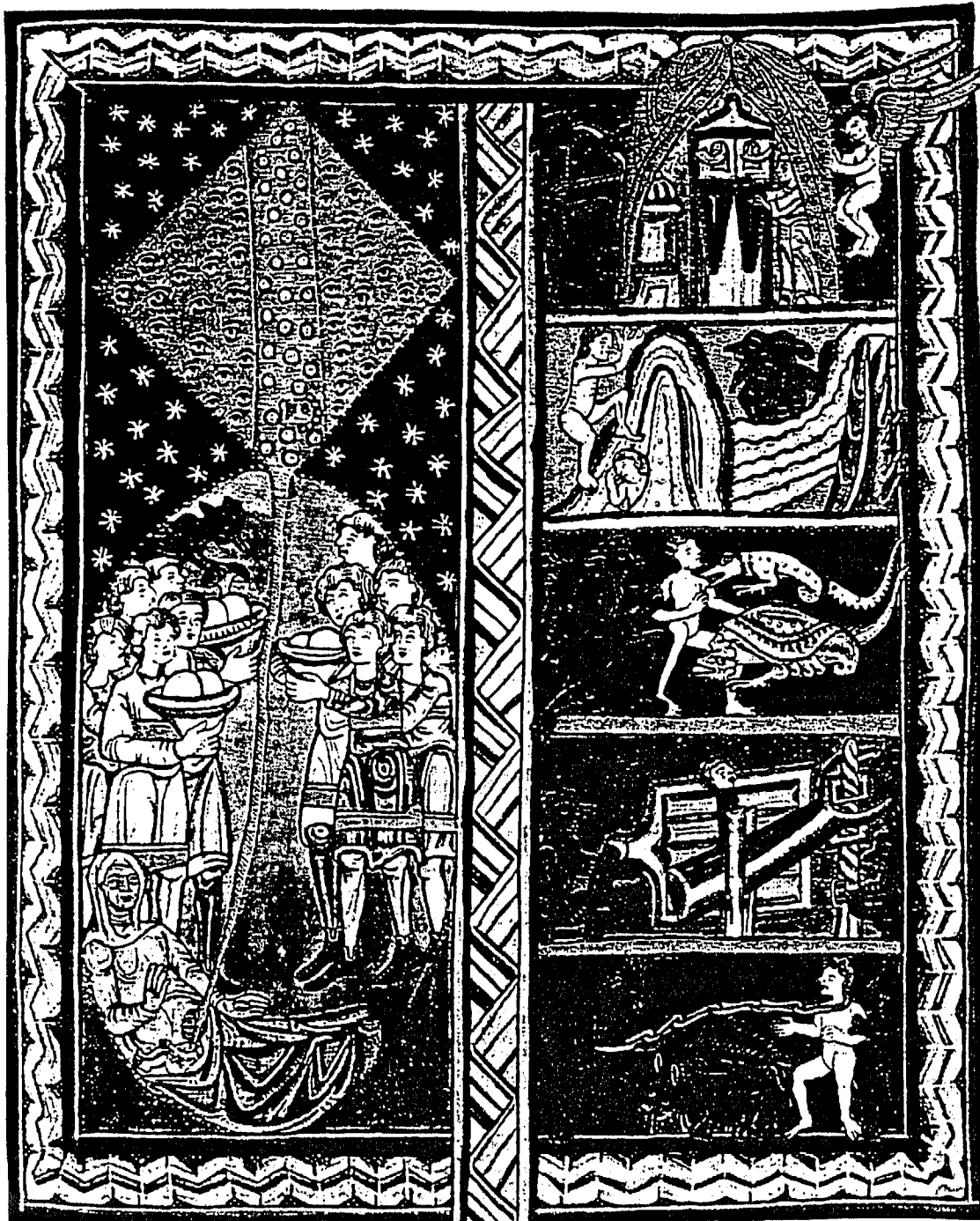


November 1990

Shifting Dullness



Musician, Mystic & Medical Writer

Leslie Rokoske

With the first note their ethereal voices sent a chill up my spine, releasing a flood of emotion only like that experienced during ultimate sensory stimulation. Thus were my feelings during the recent "Early Music at Duke" concert, Filae Sion Music from Medieval Women's Cloisters. Last Monday evening, the German-based (Cologne) professional women's ensemble, Sequentia, presented medieval music of a religious nature, which originated and was sung in women's cloisters from the 12th to 14th centuries.

Although women were forbidden from singing in churches during this time, within the sphere of female religious communities a rich and passionate tradition of collecting, creating and singing this genre of music took place. One composer of medieval cloister music was Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179), a German nun and visionary whose works reflect the themes of her mystical experiences. For instance the piece *Nunc Aperuit* evokes a visionary event: "Now a closed gate has opened to us that which the serpent choked in a woman, hence the flower of the Virgin Mary gleams in the dawn."

In addition to her musical accomplishments, Hildegard von Bingen was also a scientist and scholar. Through her prolific writings, this medieval Benedictine nun "discusses the spheres of heaven in terms of the elements, the universe as a series of concentric spheres; the zones of the atmosphere; the structure and inner workings of the human body; the nature of metals, stones, plants, trees, and animals." (From *Beyond their Sex: Learned Women of the European Past*, ed. by P.H. LaBalme, 1980.) She is known in particular for two medical treatises: *Physica*, an encyclopedia of both folk medicine and the most current treatment modalities known at the time (through her contact with Arab science, the most advanced medicine of the High Middle Ages), and *Causes and Cures*, a volume describing the etiology and treatment of common medical problems.

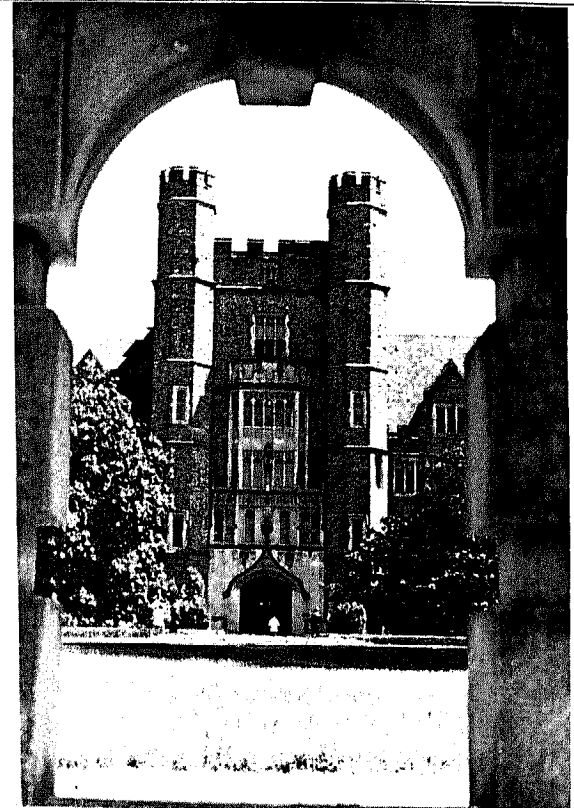
Hildegard von Bingen is credited with being the first Westerner to write about the need to boil water in disease prevention. Much of her medical advice includes nutritional information and dietetics: she discusses the various 'virtues' of grains, legumes and other modern health fare. Thus she was a forerunner of the preventive medicine doctor. Although she claimed that as a mystic she had no human sources for her

scientific knowledge, there is growing evidence that Hildegard von Bingen conducted some primary research in compiling her medical texts.

Regardless of her sources, this German nun's contribution to both the cultural and scientific spheres of the Middle Ages makes her deserving of a place in mainstream medical and musical history.

About the cover

This illustration by Hildegard von Bingen depicts the infusion of the soul into the womb of a pregnant woman.



Shifting Dullness accepts letters of opinion from all members of the medical center community which encourage responsible dialogue. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editorial staff. *Shifting Dullness* reserves the right to edit letters for length and style. Submit responses in the *Shifting Dullness* box in the Alumni Affairs Office, Student Lounge, or mail to PO Box 2765 DUMC.

Second Opinions

Suspicionless Drug Testing of Physicians

Edward C. Halperin, M.D.

Johns Hopkins University and Hospital in Baltimore have, over several years, taken a series of steps to address the problem of chemical dependency in health care personnel. These include an alcoholism program and a general faculty and staff substance abuse program directed by a professional assistance committee. Receiving self-referrals as well as referrals from colleagues and department chairpersons, the professional assistance committee has significant discretionary authority to deal with impaired personnel, housestaff and faculty physicians.

After a long period of debate, education, and over some objections from the medical staff and other employees, Johns Hopkins Hospital's Board of Trustees and its medical board have chosen to add random suspicionless drug testing as a component of the chemical dependency program for physicians. When staff physicians renew their clinical privileges they must go through their usual recertification procedure; at Hopkins this includes agreeing to submit to randomized drug testing. A breathalyzer test, urine sample, or both will be required at random from an as yet undetermined proportion of physicians applying for initiation or renewal of privileges. The test will be used to detect alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, PCP, and opiates. If a physician tests positive, he or she will be retested. If the test is confirmed positive, a medical review will ascertain whether the test results stemmed from a medically indicated drug, some other substance, or an illicit drug. Those individuals deemed positive as a result of drug abuse will be referred to the professional assistance committee. All other hospital employees, including housestaff, will be subject to drug testing if there is a reason to suspect a problem. It is possible that in the future, nurses and housestaff may be included in the routine testing program.

The Hopkins program raises a series of thorny scientific, ethical, and legal issues. Hopkins has argued that physicians must provide moral leadership on the issue of drug abuse. Medicine, as a profession which involves saving lives and life-threatening procedures, has a special obligation to free itself of impaired practitioners. Hopkins argues that randomized drug

testing will help fulfill this goal. Hopkins appears to be acting within its legal rights and, as a private hospital, is not in violation of Fourth Amendment protections against unlawful search and seizure.

There are, on the other hand, a series of strong objections to suspicionless drug testing of physicians. These include violations of a perceived right of privacy, the inherent inaccuracies of drug testing, the financial expense, and concern that drug testing might be used as a means for blackmail, settling old hospital political feuds, academic disputes, and personality conflicts.

Constitutional experts in North Carolina advise that Hopkins, as a private hospital, is not subject to suit on the basis of civil liberties violations. A government hospital would, on the other hand, be subject to suit on the basis of violation of the search and seizure provision of the Constitution. The Maryland Civil Liberties Union has announced that they will not litigate against Hopkins.

Dr. Edward C. Halperin is an Associate Professor of Radiation Oncology.

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Reflections on Poetry and Medicine

Julie Fishbein, M.D.

—Presented to the Davison Club on October 19, 1990
on the opening of the new Arts Medicine Clinic.

In 1985 I went to graduate school to become a writer. It was a fascinating time for me, surrounded by famous writers, and everyone involved in the act of making art. In fact, everyone was writing about the process of art, writing about writing. But I soon felt something was missing in the poems, something vital and vibrant, which I couldn't quite pinpoint.

Until I returned to medicine, and there it was in every room. I want to take you there, to one particular ten by twelve foot room up on the pediatric ward, a spacious room for a short stay. My three-year-old friend Sarah lives there. She has aplastic anemia, a failure of the bone marrow to make blood cells. You can spot her any day in her red plastic high-heeled slippers, costume jewelry and underwear, as she comes clackety-clack down the hall. Sarah can't read, but we often find her sitting at the nurses' station, thumbing through her own hospital chart, considering each page carefully. If you need to borrow the chart, you must ask her permission, and be prepared to come back later. She is a powerful child.

And yet I have seen her meek and too breathless to speak, with a circle of relatives joined in prayer around her bed. These are the vicissitudes of her illness.

There is no use putting on airs with her. She will call your bluff. The first time I met her it was two in the morning, and the nurse had called to tell me Sarah had a fever. I ambled sleepily into her room, examined her and explained matter-of-factly that I must draw some blood. As I reached into my pockets for the things I needed, Sarah peered up at me from her tangle of IV's like a little spider in her web and asked me, quite matter-of-factly, if I was sure I knew what I was doing.

I had to stop and think. She knew full well the doctors' fallibility, and I never forgot that confrontation. The next day, she stopped on her go-cart to tell me that I'd done a good job. Thank you, Sarah.

Sarah's mother has just had twins. She was hoping one of the them would be a match for a bone marrow transplant, which is Sarah's only chance for a cure. But

neither of them are. So, now the room has three little girls, and Sarah's mom jokes about buying a farm to put all the kids on, all the kids she may have to find a match for Sarah. Sarah's dad has gotten a job in the Duke Hospital Maintenance Department. They will never afford a farm, but their hospital room is one of the richest places on earth. I go there often, and it nourishes me.

There is a great deal of voyeurism in medicine, and I have come to enjoy it, not to be embarrassed by it.

You walk into a room with a set of questions in your mind; you want to answer the riddle of the illness, to make a diagnosis. But each time you are surprised. You find the answers enveloped in a scene, a family under stress in a little room whose boundaries compress and confine them like the lines of a poem.

As they struggle to answer your questions, as they probe you for your opinions and at the same time, judge you, as they work together (or against one another), and joke and pray and curse and cry their way through a troubling time, they are making a poem of their lives. They are creating scenes which brand themselves into your memory. They are offering you what William Carlos Williams called "an intimation of what is going on in the world," or the lesson which Kierkegaard wanted so much to learn, "how to live a life."

The essence of all poetry is in that room. In the naked patient standing before you, you see yourself and your own mortality. It is a confrontation. The atmosphere is charged, and every gesture belies greater things moving beneath the surface.

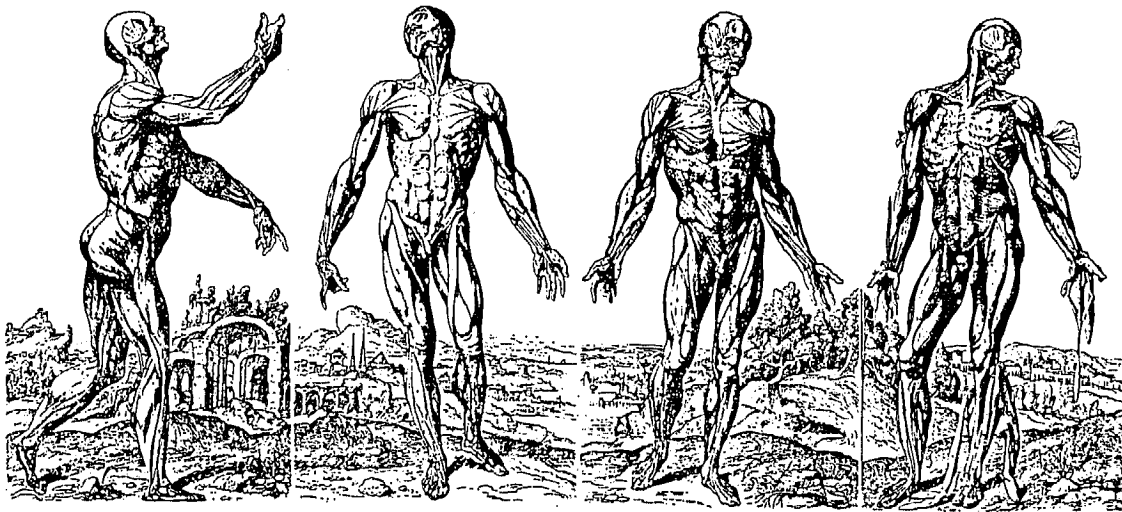
So, what am I trying to tell you about medicine and poetry? Just, I suppose, that they are inextricably linked, that I have found more poetry here than in all the ivory towers. Each room I enter is a living poem, struggling to create itself. I am a witness to my patients, they are my teachers, and to learn from them is the greatest privilege I know.

Dr. Julie Fishbein is a Duke fellow in Pediatric Hematology-Oncology.



Novel

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November in Medical History

Chris Tharrington

- The first treatise printed in the English colonies, *A Brief Rule to Guide the Common People of New England How to Order Themselves and Theirs in the Small Pocks or Measles*, was printed in Boston on November 2, 1677. The author, Thomas Thacher, followed the trend of the time by practicing both medicine and theology - he was also the first minister of Old South Church in Boston.

- On November 6, 1880, Charles Louis Alphonse Laveran, a French army surgeon in Algeria at the time, first observed the malarial parasite in human blood. For this and later work on protozoan diseases, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1907.

- St. Martin, patron against smallpox and leprosy, died on November 11, 397 A.D.

- On November 14, 1888, the first Pasteur Institute officially opened in Paris. Pasteur himself was so overcome by the honors paid him at the ceremonies that he could not deliver his prepared speech. His son-in-law substituted, closing with the words, "Science, in obeying the law of humanity, will always labor to extend the frontiers of life."

- The trustees of the College of Philadelphia published the requirements for the degree in medicine on November 17, 1789. Included were attendance at lectures, examinations, a thesis, and apprenticeship with a "respectable practitioner."

- On November 29, 1811, Napoleon closed the medical school at Salerno. Of Hellenistic - rather than Roman - origin, the school was first mentioned in 848 A.D., and flourished especially in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The school was the first to be independent of the Church, was the first medieval school to cultivate medicine as an independent science, and was the first medical school with female instructors. Various proverbs and adages (more popular in previous centuries) were attributed to those studying at Salerno. One example regarding physicians' fees was, "collect while the pain lasts."

Davison Council

Betsy Hilton

The following are from Davison Council meetings held on Sept. 26, Oct. 10, and Oct. 24.

1) A procedure for student initiated action to address important and urgent educational issues was created by the Council in conjunction with Dr. Petrusa, PhD, from the registrar's office. The final revisions of the policy will be made, prior to submission to the administration for approval.

2) Treasurer Ann Sharpe, MS4 and the budget committee have been working to revise the 1976 Davison Society Budget Policy. The policy aims to outline the ways Davison Council money should be spent. Discussion of the revisions will take place at the Nov. 7th Davison Council meeting.

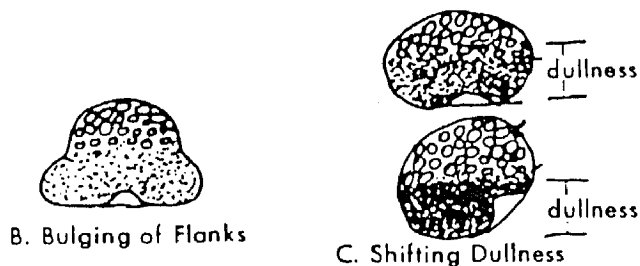
3) Service VP Susan Roque, MS4 organized a successful activities fair for the first year class.

4) The fall Medical School service project, Habitat for Humanity, was rained out. Another attempt will be made in January. Contact Jim Davidson, MS3 for details on how to get involved.

5) Mary Amato, MS4 and Jim Davidson, MS3 have been working with Dean Graham to improve both the North and South Student Lounges. In North, a microwave oven and bookshelves are to be installed. The combination has been changed and can be obtained from CTL. Guidelines for the proper use of the lounge have been posted in the lounge. The major problems that are making on-call beds in short supply stem from students messing up beds in the daytime and locking callroom doors when only one student is occupying the room. Dean Graham has been made aware of the need for a larger student lounge in Duke South and is working to locate a space.

6) The first year class Davison Council representatives are Chris Cabell (Pres.), Chris Hasty, Chris Woods, John Monks, and Alison Toth.

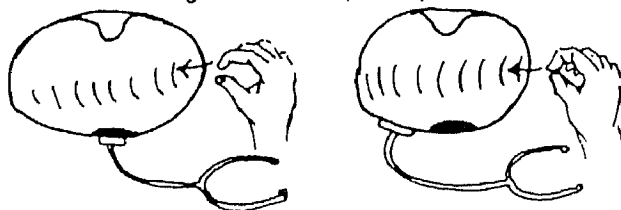
7) Medical School students are reminded that all are welcome and encouraged to attend Council meetings. Minutes of the biweekly meetings are posted outside the mail room in Duke South.



B. Bulging of Flanks

C. Shifting Dullness

Patient examined in knee-chest posture, flicking sound damped by fluid



E. Puddle Sign for Sparse Ascites

Confused about what *Shifting Dullness* means?

Well, here's your chance to find out! Come to a bag lunch on Monday, Nov. 5 from noon until 1pm in the Dean's conference room, Green Zone, Duke South. Open to all interested in contributing to *Shifting Dullness*, especially MS1's and MSIII's. Call Holly at 688-7347.

November Calendar

Rowena Dolor

Special Events

November

- 2 - House Party: Bachman, Lauvetz, Nunez, Mair.
15B Tarawa Terrace, 9:30 pm - 6 am
- 3 - Homecoming Dance, Blue & White Night;
music by Savoy Truffle, 9 pm - 12:30 am, Von Canon
Hall, Bryan Center
- 9 - TGIF at the Hideaway, 5 pm
- 9 - Surgery Dept. Renewal of Systems, 6:30-8:30
pm, Searle Center
- 10 - "Reeding Qualities" 10 pm - 1 am at The Pub
- 14 - Second City National Touring Comedy
Company, 8 pm, Page Aud.
- 17 - Medical Alumni Weekend Libation, 10 am - 12
noon, Card Gym

Freewater Films

7 & 9:30 pm, Bryan Center; free with ID

November

- 1 - A Place in the Sun
- 2 - Distant Voices, Still Lives
- 6 - And the Ship Sails On
- 8 - In Cold Blood (6:45 & 9:30 pm)
- 9 - Drugstore Cowboy (midnight: The Hitcher)
- 10 - Captain Blood (10:30 am)
- 13 - Il Bidone ("The Swindle")
- 15 - To Kill a Mockingbird
- 16 - The Little Thief
- 20 - Fellini's Satyricon
- 27 - 8 1/2
- 29 - A Raisin in the Sun (6:45 & 9:30 pm)
- 30 - The Cook, the Thief, His Wife and Her Lover
(6 & 9:30 pm)

Quad Flix

3 pm (Sun.) & 8 pm (Sat. & Sun.), Bryan Center, \$3

November

- 3,4 - Pretty Woman
- 10,11 - Total Recall
- 17,18 - Born on the Fourth of July

Dance

- Nov. 16,17 - Duke Dance Club Fall Showcase, at
The Ark
- Nov. 29-Dec. 2 - Celebration of NC Dance, Second
Annual Julia Wray Memorial Dance Concerts, Reynolds
Theater

Art

- ends Nov. 14 - Jeffrey Gall, Mixed Media/Metals
and oils, East Campus Gallery (Library)
- ends Dec. 30 - R. Crumb Comix. Recent work,
Duke Univ. Museum of Art (DUMA), East Campus
- Nov. 7 - Series of Animated Films, 8 pm, DUMA
- Nov. 8-29 - Geoffrey Grogran, Drawings and
Paintings, Brown Gallery, Bryan Center
- Nov. 16-Dec. 30 - collage and sculpture: the Art of
Irwin Kremen, DUMA

Duke Drama

call 684-2306 for info & tickets

November

- 6-20 - "R. Crumb Comix" by Robert Crumb;
adapted by Johnny Simons
- 10-12 - "Noel Coward Revue"
- 13-17 - "Uncommon Women and Others" by Wendy
Wasserstein

Music

November

- 16 - Duke Wind Symphony, 8 pm, Baldwin Aud.
- 30 - Messiah by G.F. Handel, 7:30 pm, Duke
Chapel. Call Page Box Office for tickets

December

- 1,2 - Messiah by G.F. Handel, 2 pm (Sat.) & 3 pm
(Sun.), Duke Chapel. Call Page Box Office for tickets

Duke Basketball Home Games

November

- 3 - vs. the Soviet Union (exhibition)
- 7 - High Five (exhibition)
- 14 - NIT 1st round vs. Marquette
- 26 - vs. East Carolina

Opportunities

- Two Logan Clendening Traveling Fellowships in the History of Medicine are available, which are tenable for three months during 1991. Applicants may elect to travel anywhere in the world for the purpose of studying any aspect of medical history of interest to them. Please contact Robert P. Hudson, M.D., Chairman, Dept. of the History of Medicine, The Univ. of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City, Kansas, 66103 for application forms, which are due by March 15, 1991. The Fellowships are of the value of \$1500; applicants will be notified by April 15.

- The American Osler Society announces the availability of an award for support of research in the broad areas of medical history and medical humanism. The successful applicant may be eligible to present a paper based on his or her findings at the annual meeting of the American Osler Society. The stipend for the coming year will be \$1000, and up to \$500 additional may be made available to support travel to the annual meeting. A letter of support from a faculty sponsor who will assume responsibility for planning and guidance of the fellowship must accompany the application form, which may be obtained along with further information from Lawrence D. Longo, Secretary-Treasurer, The American Osler Society, Division of Perinatal Biology, Loma Linda Univ. School of Medicine, Loma Linda, CA 92350. Completed applications should be received by February 1, 1991. Notice of Award will be made by April 1, 1991.

- Each year the American College of Legal Medicine presents the Schwartz Award for \$1000 to a medical student who authors the winning paper on legal medicine. Honorable Mention Certificates may be awarded for second and third prize. All papers submitted will receive consideration for publication in the ACLM Journal of legal Medicine or other College publications. Only papers not previously published and only uncollaborated original work will be considered. Papers may deal with any aspect of legal medicine, including research work done by the author. Papers must be between 3000 and 6000 words in length, typed, double-spaced, on 8 1/2 x 11 white bond paper with one inch margins. Citations and references must be listed in standard form at the end of the paper. Entries must be postmarked no later than December 31, 1990, and should be submitted to Tom Teal, Executive Secretary, American College of Legal Medicine, P.O. Box 3190, Maple Glen, PA 19002.

- As a special project during the 1990-91 academic year, the Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine is sponsoring the ninth annual William Carlos Williams poetry writing competition for medical students. For more information, contact the Human Values in Medicine Program, Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine, P.O. Box 95, Rootstown, OH 44272, or call (216) 325-2511. The deadline for submission of poetry is December 31, 1990.

Airline Discounts for Residency Interviews

- The Association of American Colleges has arranged for Northwest and TWA to provide special discounts for senior medical students traveling for residency interviews. Special toll free numbers and reservation codes guarantee fast and efficient service. Northwest Airlines offers 40% off Coach fares and 5% off

Excursion fares from 11/1/90 through 2/28/91; call 1-800-328-1111 between 7 am and midnight central time, 7 days a week, and mention special code 01574. TWA offers 50% off Coach fares and 5% off Excursion fares from 11/1/90 through 3/1/91; call 1-800-325-4933 between 7:15 am and 7 pm central time on weekdays, or between 8:30 am and 5 pm central time on Saturdays, and refer to profile number CV10069. Certain restrictions apply.

Cultural Services

• The staff of the Cultural Services Program, especially Joy Javitz Stewart, is available to provide you with information about arts and humanities events in the Triangle area, and about discount or free tickets.

Please call Joy Javitz Stewart at 684-2027 if you are interested in any of the following:

1. Participating in a chamber music group.
2. Taking a tour of the Duke Museum of Art.
3. Attending a workshop on body language in March, sponsored by the Institute of the Arts.
4. Exhibiting your art or craft in a display case in the Hospital.
5. Knowing about free or discount tickets to plays.

Also a reminder about the two ongoing programs:
1) STELLAR STORIES: Friday noon, M133 Dean's conference room. Call Cedar Koons, 684-2027, for copies of stories.

Nov. 2 - "The Year of Getting to Know Us" by Ethan Canin

Nov. 16 - "My Mistress" by Laurie Colwin
2) I WANT TO READ YOU A POEM: Friday noon, M133 Dean's conference room.

Nov. 9 - Favorite Sonnets, Sestinas and Villanelles
Nov. 30 - poet Judy Goldman will read

Law and Medicine

All are invited to participate in activities organized by the Duke Society for Medical-Legal Affairs.

Legal health care programs include letter writing and compiling summaries of the type of health care work done by various firms, and panel discussions on careers in health care law. Some in the group are investigating how to get involved with counseling a nursing home in Chapel Hill, and to see if help can be provided to an attorney from Raleigh involved in pro bono work for AIDS patients at the Medical center. Several suggestions for lectures/discussions on current legal issues in medicine include controversial health care issues (i.e. abortion, AIDS), and ethical issues in health care law.

Outreach programs include AIDS counseling at the Medical Center, tutoring hospitalized children using lesson plans developed by the children's teachers, and a blood drive in January.

Health Programs include stress and nutrition workshops, a race with the Medical School, and organizing events for a fitness week.

For more info, contact Holly Lisanby, MS4, the medical school representative, at 688-7347, or Cliona Robb, DSMLA President, at 383-6955.

AMSA News

Steven Morefield

AMSA is planning some exciting projects in the near future, and all are invited. The regional workshop this year will be held in Charleston, SC, Nov. 2 through Nov. 4. It promises to be fun and informative for all. Charleston was host to last year's workshop, but hurricane Hugo had other plans for the city. Planned seminars include "The History of Southern Medicine," "The New Medical Board Exams," "Computer Medicine and the Country Doctor in 1990," plus the mandatory Harbor Cruise and Beach Party. Late registration is available, so if you would like to come and meet medical students from throughout the southeast, call Chris Stille, MS4 (490-1435) or Steven Morefield, MS4 (493-1555).

Other projects in planning right now include a debate on the issue of a national health care plan. Come and listen to the facts and express your opinions. Details are still pending, so keep an eye out for further announcements and posters. If there is interest again this year, we would like to organize another Ropes course, so all those interested be sure to speak up.

The Blood Pressure Screening Drive at Northgate Mall with the UNC chapter of AMSA was a real success. Thanks to all of you who came to help. The final total was over 1200 blood pressures taken in four hours.

There still seem to be some books left over from the last booksale. If you had books that were not sold and you have not picked them up, contact CTL or Chris Stille, MS4, to get them back.

Announcements

• MEETINGS:

November

5,17 - Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC), 7 pm, 106 Teer Bldg.

7,19 - Davison Council, 5:30 pm, Dean's conference room

• IM SPORTS: Call 684-3156 (IM office) or 489-9004 (Ashok Reddy, IM Chairman) for info.

November

5-9 - entries for Racquetball Tournament

10,11 - Racquetball Tournament

Interview with Mark Vakkur on his novel *A Matter of Trust*

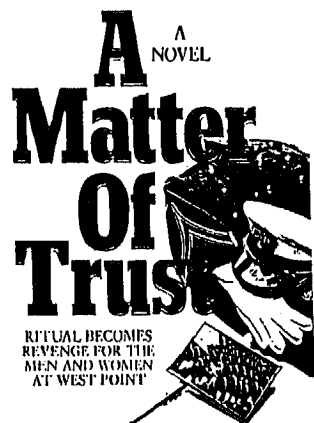
Holly Lisanby

A Matter of Trust is the story of trust and betrayal among cadets and West Point. Mark Vakkur wrote this novel during his first few years at Duke medical school. The central conflict involves an arrogant new cadet pitted against a narcissistic, insecure upperclassman, Clarence Wiggins. The paperback, published by Harper and Row, is available at local bookstores.

What compelled you to write this book? When I graduated I swore I would never write about West Point. So much has been written about the military and the academies. I think the broader question is what compels me to write at all, and I really don't know. I always liked reading and I think it is natural that someone who likes reading should also like writing. Something wonderful happens when you pick up a book written by someone who has been gone for two hundred years and you can pick up what was important to that person.

To what extent is your book autobiographical? This is a work of fiction, but there is a little of me in every character. It's almost impossible not to be somewhat autobiographical because I draw on my own experiences. I think good fiction captures an essence of reality by incorporating actual events and observations. I've never known anyone quite as sadistic, intense and insecure as Clarence Wiggins but I think there is a little of Wiggins in all of us. This book is more of a confession than an accusation. I can see the Clarence Wiggins in myself. He represents the dark side of ourselves, the side that is capable of great evil. There is a little bit of dirt in each of my characters.

Mark Vakkur



Is there physical hazing at West Point?

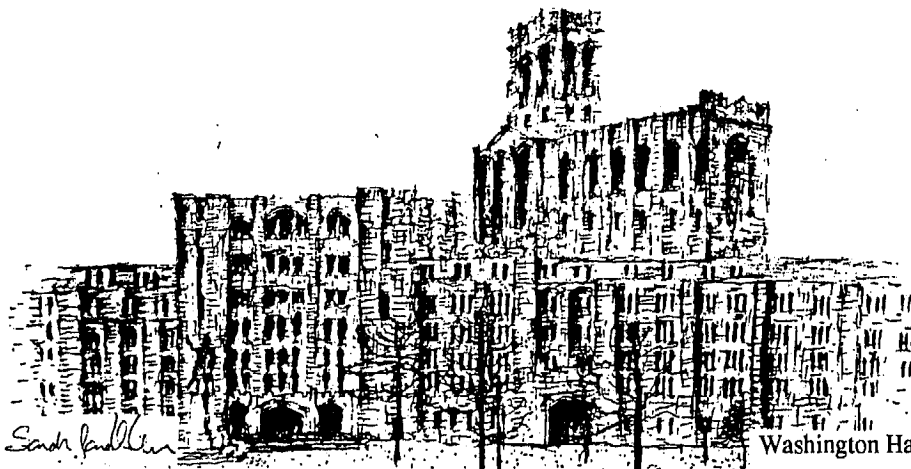
I am told there have been radical changes in the system making it more humane. When I was at West Point, there were instances that were close to physical hazing, although nothing quite as overt as in my book. I found that people could do far more excruciating things to you mentally than physically. I have been in other situations where I was physically abused

and harassed. My coach at hockey camp would take a sawed off hockey stick and whack people in the stomach if they let their legs droop during leg lifts. I found the situation at hockey camp more tolerable than the situation at West Point. The constant yelling and humiliation started to eat away at me. I questioned if it was right. I told myself that this is the system, that everyone must go through this and it's not personal, but part of me started to doubt that. Gradually the hazing loses the aspect of a game and becomes a reality that is much harder to tolerate.

What role does intimidation and hazing play in the training of military officers? I tried to keep my bias out of the book, but I have profound philosophical differences with West Point. In my original version of the book there was a murder and a suicide. It was a real slam on the academy. I realized there was so much bitterness in it that no one would read it.

To decide what role intimidation and hazing play in the training of military officers, you must first accept, for the sake of argument, that there is a role for a body of people who are armed for the purpose of destroying other human beings. To prepare those people for the hell of modern warfare, there needs to be some right of passage to galvanize their strength and to weed out those who would crack under the pressure. I think unless you are very vigilant this system of training will change you, perhaps irreversibly. My way of looking at the world now is a bit more rigid, straightforward, and inflexible. Graduates of West Point tend to split the world up into black and white, us and them, the informed and the liberals. The assumption is that by force of arms you can settle differences between countries.

Did West Point affect your decision to enter medicine? I think West Point made me acutely aware of the issues of power and dominance involved in pimping. Like a beaten child, I am sensitized to those patterns. When I went to West Point I had no idea I would go into medicine, in fact, I initially hated science. In my second year I did well in physics and chemistry and I began to enjoy the sciences. Disillusioned after plebe year and full of anger and bitterness, I turned away from the West Point system. I was surprised to see the similarities between the military and medicine. But the degree of humiliation and posturing that goes on in medicine is far less than what goes on in the military. Also, my classmates in medicine are easy to get along with, bright, and gifted.



Washington Hall, West Point.

Medicine and the military are similar in their respect for tradition. In the military, many things are done simply because they are tradition. "Because that's the way they used to be done, damnit, and by God they will be done that way today and tomorrow." This attitude gives people a sense of security. There is a universal need to rely on something larger than yourself. In medicine, I see this need being manifested in the attitude that 36 hour shifts and every other day call are essential to training competent doctors. There isn't any objective evidence to support the claim that you have to abuse yourself to be a good doctor. It is interesting that a profession that honors the scientific method doesn't apply it to evaluating its own training programs.

What role does pimping play in the education of doctors? None at all. I don't know of any controlled, randomized, doubleblinded studies that have shown that pimping makes better doctors. I do know POW's who swear that their experiences at West Point helped prepare them for the torture and abuse they endured. It seems ludicrous that ours is supposed to be a profession of compassionate healers but there is this jockeying for position, this ego play that seems totally incompatible with the ideals of health care. In the past it was possible for doctors to be pompous and paternalistic but people demand more from doctors now. Training programs are responding to that demand by becoming more humane.

Although pimping is more subtle, I think there are similarities between hazing in the military and pimping in medicine. To differentiate pimping from the Socratic method of teaching, I will define pimping as an abusive behavior that is not intended to teach but rather to humiliate and degrade. Pimping is intellectual bullying. Pimpers use their knowledge as power over others. It stems from the same tendencies that lie behind hazing or any other form of oppression.

Tell me about your next book. The next book is set in

a fictitious North Carolina medical center named Emerson. It has nothing to do with any existing medical center. I am a visual thinker and I break up the action of a book into scenes. In the opening scene, a respected neurosurgeon who is second in line for the chairmanship has a car accident in which he runs over a young girl. He initially intends to phone for help but in a moment of panic he realizes this incident could destroy his career. He abandons her and the rest of the book is about the resolution of this central conflict. The book examines the question "when does your career become so important that it is of more value than a human life." The conflict intensifies when it is a medical career, a career that is ostensibly devoted to saving human lives. Presenting this conflict in such a dramatic fashion will help people examine where they place their priorities in life. The details of the plot are all subject to change.

How did your family and friends contribute to your writing? My wife was absolutely invaluable in terms of providing moral support and feedback. The book's characters invaded our living room for the better part of two years. Writing is communication, saying something to someone, not a mystic, solitary process. You must keep your reader in mind. I did that by maintaining contact with my wife and friends throughout the process.

Tell me about your life before West Point. I was born in England and spent most of my life in Southbend Indiana. I attended West Point 1982-1986 and matriculated at Duke Medical School in 1986. I was gone from school a total of 14 months spending part of that time in the Army. I returned in March of this year and am now in my third year taking courses at the UNC School of Public Health and doing research. I also spend time promoting my book and writing the next one.

Dear E Bach

Eric Bachman

Dear E Bach,

I'm new to Duke and would appreciate suggestions for short weekend trips that are affordable and fun. This first year grind demands equal vacation time.

— Babe in the woods

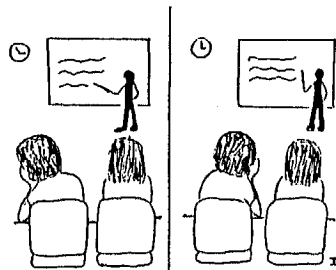
Dear Babe,

Having covered every inch of highway in this part of the country, I feel qualified to answer your query. I'll break it down into travel times and their possibilities.

0-1/2 hours: Well, the only really suitable places for this time frame are Chapel Hill or one of the lakes, either Jordan or Falls. But you already know that.

1/2-1 hour: The zoo in Asheboro boasts an excellent African exhibit and the new lowland gorilla infant, and can be comfortably toured in 1-2 hours. Talk about massive potential for growth. The master plan is to have all of the continents and a sea world by around 1995. I'll still be here then. The review will be in the April 1995 *Shifting Dullness*.

An alternative is Greensboro or Winston-Salem, where the Moravian community still thrives and offers tourists a taste of ethnicity in the heart of the Carolinas.



Shifting Dullness

Alright, W-S in 1 hour or less is pushing it, but you should all have fuzz busters by this time. Whenever possible, take I-40 for its 65 mph speed limit and plethora of Bojangles.

1-2 hours: Now we're talking. Depending on how heavy your foot is, you can travel substantially eastward all the way to Greenville to catch an ECU Pirates football game. Easy U is known for killer tailgates, excellent football that includes opponents like Miami and Notre Dame, and a strip of watering holes where the rebel yell is king. This trip is best done in a souped-up Camaro with dice, garters or similar prole advertisements on the rearview mirror.

2-3 hours: The farther you go, the better your opportunity. South of the Border defines tacky. Who hasn't cursed the multitudes of signs that line I-95 before Pedro's hangout? No bank machines there. No good food. In fact, the only reason to stop there is when your car breaks down. Even so, I'd suggest walking to another exit lest you need car seats filled with manure.

Blowing Rock is a beautiful town nestled in the Appalachians that is still the best location to do family vacation (family med rotation). Nearby you can party with the skiers from Appalachian State, cruise the Blue Ridge Parkway and eat at the Woodland's Barbecue joint. Remember, B or C sanitation ratings attest to authenticity when it comes to food.

Just three hours away you can really strike gold in Virginia with Busch Gardens Old Country. The place is clean. The food is good. The rides are not lame and imagine a fun-filled day complete with a tour of the Busch beer factory where the William and Mary students regularly attend happy hour? What a coup that must be. They must be tour guides themselves by now.

Finally, three hours will get you to any of North Carolina's beaches with ease. Beaufort has charm and the marine lab. Wilmington has great beaches and boating opportunities. Myrtle Beach in South Carolina is the college student's paradise with a strip and other stuff that your Dookie classmates should inform you of.

So, my advice to you is to travel whenever possible. Durham and its environs are fun, but the true character of the Piedmont is revealed during the road trip. Small towns in North Carolina, all of them "Governor's Communities of Excellence," can only be experienced by loads of highway mileage. Keep on truckin'.

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MEDICINE

All I know about medicine I picked up
from my doctor friend in El Paso
who drank and took drugs. We were buddies
until I moved East. I'm saying
I was never sick a day in my life.
But something has appeared
on my shoulder and continues to grow.
A wen, I think, and love the word
but not the thing itself, whatever
it is. Late at night my teeth ache
and the phone rings. I'm ill,
unhappy and alone. Lord!
Give me your unsteady knife,
doc. Give me your hand, friend.

FEAR

Fear of seeing a police car pull into the drive.
Fear of falling asleep at night.
Fear of not falling asleep.
Fear of the past rising up.
Fear of the present taking flight.
Fear of the telephone that rings in the dead of
night.
Fear of electrical storms.
Fear of the cleaning woman who has a spot on
her cheek!
Fear of dogs I've been told won't bite.
Fear of anxiety!
Fear of having to identify the body of a dead
friend.
Fear of running out of money.
Fear of having too much, though people will
not believe this.
Fear of psychological profiles.

Fear of being late and fear of arriving before
anyone else.
Fear of my children's handwriting on
envelopes.
Fear they'll die before I do, and I'll feel guilty.
Fear of having to live with my mother in her
old age, and mine.
Fear of confusion.
Fear this day will end on an unhappy note.
Fear of waking up to find you gone.
Fear of not loving and fear of not loving
enough.
Fear that what I love will prove lethal to those
I love.
Fear of death.
Fear of living too long.
Fear of death.
I've said that.

—*Poems by Raymond Carver*

Purely Purulent

Uncut & Unpublished: Real Questions for E. Bach

Eric Weidman

1. Do new attendings and fellows have difficulty making the switch to long white coats, ie do they trip over themselves if they use all the buttons? Do any such coats come with training wheels?

Sincerely, INQUIRING

MIND

2. Has the "human wave" ever been performed during Surgery Grand Rounds at Duke? If so, do you have a picture?

Sincerely, BUFF

3. E. Bach, I admire your gifted vocabulary. Do you use a thesaurus, and what's another good word for thesaurus?

Sincerely, AWED

4. I want to open a hot dog stand, or at least a pretzel cart in the central area of the Duke North Hospital OR suite. (Big buck-a-roonies for the E. Weid) Who do I contact about getting started? If I take my hot dogs directly from the steamer, would I still break the sterile field by giving it directly to the staff scrubbed on a case? Could I get some hot dog tongs named after me for this effort?

Sincerely, E WEIDBUTT

5. Compared to me, how much more Prolixin, IM or PO, do you estimate Saddam Hussein could handle?

How about compared to you?

Sincerely, PSYCH STUD

6. Is it love, gravitational pull, or flatus that makes the world go around?

Sincerely, JOB

7. Could you guide me to some references that list the criteria for the labeling of "liberal values" and "North Carolina values"? Which is *politically correct*, and who is the self-righteous SOB who coined that phrase? Finally, I'm confused; is Jesse Helms running against Harvey Gantt or Ted Kennedy?

Sincerely, CONFUSED

8. Now that the Simpsons have been sold out to a fast food chain, am I still morally obligated to abstain from purchasing bootleg Simpsons merchandise? Has this been discussed in any deans' groups?

Sincerely, SIMPLETON

9. I came to medical school for the sole purpose of finding/marrying a bright young woman with a high income potential; however, I am now a fourth year without any promising prospects. Could you reprint your article "Catching Superwoman: A Male's Guide to Marrying the Woman with the Income of Your Dreams."

Sincerely, GOLD DIGGER

Shifting Dullness Bag Lunch

Monday, Nov. 5, noon until 1pm

in the Dean's Hall Conference room, Duke South

All are welcome to come and meet the people who work on the Medical Student Newspaper. Attend and see how you can get involved. Staff and editorial positions open. Call Holly at 688-7347.