

FSH DECISION LETTER 2019 6

Based on my review and on reviewer comments I am not able to accept your submission. We find this to be a powerful revisiting of a shameful episode in the history of medicine and want very much to publish it. However, I am still struggling with the voice, and especially the switch from "you" to "I" which I think could confuse readers and distract them from the emotional impact of the poem. I suggest as a minimum noting in the abstract that the poem is written in Anarcha's voice. I also recommend that you consolidate abstract and the prose introduction to the poem. Please understand we think this is a strong and important piece of writing, and are trying to ensure that it speaks as clearly and resonantly as possible.

Decision Letter II:

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DECISION LETTER III:

I am pleased to inform you that your work has now been accepted for publication in *Families, Systems, and Health*. Thank you for your patience with the revision process. I hope you will agree that the final result is an absolutely exquisite, heart-wrenching work that confronts readers with a piece of history from which they cannot turn away. Your decision to focus on Anarcha's voice in my read makes the poem more powerful and more accessible. I admire so much in the language and rhythm of your writing - "their knuckles turn White White White," "beat the wind with words," "butterflies rise beneath my skin". The repetition of slice/blood and breath throughout the poem unify these two apparently contradictory images into a final somehow hopeful resolution of courage and endurance. Despite the visceral horror embedded in your writing, the conclusion is triumphant "Still I breathe."