

Hi [REDACTED]. I had the opportunity to read the lyrics to your adaptation of “The End of Innocence” (I wish I knew the original, sorry! I do remember your first project was a rap song, but this seems a somewhat different genre, right?). In any case, this work beautifully summarizes a central theme of medical education, i.e., a loss of innocence. I’ve heard time and again that becoming a doctor changes you fundamentally, in ways both good and (sometimes) bad. We often resist change, yet change is the one constant in life. So, as your lyrics suggest, perhaps the best any of us can do is recognize what we want to save (perhaps “the soft heart in each of us”) and decide what we will substitute for innocence. I liked this work a lot. Dr. Shapiro

[REDACTED], I enjoyed the poem you wrote for your final anatomy project. It had a kind of picaresque quality to it, a kind of poetic coming of age. The person you were at the start of gross anatomy was very different than the person who reached the end of the course. I’m glad that you developed such meaningful relationships with your classmates, your professors, your cadaver, and even Netter. That bodes very well for your future as a caring clinician. Regards, Dr. Shapiro

Hi [REDACTED]. In this final project, you continue your musings on the nature of life and death that you began in your first poem. Here, I sense you are also wrestling not only with philosophical speculation, but also with a tangible and difficult event. Life can, and does, change in an instant, and sometimes very painfully. But I think we often have the capacity to wrest good out of evil, and meaning out of suffering. I hope that out of whatever it is that is distressing you come some good and some hope. Regards, Dr. Shapiro

Another touching poem, [REDACTED]. It is so simple and heartfelt, and the last line gives it the quality of a prayer. The image of you sitting quietly by your cadaver was lovely, and evoked the physician sitting by the bedside of the patient, when no more action can be taken, and all that can be offered is human comfort. Not only was the cadaver changed by anatomy (as you put it, “mangled”), but you were changed as well. And somehow, despite the “mangling,” I think neither would regret the experience. Thanks for this poem. Dr. Shapiro