

FM REVIEW 2014 28 COMMENTS

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: This essay is about several things, and that is its problem. It starts off with an interesting premise about love vs. risk, but this seems to disappear somewhere along the way. Then it addresses the medical issue of what to do about babies born to hep-positive mothers in X, which may only have mild interest to family docs in this country, where the policy to vaccinate at birth is standard regardless of seropositive or seronegative status of the mother. Finally, there is a tribute to an inspirational physician role model who tragically was killed in Afghanistan. There are simply too many insufficiently developed strands here. I rarely use the reject & resubmit option, but I think there is too much wrong with the essay for simply a major revision. Yet there is the kernel of something valuable here; and if the author could craft a different article as described below, it would be worth considering.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: This was clearly a compelling experience for you, but the essay itself does not sufficiently convey its intensity or meaning. I don't think the essay is really about expert opinion per se - Dr. Umanos' great contributions to maternal/infant health in Afghanistan seemed to stem not so much from his "expert opinion" as from his intrinsic moral authority as someone who had proven himself to be trustworthy and rooted in love for his patients and the country. The essay starts off promising to be about love and risk, a promising and intriguing theme, but then veers into the discussion of dealing with infants born to hepatitis-positive mothers in Afghanistan. A better essay could be crafted that focuses on what love and risk meant to you in Afghanistan - perhaps how your love of your family was balanced against your love of your patients, perhaps how you learned from Dr. Umanos' example about how to love more than to fear. If you rewrite this essay in a way that emphasizes what you learned from your experience in X and how those lessons have persisted in your practice in the U.S you will have a story well worth telling.