

FM REVIEW 2019 14 COMMENTS

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR I Narrative essays should be stories that illuminate the work of family physicians or family medicine educators. A narrative essay is not a vehicle for sharing opinions, no matter how valid and well-supported the opinions might be. There is the nucleus of a great story in your paper, but, as currently written, there is too much opinion and advise and not enough story.

We think this problem can be fixed by reframing your goals for the piece and encourage you to work on it further.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR II: I very much liked the way the author reconfigured the piece - indeed, she revamped the entire focus, making it much more of a narrative essay and less of an opinion. She added important details about her own experience as a mother that illuminated the underlying intent of a birth plan; and also highlighted her teaching role with a somewhat judgmental resident. This inclusion of teaching implications will make the essay particularly relevant to our readers. With a few minor copy-editing issues which I point out below, I recommend acceptance.

Minor copyediting I noticed - p.4 line 33, "Even if neither of these are true..." I think should be "neither of these IS..."; and p. 5, line 33, should read "I explain WHAT my priorities are..."

Also, sometimes the author uses quotes and sometimes they are implied. To me, it works, but please consider this issue.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II: Thank you for this extensive revision, which has effectively transformed what was often an opinion piece into a true personal narrative. This version is well-written and engaging, and perfectly captures the spirit of the narrative essay section. I especially appreciated your sharing how your own experience not only as a family physician but as a mother illuminated your understanding of the patient's birth plan. I also liked your emphasis on the educational component of this encounter, the way you gently worked with the resident to diminish her judgment and assumptions, coaxing her toward a deeper understanding of the intent underlying a birth plan. Your final statement to Leah in this regard is quite moving, and conveys beautifully the essence of family medicine. I anticipate our readers will be engaged by this piece, and will be impelled to reflect on how to interrogate their own eye-rolling experiences with patients.