

### FM REVIEW 2015 3 COMMENTS

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR:** This is an extremely well-written essay by a long-time academic family physician that reflects on feelings that arose for his pastics attending while he was a medical student. The essay tackles a topic much neglected in the literature - how to deal with human feelings we have toward colleagues and supervisors - with honesty and sweetness. The narrator also shows how this early event continues to influence his own thinking as a supervisor and guide of adult learners. Ultimately he concludes that while relationships with learners usually emphasizing building bridges, sometimes fences are required as well. Further, it acknowledges that what we sometimes see as love is really the desire to "possess" the qualities of an idealized other. Because of the personal nature of the essay, and because my initial reviewers were split (minor revision/reject), I sent it to both a third reviewer and X. The consensus is that it is a wonderful essay that will make a thoughtful contribution to the journal.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR:** This essay recounts with honesty and surprising sweetness the personal feelings that flowed between the narrator and an attending, as well as the firm boundaries the latter put in place. As such it is a great example of acknowledging the humanness of learners and teachers, as well as how such situations should be gracefully handled. The instruction to "look for the lesson" is great, as is the subsequent reflection on negotiating "borderlands" and the need occasionally for fences as well as bridges.

Please note the minor wordsmithing suggestions from Reviewer 1 (as well as the following: In the paragraph near the bottom of page 4 that starts with "She rushed off . . . This sentence needs an "of": Meeting in front of the hospital did not sound like the start of a relationship . . .).

Also, please consider Reviewer 3's concern about the final paragraph. I too like the concept of an inner mentor, and perhaps that can be made explicit somehow. In a way, you have "metabolized" your early teacher; and have recognized that what you loved in her were attributes that you longed to develop in yourself - and now have in an ever-evolving process.

This is a very strong essay, both in terms of topic and writing.

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR II:** This is an intriguing, honest essay addressing a rarely discussed topic - a medical student's attraction to his teacher, and a possible reciprocation handled with professionalism, grace, and an unflagging desire to keep the learning of the student front and center. It was already well conceived and well written in the original submission. The author has made the very minor revisions suggested by enthusiastic reviewers (and asst editor). As well, with two finely crafted concluding sentences, he has brought the real point into focus: we all exist in borderlands of desire, both of the body and the soul. What is important is how we navigate these; and with luck, we will begin to see some of the qualities of our admired mentors in ourselves. Absolutely wonderful essay, please accept.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II:** Thank you for such a perceptive and authentic essay. We appreciate your making the very minor revisions requested. The essay's last two sentences have brought the real point into focus - we all exist in borderlands of desire, both of the body and the soul. What is important is how we navigate these; and with luck, we will begin to see some of the qualities of our admired mentors in ourselves. Your attending's wise instruction after your "confession" is beautifully

**fulfilled in the last line. Congratulations on this thought-provoking and ultimately humble and hopeful piece.**