

25th anniversary edition

SCOPE

2018



Small handwritten signature or mark in the bottom right corner.

on the cover
FIRST PLACE - ART



Jolly Rancher
Tom Ala, MD, professor of neurology
digital photography

EDITORS' NOTE

Some of you might be wondering, “What is SCOPE?” SCOPE is a...

Sprawling

Collection of

Original artwork,

Poems, short stories and photography submitted

Every year by extraordinary SIU SOM students, faculty and friends.

There seems to be a notion that those involved in the medical field are generally intelligent, serious, science-driven individuals. True. However, we are also creative and love the arts as well. SIU School of Medicine allows our medical community to explore and celebrate that side of ourselves through our annual editions of SCOPE—something we’ve done for the past 25 years. We have had the great honor of serving as co-editors of this milestone “silver” edition.

We hope that this edition portrays our appreciation of the arts and of all those who share their talents with us. We further hope this compilation of pieces will provide you with enjoyment and would like you to consider a quote by Ava DuVernay:

“Creativity is an energy. It’s a precious energy, and it’s something to be protected. A lot of people take for granted that they’re a creative person, but I know from experience, feeling it in myself, it is a magic; it is an energy. And it can’t be taken for granted.”

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FOREWORDS

Looking Back with our Founding First-Years

Hard to believe that 25 years ago, SCOPE began with a meeting with Roger Robinson, the assistant dean of students in Carbondale, during the first month of medical school. That inspiration led to an idea to create a vehicle that would, through a generation, provide a glimpse into the human side of medicine and our medical community. Fueled by the unbounded passion and resilience of a few trailblazers, both in Carbondale and in Springfield, SCOPE was “born” in the spring of 1994.

Why SCOPE? Well, after a rather fun dinner discussion in my apartment with my friend, colleague and co-founder, James Davis, the name (stetho) SCOPE just stuck! From the heart of the artist to the ears of the reader...

SCOPE truly is a labor of love that a lot of us shared in that first year as we balanced the rigors of the medical training. It also represents the unconditional support of the early believers: Roger Robinson, Phil Davis, Jacqui Scolari, Dean Getto and the SIU Medicine community who liked the idea! They gave us the opportunity to be, in the words of Steve Jobs, “a little foolish.”

Thank you, Roger, for making that \$2,000 grant happen in 1993! And congratulations to all the editors, staff, contributors and supporters who have carried the torch forward, taking SCOPE to a higher level each year. It has been a delight to watch the baby grow up.

Happy 25th birthday, SCOPE. May the best still be ahead!

Manish Kohli
Co-Founder, SCOPE

Manish Kohli and I found that medical school was a time of enormous discovery and transformation. Most students starting medical school have relatively little exposure to the realities of disease, death, suffering, or our astounding capacity to heal. As students, we encountered the human condition in ways that we had not known before. Ultimately, no one could teach us how to integrate these new experiences into our lives. There are no tricks to “understanding” the big realities of life. In the midst of a busy rotation, we are tempted to harden ourselves against unsettling experiences. I do not blame myself for those times when I protected myself in this way. There is however, a better way: It is to allow ourselves, when we can, to feel, to hurt, to acknowledge that we do not fully understand, and eventually, over time, to allow our experiences to expand our intuitive understanding of the world. This is the place for SCOPE within the medical community. SCOPE was founded as a forum through which we might explore our experiences in a world that has become larger than the one we have known.

As Manish and I talked about the need for a creative forum within the medical community, we were met with broad support. Jacqueline Scolari, Phil Davis, John Record and Roger Robinson provided administrative support, while Molly Honneger, Andrea Lee, Una Shah, Brad Clayton and Robert Morrow helped form our first editorial boards. With the announcement of the project, we were astonished by the number and quality of entries that we received. We were uplifted by the honesty, humor and resilience of our colleagues and friends. Ultimately, we realized that SCOPE had become an avenue for expression of the inner life of our community.

Over time, I have transitioned from medical student to medical faculty. During this period, I have continued to see medical school as a time of enormous growth and transformation. I am thrilled to see that for 25 years now, SCOPE has given voice to the dynamic and creative spirit of the SIU medical community.

James Davis
Co-Founder, SCOPE

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Karla Patton, community

You Decide

Should I tweet, blog and text?

Should I stand for what I believe in
or follow all the rest?

Should I binge watch or pray for solitude?

Was that a real train wreck or mere platitude?

Was that a near airball turned into a dunk of pride?

Should we talk face to face or was I just side-eyed?

Should you take a selfie and then photo bomb too?

Are the values of our world being dog whistled as a way to ghost a few?

My mental threads are running wild. Stand up. No sit.

Never mind. I'll let you make some sense of it!

Lori Hinderliter, staff in surgery
cross-stitch

French Bistro



Mary Corrigan Stjern, community
pastel painting

Autumn Sunset at the Lake



John Grace, MD, alumnus, Class of 2000

When Everything Is Grand

When everything that's new is good,
And everything that's mad is brave,
When anyone who's rich is strong,
And anyone who's lost unsaved.

Then everyone that's kind is weak,
And anyone who's meek afraid,
And everyone who's tired old,
'Cause everything that's grand is made.

When nothing ever stands that is,
And nothing ever good is gave,
There's nothing more for God to give,
When everything that's grand is made.

Ann Augspurger, staff in alumni affairs

Quest for the Silver Lining

Is there really a silver lining, or is it make believe?
Simply the stuff fairy tales exclaim

Some choose to look for the shiny, glimmering layer, and they see the glass
half full
For others, it eludes them
Determined that the glass is half empty or even completely naked and bare

Others peel away layer after layer after layer
Struggling to reveal or even get a glimpse of the thing
One bad thing after another in this world with no foreseen break
Perhaps their silver lining is only to be revealed in heaven where there are
no more tears and no more pain

Or perhaps they are strong enough and determined enough to find the
silver lining anyway
Finding joy in their Maker no matter what
Deciding that a silver lining is really a thread woven throughout their lives
Unbreakable, undeniable, bestowed by God if we just choose to trust

And others have the silver lining right in front of them
So shiny
So glittery
So glamorous
So obvious they could trip over it and curse its presence

Onto the next thing or next spouse or next acquisition
Throwing out what they have like it will never do
Bypassing silver to look for the gold like that's all there is to pursue

So is a silver lining what you make it?
Is it something you look for or something you create?
Or is it just a fallacy—a legend we hate?
Mind over matter, luck, or predetermined fate?

Platinum, foil, specks of glitter even shards of spit-out metal (true grit!)
They're all silver
But their beauty lies in the eye of the beholder

Debi Santini, staff in graduate medical education

Playground Prejudice

This August afternoon is hot and hazy. The adults in charge are dividing their attention between an older sibling's ball game while watching the giggling, excited younger ones on the playground. My grandson and I arrive for some slide and swing time before dinner.

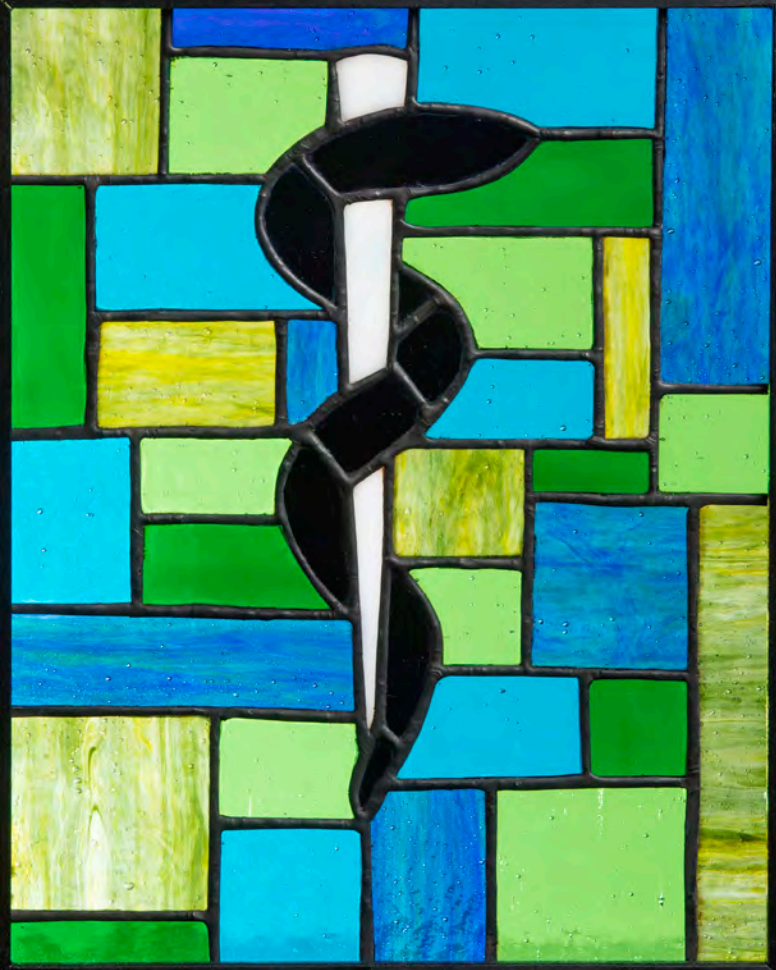
Another car pulls in, a family jumps out, and the parents and older child dash to the ball field. Their little 5-year-old runs excitedly to join us and the other kids that are playing. As he reaches the swings, a young girl, maybe 8 years old, stops him and says, "Black kids can't play here."

Every person alive should see the horror and confusion on that tiny boy's face. He turns to leave but I pull him close and say, "That is not correct. Everyone can play here. Everyone can play anywhere that playing can happen." I call my grandson over, introduce him to his newest friend, and they scurry off. Eventually there is laughing and climbing and chasing and swinging and sliding. But the entire time that sweet little boy keeps glancing fearfully over his shoulder.

I wonder what he tells his parents when they ask about his day.

Mollie Laramore, student, Class of 2018
stained glass

Medicinal Clarity



Jerry Goddard, MD, clinical assistant professor, family and community medicine

The Healer

The young doctor set up his practice in the small rural town and soon found himself with a bustling and somewhat harried practice. It was a practice made up of farmers, small business owners and a smattering of university types who had chosen the small town life. While he enjoyed his salt-of-the-earth clientèle, there were a few “heartsink” patients that he considered to be the crabgrass in the lawn of a family practice. One elderly female patient (“Mrs. Belcher”) had irritable bowel syndrome and proved to be an especially frustrating frequent flyer in the office. She was on the “to-be-seen” patient list more than any other, and the doctor struggled to remember his residency lecture on dealing with the incorrigible hypochondriac.* Her never-ceasing complaints of eructations, foul frequent flatus, debilitating dyspepsia, and bowel movements that came too often or too little made for a tiring, distasteful whack-a-mole medical marathon. This lady was a pro at stumping the medical profession and had stumped multiple GI consultants as well as the frazzled country doc.

While the practice flourished, his marriage was circling the drain from the long hours at the office/hospital, all too frequent after-hours patient phone calls, and call-backs to the unmanned small hospital ER. The bleeding soon became a hemorrhage and his marriage took its final breath after a long and painful downhill course. Fortunately the doc could lose himself in his busy practice and be sustained by accolades concerning his skill and dedication.

One cold, bleak, dreary January afternoon he saw Mrs. Belcher’s name on “the list.” He immediately became nauseated and drained. How could

*The politically correct term today is “patient with health anxiety,” but this episode occurred in 1979.

he face the kryptonite queen one more time? He had the mind to tell her where to go, and it was a hot and distant place from this rural village. Just seeing her name sapped his strength and he slowly crawled to her exam room. While withstanding great pain he entered, and there sat Mrs. Belcher on her throne, which in fact was the mere examination table. As he looked into her aging eyes, she simply said, "Oh doctor, I have been praying for you every day since I heard of your divorce." She continued as the stunned doctor was at a loss for words, "You are such a kind and caring doctor and I just want you to know how much you mean to me." He struggled to hide his moistened eyes that had been opened like Paul's on the road to Damascus. While no ethereal voice was heard by the patients or staff in the outer office, the message was heard in the doctor's heart. At that moment and for the years to come, Mrs. Belcher was seen as a healer, and the doctor no longer felt pain from the thorn in his side.

In the ultimate depth of being, we find ourselves no longer separate, but rather, part of the unity of the universe. That unity includes the sufferer and the suffering, and the healer and that which heals. Therefore, all acts of healing are ultimately ourselves healing our self. - Ram Dass

Anne James, community

Very Audrey

Everyone knows an Audrey
a wide-eyed beauty
beguiling Botticelli face,
full of radiant grace,
willowy as a spring day.

A style sensibility,
from big floppy hats,
to ballet flats,
she turns them into classics.

Wearing an octopus tattoo
marveling at the words of Carl Sagan
how our bodies have the same composition as stars.
Disclaiming beliefs where others settle
that we are ephemeral—
a flash of luminescence in a great dark sea.

She dances through ocean depths
hosting coastal elite
the mere suggestion of what hides beneath
inspires and fascinates.

Long legs stride the earth
stolen glimpses coming in and out of view
like waves of the Caribbean sea;
there one second and gone the next.

Ethereal being,
my sparkle,
my darling,
my daughter,
little copilot to me.

Wesley Robinson-McNeese, MD, alumnus and SIU system director for diversity initiatives

FIRST PLACE - PROSE

The Race Is Not to the Swift

His football coach said of his open field running, “There’s no one out there who can keep up with Felman. He’s as fast as lightning!” Felman showed this same speed at Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp during intra-company sporting events, so it was no surprise he was reported to have been at the front of the pack of young men who ran from *railroad bulls* at the Old Brickyard Pond on 19th and Madison Street in Springfield, Illinois.

Felman and four of his hometown buddies were hoboing back to East St. Louis for the weekend from their CCC work camp near Skokie, when they encountered the *bulls*. They had been at the camp only two weeks, but longed to get back to East St. Louis to visit family and friends, having found the communities around Skokie unwelcoming to Blacks. Neither of them could afford to pay for a trip home, however, having not received their \$30/month pay from the CCC. That’s when Felman came up with a plan to hop a train. The scheme required working with an accomplice at the freight yard to identify the correct train, but was far more likely to succeed than a group of Black men trying to hitch a ride out of Skokie.

Felman was one of five East St. Louisans who enrolled in the CCC at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri in July of 1933, a few weeks after their high school graduation. They were assigned to Camp SP-16, Skokie Valley, Glenview, tasked with draining swamp-like areas in Harms Woods and constructing recreational facilities for what would become Skokie Lagoons State Park. The Department of Labor organized the CCC enlistment process for young men whose families were on relief rolls. The Army ran the camps, and earlier that year President Franklin D. Roosevelt approved eight such CCC projects in Illinois. More than 1,000 men were among the initial company

assigned to the Skokie Marsh project—these five homesick men from East St. Louis among them.

Their weekend plan was rational, but brash. Hoboing was a popular means of transportation in the Great Depression era, but it was also illegal and could be dangerous. One never knew who, or what would be encountered when riding the rails unapproved. Add to that the unpredictable weather, coarse conditions of boxcars, and accidents from jumping on and off moving trains, and hoboing was truly for the brave, adventurous or desperate. Even so, more than one million, mostly men, chose this lifestyle and mode of transportation during the 1930s. Train crews were admonished to be on the lookout for *Bos* and to show them no kindness. Major rail yards like the one in Springfield hired male security staffs, who used harsh tactics against those who rode freight trains for free and against the law. Because of these tactics, such men came to be known as *bulls*. It was well-known that most hobos chose to board freight trains when they stopped or slowed in a railyard. So, sometimes for the *Bo*, the stop was more eventful than the ride—the yard more dangerous than the line.

Felman's small but happy group of camp workers left Skokie immediately after their workday ended on a Friday, hurrying to a nearby railyard where they jumped into an empty freight car, on a designated line, without difficulty. They found the yard teeming with other CCC campers with similar ideas, yet he and his companions ended up in a car by themselves. White campers quickly looked up at them and then rushed past, jumping into boxcars with less colorful human cargo. Racial segregation seeped its way into hoboing as with all other elements of life in the United States in 1933. Even so, theirs was a humdrum, slow, meandering ride from Skokie to Springfield. Arriving in the capital city's Illinois Central Railroad yard around midnight, the train came to a halt, sitting idly on the tracks for half an hour before the restless men gingerly, jumped down into the quiet night to stretch their legs.

They had gone only a few feet from the train when they saw glaring lights in the distance, and heard someone yell, "Git at 'em! They're over there!"

The group collectively winced behind the unmistakable sound of a gunshot coming from where the voices had been, and Felman moved *cont.*

The Race Is Not to the Swift cont.

instinctively, almost as if the shot had come from a starter's pistol beginning a foot race. He was off and running with abandon, his friends scurrying behind him in an every-man-for-himself mass of arms and legs. It's questionable whether any of them heard the subsequent yells of "Stop," coming from the *bulls* behind them. For sure they would not have stopped even if they had heard. But they all slowed and then halted in a frightened, trembling mass when Felman screamed somewhere in the dark ahead of them.

The ground had suddenly dropped from beneath Felman's feet as he ran, and he quickly found himself up to his neck in dirty water, grievously struggling in a twisted mass of weeds, old tires, metal and other debris. He had run headlong into a stagnant quarry pond adjacent to the railyard. By the time his friends reached the spot where he foundered, they having inched forward hesitantly towards the sounds of his yells for help, the bulls arrived at the spot as well. Felman had sunk beneath the scum-covered, trash-strewn water. No one could see. No one could help.

It took two days and dynamite blasting for his body to be recovered. The Coroner ruled his death an "accident v. suicide." The owners of the Brickyard were encouraged to "put a fence or guard of some nature around said pond, for the safety of the public," and Bisch Funeral Home's hearse carried Felman Ewing's body, out of kindness alone, to East St. Louis—the place of his longing, in a ride he still never would be able to afford.

Rosanne Hamilton, staff in patient business services
fabric

Diversity Quilt



John Grace, MD, alumni, Class of 2000

I (Am/Have) Hurt I (Forgive/Apologize)

I'm in pain. And I hurt. And I'm mad. And I hate.
And I want to convey.
Understand.

Make them see.
Make them feel.
Make them know what they've done.
Understand?

I want to forgive.
I want to move on.
But first they must first...
Understand.

After they see,
After they know,
After they feel,
Understand.

Then I'll let go,
Then I'll be free.
Then I'll forgive.
Understand?

I wait.
And I wait.
I wait with my pain.
And it burns
But they don't
Understand.

They don't understand

Can I forgive without that?
Let go without that?
Don't I need them to
Understand?

Don't I need them to see?
Need them to know?
Need them to feel?
To forgive?

If forgiveness is hope,
A hope that they see,
A hope that they learn,
Understand.

I can give that *today*,
Give that *right* now,
Hope that they learn
Understand.

And when *I* forgive,
And when *I* let go,
And when *I* can see,
Who I am.

Then I can live,
Then I can go,
Then finally,
Understand.

Those I have hurt,
Those I have wronged,
Those who have stood
Where I stand.

cont.

I (Am/Have) Hurt cont.

Those who have stood...where I stand.

Understand?

I'm so sorry to you,
So sorry...to them,
Sorry...for all that *I've* done.

I couldn't see,
I didn't know,
I wouldn't feel,
Understand.

And now it's so clear,
Now it is so,
Now it is here,
In my hand.

I forgive,
Accept,
And apologize,
But most of all... I understand.

Cynda Strong, community

As Seasons Change

Shards of ice crunch underfoot in leaf laden fields.

Barren branches moan under the soft layer of the first snow.

Prairie grasses shiver in the evening shadows

As a silver strand of smoke laces the sky and drifts slowly over a field where

A farmer burns off the last of the harvest spoils.

Silence echoes across the land, and a haunting sigh escapes the earth as it settles into hibernation.

Undaunted by the chill, a solitary pair of geese glides slowly over the ice-glazed pond.

Debi Santini, staff in graduate medical education

Princess Zoey's Fairy Tale

Once upon a time, not that long ago, Prince Kyle and Princess Zoey were living peacefully and happily in the Midwest. Kyle was more than 25 years older than his princess, but Zoey thought nothing of the age difference. She was blissfully happy and completely devoted to her prince.

But, as happens all too frequently, Prince Kyle's not-so-benevolent Uncle Sam decided that he must sail to the Middle-East on the USS Theodore Roosevelt to defend us and our country from the wickedness and evil that lurks there.

During their last weeks together, Kyle and Zoey spent endless hours in the woods and on the water. They basked in the spring rains, warm temperatures and sunshine, enjoying every moment communing with nature and living off the land and beer.

The sad day arrived for the prince to depart. For hours they traveled, her head resting on him, to the foster home that would care for Princess Zoey while her prince was gone. He explained over and over where they were going and why, but she simply could not comprehend his words.

When they arrived, Princess Zoey leaped happily out of the big red truck, then watched, confused and unbelieving, as he hugged her and drove away.

For weeks she waited for her prince to return. She adapted to the foster family's routine eventually, but her longing for her prince was quite evident and her heart seemed broken.

It took some time, but she rallied and made the best of her situation. Amazingly, Princess Zoey became quite fond of another resident at her foster home. A much older gentleman actually. They made a beautiful couple: Gipper, sleek and black; Zoey, soft and white. A mixed-race couple, yes, but no one ever gave them a questioning glance. Their 'Brangelina' moniker became 'Zipper' as the lady of the house sometimes struggled with their tongue-twister names when any rapid, stern admonishment was needed.

They dined together and worked together and played together and exercised together—things that every couple does. They spent their days side by side, sometimes arguing, but always guarding their empire against the perils that populated the streets. They reported every car that ventured down the lane, every rabbit that dared to hop, and every bird that flew overhead. The seductive flip of a squirrel tail was taken as the threat it clearly was.

Most days Gipper and Zoey would take their breaks and frolic together in

the warm sunshine among the fields and trees. Sadly, that privilege was lost when the princess leaped repeatedly into the lake for no apparent reason, then argued and temporarily lost the ability to stand or walk when she had to be bathed. They spent hours tossing and chasing the orange ball, until she developed an attitude and refused to return it. She was a fickle one. But they loved each other and tolerated the idiosyncrasies each brought to the relationship.

Prince Kyle tried a variety of technological wonders to communicate with his princess while he sailed the seas. Alas, when Zoey heard his voice she dashed to the door that he had last walked through. She simply could not comprehend why he wasn't there. It proved impossible to make her understand that she would see him if she would just look at Facetime on the iPhone. Prince Kyle lamented that his princess was clearly a Samsung dog.

One crisp fall day, Gipper and Zoey showed that fake TV hero-dog, Lassie, just how to truly save someone. The doors and windows were all closed with the loving couple trapped inside because one of the children playing in the yard was afraid of them (the child clearly didn't understand the very real rabbit and squirrel dangers). But soon Gipper and Zoey began to frantically bark and jump, then succeeded in luring the human-in-charge to the back door where hysterical shrieks could finally be heard. That day Gipper and his girl saved the life of a neighborhood boy who had fallen off the trampoline and broken his arm. Their heroism was rewarded greatly with biscuits and bones, but no television contract.

The colors of fall turned to the gloom and cold of winter, but the magic and promise of Christmas held enormous excitement and anticipation that could not be fully understood until the proper time arrived. And that day Princess Zoey received the best present ever when her prince returned to rescue her. Their reunion can only be described as shock and awe, mixed with pure joy, dog kisses, holiday biscuits, a squeaking hedgehog and mud.

The reunited Prince Kyle and Princess Zoey soon departed the cold skies of Illinois and drove off to their new life by the sea in San Diego.

Gipper is simply lost without his girl. He searches for her constantly. When her name is said—or any word that starts with the letter Z—he runs to search for her. We have explained that she is back with her prince and moving on to a new life. But he is the one now that cannot comprehend his loss. He misses his Gipper-Girl greatly. And we miss her too.

Thank you for your service Kyle Hall, and thank you for the privilege of being Zoey's foster family while you protected and defended us and our country.

We will try to Facetime Zoey soon—maybe you'll be able to help her figure it out. Or you'll need to get her a Samsung phone.

Ashay Vaidya, student, Class of 2021

As Life Moved On

We drove home in silence,
There was nothing to be said.
She was taken from us tonight,
The joy in our life was dead.

Leukemia, they told us,
With 6 months to live.
We frantically gave every cent we had,
Until we had nothing else left to give.

The first months were a haze,
As we shuffled through a night without dawn.
I plunged myself into work,
Functioned dutifully as life cruelly moved on.

I nodded solemnly to our friends' condolences,
With a black hole burning in my chest.
Longed for their ignorance of my pain,
When I returned every night to an empty nest.

My wife cursed the God who took her from us,
Burned her faith in the fire of this black swan.
Prayed for a release from this living world,
So that life would cease indifferently moving on.

Our anger seemed boundless, tireless, and eternal,
We stared bitterly at the world and all those who lived within its shell.
It wasn't until we finally turned those stares to each other,
Did we realize that we had the privilege of living in it as well.

We began speaking to each other again,
Descending the mountain of living death that we'd been trapped upon.
Held each other and mended one another,
Finding whispers of solace as life mercifully moved on.

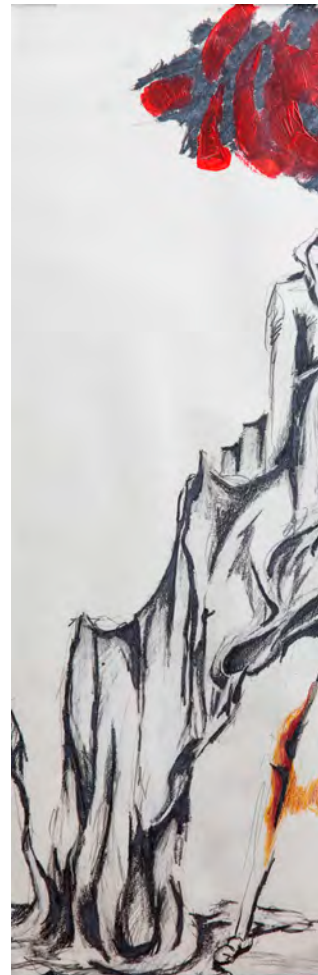
We reached out to friends and family for comfort and kindness,
Gathered around warm discussions of sweet remembrance.
Tears cascaded down our cheeks for the one we had lost.
Arms squeezed tightly around the ones we had in our presence.

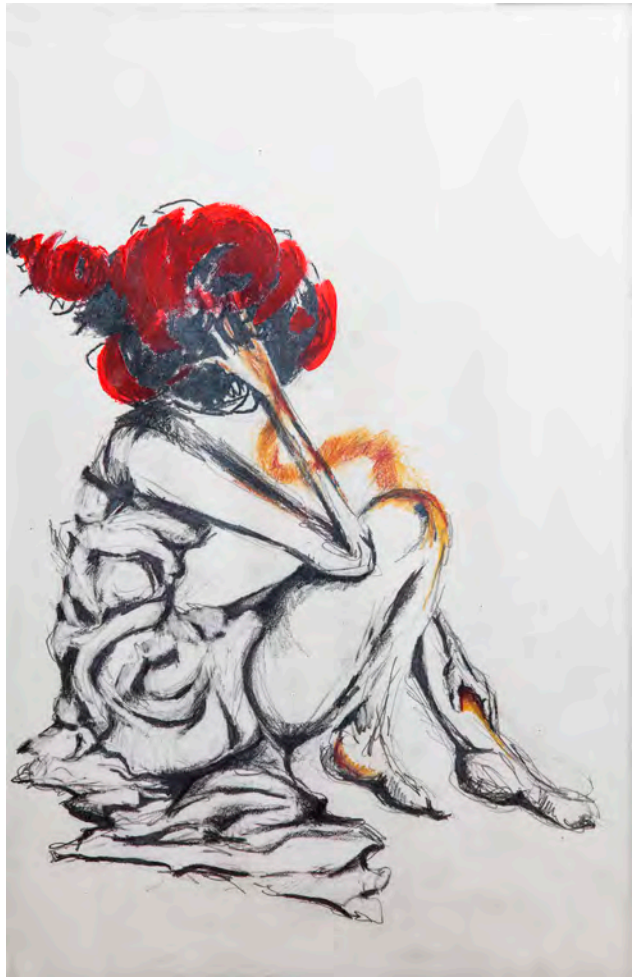
The wrath inside us began to dissipate,
Dwindling until it was gone.
We remerged, rebuilt, and remembered,
As life moved hopefully on.

Marie Varnet, student, class of 2019
charcoal on paper

SECOND PLACE - ART

Triptych





Laura Worrall, director of continuing professional
development
photography

Male Delivery



Anne James, community

Little Conqueror

Sturdy three-year-old legs clomp down the long flight of yellow pine stairs when a sudden betrayal of his body throws him to the floor with a smack. Eyes roll up as he goes rigid, racked and contorted by violent convulsions.

In the waiting room of a neurologist in Columbia, South Carolina, tortured bodies of suffering children are held in place by sophisticated wheel chairs.

Their small frames a battleground where war rages between brain and muscles.

I hold my son, soft copper curls tumbling around his ears,
pearl cheeks brushed with coral.
Reflecting myriad colors of the sea,
his worried blue eyes question me.
Radiating health, bursting with beauty,
a replica of an 1890 Pears' *Bubbles* soap ad.
My heart squeezes shut, is this what life has for him?

Determined little legs struggle to climb the school bus steps,
he half-turns to give an offhand wave.
The door closes as the bus carries him away.
I strain to smile through a blur of tears.

In middle school,
the Southeast Region Director of Student Psychology
prophesies a life sentence of doom
“your son will never make it through high school.”

cont.

Little Conqueror cont.

Years later, a service flag hangs from my front window
with a blue star in the middle,
a symbol that a child is in service in this Pensacola house.
My son, a honed and polished soldier, fighting in Iraq.

The sun beats hot on our heads
the day he graduates
from Ohio State University.
A mechanical engineering degree
tucked under his arm.

I watch him walk around the
Naval Air Station Museum
a little boy with curly red hair
sitting high on his daddy's strong shoulders.
I smile through my tears.

Kathryn Waldyke, MD, assistant professor, physician assistant program

The Process

Summoning poems
Trying to hear
Words in my head,
Make visions clear

On the blank page
Ply my old pen
Sketch and re-word
Time and again

Want it just right
Think each word through
Rhyme it? Comma?
Tense usage too

When is it done?
How will I know?
When I can't see
Where else to go

Put in new words
Find synonyms
Move lines around
All sorts of whims...

Feels like enough
Sounds smooth and clean
“It’s been two hours—
Where have you been?!?”

Emily Wade, student, Class of 2021
acrylic painting

THIRD PLACE - ART

Tides of Blue



Cat Brandt, student, Class of 2019

Throw the First Punchline

I was in the fourth grade the first time. We were playing tag on the blacktop during recess – the highlight of any elementary student’s day, unless, like me, you also had a strong affinity for lunch. Unbeknownst to me the game of fourth grade tag was radically different than third grade tag. Girls were now expected to tag boys, and boys could do whatever they wanted. That wouldn’t be the last time I’d miss a seemingly vital cue of pre-adolescence (looking at you, complete ignorance of NSYNC members and training bras). After the third girl in a row I’d tagged, a helpful classmate quietly pulled me aside to indicate my error. Of course by ‘helpful’ I mean ‘positively abhorred’, and by ‘quietly pulled me aside’ I mean ‘belted incredulously across the vast blacktop’ to a captive audience of pre-pubescent vultures, “Are YOU a LEZ?”

Eleven pairs of eyes intercepted mine as heads spun into 270s more impressive than my career character in Tony Hawk. The sound of kids playing was sucked right off the blacktop. Sunlight retreated behind storm clouds. Across the street a lady halted, aghast, and crawled back into her minivan.

“WHAT? NO!” I professed as my hand flailed around for the nearest boy to tag. I laughed, “I was just... kidding? I was just kidding!”

That’ll save me, my poor little fourth-grade sensibilities thought. I didn’t know what THAT word meant, but I knew it must be categorically BAD and I couldn’t ask just anyone (read: my parents) about it. That left only one option. Ask Jeeves. Twenty-five minutes – shout out to dial-up internet and Windows 95 – one search query, and a frantic shut down of the family computer later, I had my answer. A hot piece of lead dropped in my stomach. What little I knew about the matter was limited to an abstract reference in my religion workbook and the hushed, awkward tones that accompanied the inevitable yearly Leviticus reading at Mass.

Of course, then, that was NOT me. It couldn’t be.

I passed through puberty with the grace of a broccoli stalk in the garbage disposal. I begrudgingly began to understand that, crap, maybe THAT was me. So. Now I needed to protect myself. I did mention the pre-pubescent vultures earlier, right? They were fledglings too. If a good defense was the best offense, I figured a good self-deprecating joke was the ultimate defense.

Throw the First Punchline cont.

Let me tell you. It worked.

I learned that if I could make fun of myself—throw the first punchline—no one could make fun of me. I was invincible. That’s right. Not all superheroes wear capes. Some of us wear flannel.

Humor carried me through high school. I wrapped myself in the laughs I garnered while stomping on the anxiety bubble wrap under my surface until I was a vortex of fear and fearlessness. Fear of family, faith, peers. Fear of letting everyone down with what I definitely, no how, absolutely couldn’t ever admit. Fearlessness because I was fragile, and I was untouchable.

I rode my chariot of tremulous confidence into college and found a brand new audience. It wasn’t long before I came out. Like a broken faucet the vortex depressurized. First in dribbles, then a stream.

All the while joking.

Not too many months after, I found myself cleaning up in a bathroom stall as he grew bored of violating my body.

A pair of bloodshot vulture eyes intercepted mine as my head spun in 360s. The sound of drunken laughter and tinkling glasses was sucked right out of the bar. Fluorescent lights flickered behind the stall door. Across the street a lady halted, aghast, and crawled back into her taxi.

The vortex tore up through the floor and laughed, “Damn, I must really be gay after all. Sorry!” (Go back and re-read that. It’s the only rape joke you’re allowed to laugh at, folks.)

That’ll save me, my poor little 14th-grade sensibilities thought.

I later learned that the vulture had told friends he had successfully “turned me straight.” Joke’s on you.

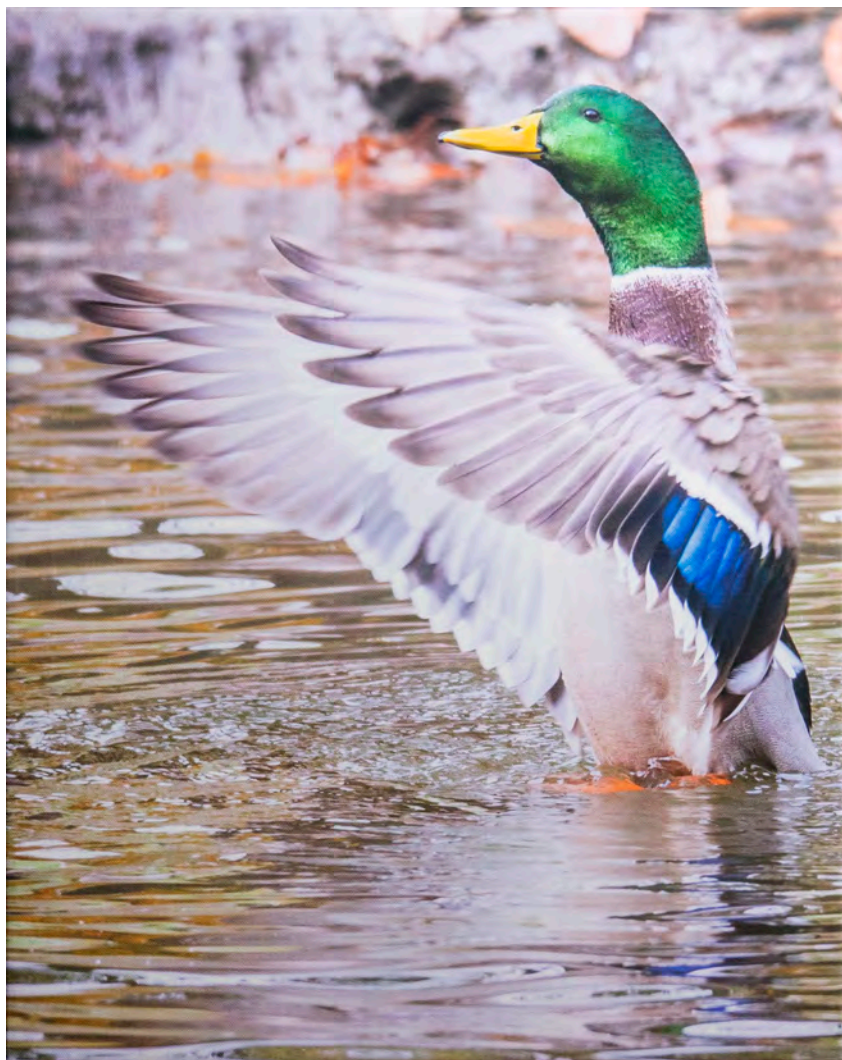
That incident shook me a tiny bit more than the great tag debacle of fourth grade. Now, I dealt with it the only way I knew—which was to ignore, implode, and eventually process—but it was humor that kept me sane. I remember the first day I truly felt normal again. I was in my pajamas for the fourth day in a row watching the same Saturday Night Live sketch on repeat until I was laughing so hard I cried, and then I was just crying. First in dribbles, then a stream.

Reaching the other side of the storm, I peeled myself off the couch and the vortex off my shoulders. Rolling out my cramped muscles I prepared to take my first fledgling steps again—and tripped face-first over the rug.

I was invincible.

Ramzi Souki, MD, assistant professor of pediatrics
photography

Embrace



Kathryn Waldyke, MD, assistant professor, physician assistant program

Failure

Hail to you,
Failure,
powerful teacher,
teacher's tool.

Oh, I deplore
the sting of your lesson
teaching me.

How is it for you
to be so powerful,
so hated,
avoided?

I too teach,
using you as a tool,
allowing students to fail,
dreading the tears,
the curses

but knowing
they need you
and your lessons.
We need you.

Unlike you
I can—and do—
teach too with
affirmations,

but when the good feeling
is gone,
they want another
then another—
insatiable desire.

You, Failure,
you leave them
forever changed,
never wanting to know
again your correction,
doing anything
to avoid you again,
harsh teacher,
effective teacher.

Dedicated to Dr. Shirley Siew

Sophia Matos, student, class of 2021
acrylic painting

Wild Flowers



John Grace, alumnus, Class of 2000

Timus

Timus left the door open,
And Aura slipped on by.

Timus left the promise broken,
Aura held the line.

Timus left the kiss waiting,
Aura understood.

Time has left the dower waking,
As hours wasted would.

Melanie Barnard, MD, surgery resident PGY4

SECOND PLACE - PROSE

Dry Eyes, Steady Hands

I enter your warm, well-lit room. It's too early for family to visit, but they've left gifts and cards that make even a bare hospital room cheerful. You welcome me with a smile. I try to smile back.

Slow steps forward, weighed down by the burden of knowing too much.

I sit down by your bed and I speak the words you'll never forget:

I tell you that you are going to die.

You don't understand at first. I've phrased it too carefully. Guarding my words with technical terms, falling back on training to try to convey such a terrible concept. I see your confusion and force myself to speak more plainly.

You start to understand; the smile fades from your face. Silence falls between us. You are still, frozen with shock; and so I wait.

With dry eyes and steady hands.

You start to cry. It's sinking in. Your posture changes, now slumped, defeated. You are no longer looking forward into a distant, hopeful future, but staring into an awful, real present. You ask the question I knew you would:

"How long?"

I give you statistics and averages, numbers that mean little to you. But you are done listening. It's your turn to talk. So I sit quietly, holding your cold, frail hand between mine and I listen. You are slow to speak, but when the words come they arrive in a flood; words about your hopes, your fears, your family that depends on you. You aren't ready to die just yet.

Your heart is breaking, your world collapsing, and still I sit beside you.

With dry eyes and steady hands.

Eventually you are done crying and want to be alone. I leave the room with slow, measured steps, no lighter despite the burden of terrible knowledge I've shared.

I have many rooms to visit today, some get good news, others bad. Long hours, with lots to do, I try my best to not think of you. My mind is focused, I stay on task, because they are my patients too, and deserve my full attention. So through it all, I greet each new room.

With dry eyes and steady hands.

Finally, I make it home to a cold dark room. I cross the threshold and suddenly, I'm no longer your doctor, no longer a source of strength or answers. I'm just a person who is tired and sad. I fall to the floor, cradling my head in my shaking hands. Tears fall between my fingers, splashing unnoticed in my lap.

I wish I could have had different news to deliver. I wish someone else could have been the messenger. But above anything else, I wish that I could save you.

I can't.

But I can cry for you, for the sadness and grief you are feeling right now. You have lived such a wonderfully complex life, a book with many chapters, and I am just a dark footnote within the last one. I know you will cherish the time you have left with the family and friends who love and care for you so much. And long after you are gone, I will still remember you.

However, this time to grieve is short. There are people who I can help. So I will sleep, and in the morning, I'll return to you and others like you.

With dry eyes and steady hands.

John Grace, MD, alumnus, Class of 2000

THIRD PLACE - POETRY

I Stabbed the Buddha

I stabbed the Buddha,
Spit on Ghandi,
Exposed myself to Mother Theresa,
And gave Jesus the finger.

Then I felt badly and I apologized and I promised to never do it again,
And each of them accepted my apology.

Then some time later I was talking to Jesus,
And he didn't seem to be paying attention,
And that pissed me off,
So I kicked him in the shin.

And, almost as soon as I did it, I regretted it.
He was crying. And I apologized,
And he forgave me.

Over time I kept trying,
And I kept failing again and again.
They kept forgiving,

And one of the times when I was at my lowest,
I looked at Jesus and asked him, "Why do you keep forgiving?"

He smiled, patted me on the shoulder, and whispered,
"So that you keep trying."

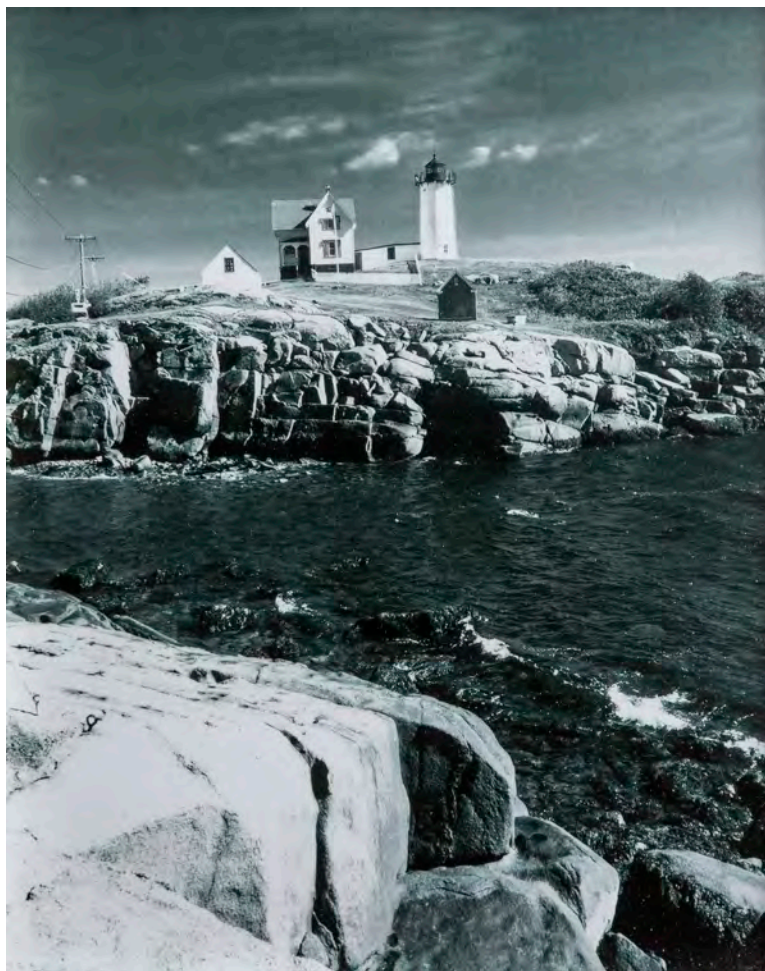
Kevin Hascup, PhD, research associate of neurology
photography

Zebras sarbeZ



Cynda Strong, community
photography

The Rocky Coast



Kathryn Waldyke, MD, assistant professor, physician assistant program

March Forward

Is it spring or is it not?
My best guess is no.
Last week warm and sunny—ah!
This week ice and snow.

What to wear each day is hard:
Shorts? Snow boots below?

In the garden things are rough.
All my trees don't know
when to bud and then to bloom—
Freeze and down they go.

This year peaches won't make fruit.
Squirrels will miss them so.
Silly me I planted peas
weeks before they'll grow.

Prob'ly rot beneath the dirt
'fore they'd ever show.
Seems I got ahead of spring:
Wait before you sow!

That's enough griping for now.
Join me? Grab a hoe.

Anne James, community

A Dedicated Symphony

Toddler hands
strive
to perform
Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star
on the violin.
Elementary school hands
discover
school work.
High school hands
excel
to valedictorian.
College hands
conquer
neuroscience.
Healing hands
care for
AIDS patients in Uganda.
Med school hands
suture
open wounds.
Flight surgeon hands
mend
soldiers in Kuwait.
Pediatrician hands
treat
all children.
These same hands
comfort and adore
a son,

love and cherish
a husband,
play and tumble
with a Westie.

My daughter's hands
have orchestrated
a symphony of love
ministering
to all they touch.

Wesley Robinson-McNeese, MD, alumnus and SIU system
director for diversity initiatives

FIRST PLACE - POETRY

Observation Room

*One and two and three and four
Medics rushed him through the door
And five and six and seven and eight
Doctors knew it was too late*

Residents unceremoniously sent from resuscitation suite
Replaced by Attendings rushing in 'til CPR team complete
One, unobtrusive junior resident, from chest compression post
SPIED involved and inquisitives entering room, some faces pale as ghosts

*One and two and three and four
Medics rushed him through the door
And five and six and seven and eight
Doctors knew it was too late*

Mayor's staff yelling, "We're not leaving. Do what you've got to do."
Ousting reporters, thickly swarming, to get a closer view
Lengthening line along the walls as family members arrive
NOTED orders mixed with plaintive shouts: "Please keep him alive!"

*One and two and three and four
Medics rushed him through the door
And five and six and seven and eight
Doctors knew it was too late*

Paramedics told of sudden collapse while seated at his desk
Staff and first responders said to have determinedly done their best
Thirty minutes expired from North LaSalle to East Erie Street
SAW powerful politicians commandeer spots in crowded rescue suite

*One and two and three and four
 Medics rushed him through the door
 And five and six and seven and eight
 Doctors knew it was too late*

Promising day-before-Thanksgiving shift quickly turned to pain
 City's political softening dashed after re-election gains
 Whispered rumors circulating about suspect coffee stains
 WATCHED weather add to overall gloom with background fog and rain

*One and two and three and four
 Medics rushed him through the door
 And five and six and seven and eight
 Doctors knew it was too late*

Chicago's first Black Mayor's life in doubted White men's hands
 Distrust, fear, stress, strife consumed collective band
 Holding standing-only viewing spots determined not to cede
 PERCEIVED stakes high if he should die, suite occupants agreed

*One and two and three and four
 Medics rushed him through the door
 And five and six and seven and eight
 Doctors knew it was too late*

Unrelenting effort beyond heroic, undoing air of strife
 Doctors conceive a different plan to save the Mayor's life
 Onlookers leaning in, also sensing fruitless track
 SAW clinical merge with science and tech to change revival tack

*One and two and three and four
 Medics rushed him through the door
 And five and six and seven and eight
 Doctors knew it was too late*

cont.

Observation Room cont.

Extracorporeal life support – the physicians’ final choice
Viewers stick with silent prayer, unfortunately their only voice
With time both sides realized the other surely cared
Having gone on long and done as much as any of them dared

Heart-lung machine precise and keen, yet no brain function noted
Two hours’ time, less spontaneous signs, Northwestern’s doctors voted
Action and automation stopped in room of bowing heads
VIEWED chief surgeon formally announce, “Harold Washington is dead.”

Kaelea Doggett, community
stippling, marker on paper

Marilyn



Kathryn Waldyke, MD, assistant professor, PA program

THIRD PLACE - PROSE

On Books and Libraries

I suspect that I will find among the SCOPE readership fellow book readers and book lovers. Many, like me, were recruited early, in the first grade with that first reading class, those first few words: “See Dick. See Dick run.” You know the series. At this point in life I cannot resist an urge to follow those short sentences with, “See Jane run—for President.” But that is another essay altogether.

Not everyone who falls in love with reading also falls in love with books, I suppose, but many of you are probably still with me there. The Weekly Reader at school was just not enough, nor the Reader’s Digest at home. I wanted more.

Early on I would angle for money to buy books from school book fairs or order them by mail, actually filling out a little paper order form, begging Dad to write a check, and mailing those off in an envelope then waiting anxiously for a couple of weeks for the ecstasy of The Box in the Mail. Other times I would ride my one-speed bike or walk a mile to town to check books out with my very own Library Card, acquired at so early an age that I actually do not remember how old I was—second grade, perhaps, about 8?

At this point I will show my dotage by offering a glance into the old libraries, for those far younger than I, who missed out. The library card then was paper, with my name and number and the expiration, typed on it by a person using a typewriter, probably manual at that time but maybe electric. If someone “swiped” my card, I would have to report the theft and apply for a new one; there was no magnetic strip. Also being paper it became useless blobs of debris in the dryer if one negligently left it in a pants pocket and those pants went in the washer, so I do see the virtues of the modern plastic card. But I digress.

The library books had a pocket too, on the back cover, and a card belonged in the pocket. You pulled that card out and wrote your name on it, and the librarian (likely with tall hair and horn-rimmed glasses, oh yes!)

would stamp the due date on the book and hand it to you, then on the card and file it in large boxes that took up a large portion of the large desk. Keep that book past the due date and fail to renew (in person), and there would be a fine—5 cents a day per item, as I recall, which rather quickly consumed my 50 cents a week allowance, were I to transgress—and an irate phone call after a week of shameful negligence. Librarians (they were not then Media Specialists) could not hit a button and send friendly then testy emails anonymously. No, this was a personal phone call, usually answered by Mom in the kitchen, from someone who a) loved “her” (rarely “his”) books at least as much as you did (even though most had a funny, slightly oldy-moldy smell—the books, not the librarians or patrons. Well, maybe you too...) and b) did not like to be talking out loud in the library, so you better get to it and bring that book in!

Back to the pull-the-card-out-of-the-pocket step, and this is key: there was no library HIPAA rule, so the card had signatures from all the previous borrowers, and you could see who else had checked it out and roughly how long they kept it. Though occasionally one might check out a clunker and return it unread, usually one did a bit of research to find a book worth dragging a mile home, as there also was an enforced-focusing-and-prioritizing five-books-at-a-time limit. Reading the list of prior borrowers was in many ways more valuable than an Amazon review. While readers did not comment directly on the book, in a small town you knew if these people were your age and usually shared your interests or not.

Media Resource Centers these days often seem to offer a “youth fiction” section. I don’t know if other libraries were like mine, as I lived in one house in one town from ages 3 to 18 and had no reason to venture 10 miles to the next town until high school dating years, and even then not their public library—but I digress yet again. Our old library had 2 distinct sections with a wall separating them—the youth section on the right and newspapers, magazines and books for adults on the left, with the Librarian and her (see above) check-out desk positioning her to police who had full access and who would be going right only. This is ancient history now—nearly a half century!—but I seem to remember about junior high we would no longer get a sharply inquisitive look and possibly verbal redirection when heading left. And she usually knew who we were and about (or exactly) what grade we were in, especially The Regulars, my crowd.

On Books and Libraries cont.

A few short years later that group of The Regulars and I had left for college, most of us leaving town forever, in part readied by those library books. A few old friends have stayed or returned. Now I return to visit my parents in that same house I brought the books to. Some of those purchased books are still there, in “my” room—Peanuts cartoons, the Little House Books, long Michener novels—reminding me of many happily distracted hours. And now I am where I remember my dad of that era: buying more books than I can usually read, sneaking them in on vacations or a few minutes after a crazy day in the clinic (just like Dad). And he is back to the library, sort of: my old library still stands as a reading room connected to the impressive new Media Center staffed with faintly familiar but less stern, masters-degree-wielding Media Specialists. I drive Dad there, and we share our recommendations with each other, and tips from friends, Amazon and NPR, so he can choose wisely five books to fill the hours of his retirement days.

Mary Corrigan Stjern, community
pastel painting

Sundown in the Boundary Waters



Ashton N. Bell, community

Forbidden Fruit

Beautiful poison
Toxic pleasure
Ebony sleep
Desire of my eyes, loins and heart
Dangerously appealing
Causing reason to silence

A warm-blooded snake
Whose bite is a drug
Killing slowly
Blurring thoughts
Confusing motives
Marring love

Eyes more powerful than the Sirens
Each one a willing trap
That men run into.
Curves icy and deadly
Making willing victim
Take the suicidal plunge

Your flower fragrant and blooming
Captivating and ensnaring
Able to produce life while drawing
The strongest to death

Your nectar sweet and final
Addicting, binding
Hope for freedom
Thrown away and burned
Fire lit by the hand of the bound

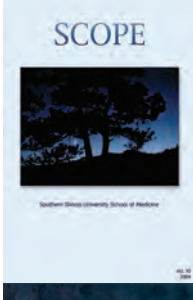
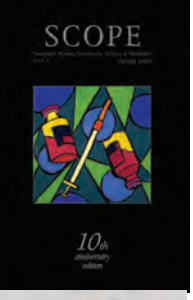
The most fatal aspect
The smile, like a lighthouse
Luring to jagged doom.
Masked danger
Chains hidden
Time lost

Destroyed dreams
Devastated hope
Condemned lives
Lie in the wake
Of this beautiful
Forbidden fruit

Emily Wade, student, Class of 2021
acrylic painting on wood

Blooming





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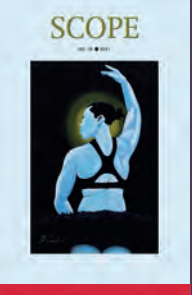
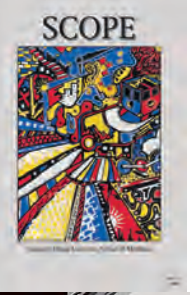
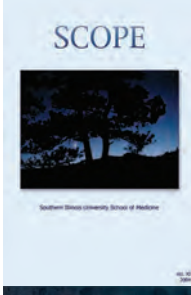
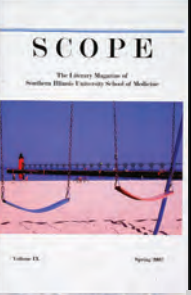
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SIU MEDICINE

Jolly Rancher

by Tom Ala, MD

