

Shapiro, Johanna

From: Shapiro, Johanna
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2003 3:07 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: selective humanities project

Hi [REDACTED] Wow!!! Your role-play of first day anatomy was brilliant. I thought it was one of the funniest things I've ever heard, and I'm sure I missed some inside jokes. You demonstrated creativity, sense of humor, insight, and not a little self-mockery. That's a recipe for a successful work of art that enlightens as it entertains. I would love to see this performed for next year's anatomy class. Maybe you can share this with Dr. Leonard (mention me as a strong advocate). Congratulations on a wonderful job. Regards, Dr. Shapiro

Shapiro, Johanna

From: Shapiro, Johanna
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2003 3:17 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: selective humanities project

Hi [REDACTED]. Thank you for your thoughtful meditation on medical school. You employed a great metaphor - from crysalis to butterfly - and that's exactly how I hope you all emerge at the end of these four years. As I mentioned in class, I also liked your insight that you are both sculptor and sculpted, in the sense that you have some say in how the final product turns out. And I agree with your insight that this "shaping" occurs over the period of a life-time: hopefully, you will always be honing your "work of art," (i.e., you). So keeping growing and replenishing! I look forward to our paths crossing again over the next several years. Regards, Dr. Shapiro

Shapiro, Johanna

From: Shapiro, Johanna
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2003 3:22 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: selective humanities project

Hi [REDACTED], I just wanted to thank you for writing - and sharing - your poem. It evoked vivid and moving images of the various domains that somehow need to be attended to in medicine, from the physical to the emotional and spiritual. If you have a copy, I'd really like to see it. Thanks for being such an active and thoughtful participant in the selective. Regards, Dr. Shapiro

Shapiro, Johanna

From: Shapiro, Johanna
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2003 3:24 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: selective humanities project

Hi [REDACTED]. I enjoyed the creativity of your humanities project. It was also neat to see you experimenting in different media - first poetry, now photography! The skull, of course, is a potent symbol, and you evoked many of its meanings through your sensitively altered pictures. It was a real pleasure to have you in this class. Thank you for your participation, and I hope to see you regularly over the next few years. Regards, Dr. Shapiro

Shapiro, Johanna

From: Shapiro, Johanna
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2003 3:29 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: selective humanities project

Hi [REDACTED] I wanted to acknowledge again how much your humanities project intrigued me. After I got over the shock effect (and good art often shocks), it really made me think about the different boundaries different cultures establish for what is normative and enjoyable. More specifically, it challenged me to reflect more deeply on how art deconstructs roles and bridges (often artificial) barriers. Thanks for taking a risk.
Regards, Dr. Shapiro

Shapiro, Johanna

From: Shapiro, Johanna
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2003 3:38 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: selective humanities project

Hi [REDACTED], I wanted you to know how much I admired the courage and risk-taking you displayed in creating - and sharing - your humanities project. I personally feel there's a lot of value in becoming more transparent and more authentic with each other. That having been said, it's hard to know exactly what to disclose, when, and with whom. You produced a brave, bold, and beautiful painting full of suffering, pride, and hope. I think it benefited all of us who saw it. Thank you. May you be guided by wisdom and compassion as you go along your path. Regards, Dr. Shapiro

Shapiro, Johanna

To: [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED] Just wanted to let you know what a good piece of writing I thought you came up with for the litmed selective final project. It was really imaginative and well-written. I was completely drawn into the fantastical story of Donna and the cadaver! The detailed renderings you provide of a purely conjectural life are remarkable. Never be afraid to use your imagination to understand your patients (so long as, with living patients, you remember to allow their input to curb your flights of fancy!).

The juxtaposition of the fantasy and the dry disquisition of anatomy review was a great way of concretizing the contrast between the life of the cadaver and the reality of dissection lab. I also think that the effortless back-and-forth you demonstrate in the story is a crucial cognitive/empathic skill in patient care. It's a perfect embodiment of the simultaneous balancing (or juggling!) of the patient's agenda (in this case, the [imagined] story of the cadaver's life) and the student-physician's agenda (learning anatomy and passing the exam!). It's not one versus the other, it's both/and, and the more comfortable you feel with this double movement the more comprehensive a physician you'll be. Great work! Dr. Shapiro