loved to camp. Every night we would lie out under the night sky and she would point out all of the constellations and tell me their names.”

“Here’s your pocket knife. Now up to bed. You don’t want your Mom to be mad.”

# Christine Todd, MD

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Faculty in Medical Humanities and Alumnus, Class of 1993

## The Boy Who Cried Wolf

It was the third or fourth time, if my memory serves  
That The Boy cried “Wolf!”  
When people began to complain.

We have jobs  
It’s a long way to the meadow, and we are plump  
We have our own children to worry about  
And why is that kid tending sheep instead of going to school, anyway?

“Just like his mother, a Drama Queen,” said Miss Eleanor, and people nodded.  
“Or like his father, who is trash,” said someone else.  
“He’s just so entitled,” said Mayor Leary.

We all decided to ignore him, to teach him a lesson  
To remind him of his place in the scheme of things.  
Which is a kid in a world where you can’t always expect help.

And when we discovered his remains one morning  
Torn up all over the meadow amongst  
Several disassembled sheep  
I have to admit there were some guilty glances  
But he was just a boy and mattered little.

Mayor Leary talked to the Scribe  
About how the story would run in the paper  
“This was his own fault for lying,” he said  
In his commanding voice.

“But wasn’t he just a scared kid?”  
Asked the Scribe  
Which is why nobody likes the Scribe and why he is  
Without wife

And we walked away quickly, having  
Proved our point about the cruel world  
And its unforgiving nature.



**A New Day Promise in Winter**

Pastel Painting

# Kathryn Waldyke, MD

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Faculty, Physician Assistant Program

## Apology or A Rude Awakening or The Bungling Clerk

Sorry about that early call—  
it's not my fault, I'll say!  
She gave us 502, with you;  
good thing we walked away.  
When we heard the voices in there,  
back to the desk we trooped  
and got new keys, for 508,  
but here is where they goofed:

We had asked for a wake-up call  
at 5, for the 6 (ugh) bus.  
They set it for the first room, seems  
it did not follow us.  
Good thing we set the phone alarm,  
or we'd have been screwed too.  
But one more time, sorry to have  
wakened you, 502.

# Marie Varnet

Student, Class of 2019



— [ **Recycle** ] —

— [ Digital Painting ] —

# Cynda Strong

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Community

SECOND PLACE, POETRY

## Country Winter

Frigid morning air greets the fog enveloped sun rays  
As a lone hawk glides over a gravel worn drive.  
Nearby corn stubbled fields beckon gleaning geese.  
A barbed wire strand dangles from a fence post ensnaring an orphaned  
leaf.

Warming sunshine lures migrating ducks to a last swim in the pond  
tinged with icy shards.  
Pillars of swirling smoke escape chimney tops and linger into dusk.

Fingers of scarlet streak the sky coaxing timid deer from hiding.  
A silver shimmer of snow begins to float in the air slowly covering

A lone mitten in a frozen roadside puddle.

## The Lonely Tiger

No animal in the jungle would be his friend,  
He had no one with whom time he could spend  
All the animals were scared of his teeth,  
And the sharp claws on his feet beneath  
When they looked into his eyes,  
They would jump with fear and surprise  
They assumed his friendly expression,  
Was one of aggression  
So the lonely tiger went to the city,  
Hoping someone would befriend him out of pity.

He stopped on the street  
To rest his tired feet  
People got out of their cars and ran at this sight,  
Like the animals in the jungle they were filled with fright,  
At the sharp teeth  
And the claws on his feet beneath  
So the lonely tiger went to a store,  
where he gave a nice, friendly roar  
The people got scared and ran at this sight  
Like the people on the street they were filled with fright  
When they looked into his eyes,  
They would jump with fear and surprise

So the lonely tiger got on a train,  
When his throat had started to pain  
People screamed and ran at this sight  
Like the people in the store, they were filled with fright  
And assumed his friendly expression  
Was one of aggression.

So the lonely tiger left the city,  
Where no one had an ounce of pity,  
Everyone was filled with fright,  
At the lonely tiger's sight,  
But really there was no need for alarm,  
This tiger would do no harm,  
The lonely tiger just wanted a friend,  
Someone with whom time he could spend.





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