

Points for my Comments

Many people speak about the anatomy class as the first real **initiation into the profession of medicine, an unforgettable rite of passage. Its hoped-for rewards are not only factual knowledge of human anatomy, but also some greater understanding of life and death, and perhaps of the doctor-patient relationship.**

Despite the fact that the donor is no longer a living person, in the anatomy lab you can sometimes, at certain moments, develop what the philosopher Martin Buber called an I-Thou – a person-to-person – relationship with donors rather than an I-It – person to object - relationship. Some of you may have thought of donors as your **first patients** (albeit highly cooperative and uncomplaining ones); or as **wise guides and teachers**. Some of you may have been surprised by the **connection you felt**, when you noticed pink nail polish on fingertips, or a tattoo on a forearm. You might have **wondered who these people were** – did they have families? What sort of work did they do? What were their lives like? You might have had **questions about why these individuals decided to donate their bodies after death and how their families felt about this decision.**

We are very fortunate today to have several people here today who will share different perspectives on donation. First Mark Brooks, the director of the Willed Body Program, will provide some general information. [REDACTED] is here with several family members and friends to talk about her sister [REDACTED]; and Dr. [REDACTED], a professor emeritus of physics and astronomy at UCI, is here with his daughter to share something about his wife, [REDACTED]

Please think about any questions you'd like to ask, as they are all here to help you better understand what this decision is like for donor and family. You are also free to share any thoughts or comments you have with them about the experience of anatomy class.