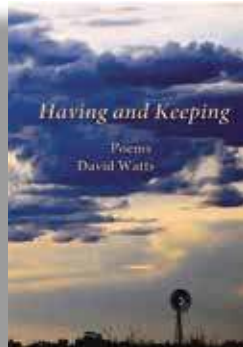


Reviews and reflections

David Bennahum, MD, and Jack Coulehan, MD, Book Review Editors



When Human Voices Wake Us

Jerald Winakur
Kent State University Press, Kent (OH), 2017, 96 pages

Having and Keeping

David Watts, MD (AQA, Baylor College of Medicine, 1965)
Brick Road Poetry Press, Columbus (GA), 2017, 97 pages

Reviewed by Peter Pereira, MD

Jerald Winakur's *When Human Voices Wake Us*, the latest volume from Kent State University's Literature and Medicine series, spans a 40-year career in medicine. Poems such as "First Do No Harm," and "To the Medical Student Who Jumped From the Roof of the Hospital" explore the demands and expectations of medical training. Others like "Blown Pupil," "Breast Exam," "Out of Practice," "A Sigh on Rounds," and "Discharges" explore the challenges and joys of a busy medical practice, and eventual retirement:

I recorded demise
in a radiant scrawl
but there were never
enough flowers.

The medical poems are deepened by poems that explore Winakur's family history. He remembers a beloved

grandmother who died of pancreatic cancer in "Forest Hills Park, Spring 1994," and a father lost to Alzheimer's in "Blue Period," and "Mowing." The poet reveals:

...it must have made him strong
since he lived long enough
to forget his name
and then my own.

There is pathos, as well as humor, in this collection. "Plastic Caskets" takes life-after-death to its absurd limits. "The Teens for Christ Convention at the Holiday Inn" humorously juxtaposes teen celibacy and adult intimacy. "Sideshow" exposes the great circus of for-profit medicine where "poisons/pummel Mister Neoplasia," and "heart-stopping spells/of fatal fibrillation .../shocked and dazzled by joules."

There is an ekphrastic poem with its all too real photograph of an elderly woman alone on a street corner "Raising Money for Medical Bills." And, there are wonderful love poems for Winakur's wife, Lee, "A Paper Anniversary at 52," and "Overwinter."

There is a forward by poet Alan Shapiro, and a introductory essay by the author that incorporates lines from T.S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" as a touchstone for the poet's musings about medical training and a life in medicine. "I was formulated, pinned...patient encounters measured out with coffee spoons...I no longer heard the singing."

Winakur urges physicians to be attentive, and to hear patient's human voices. He also urges physicians to be attentive to their own deepest selves. In "Auscultation" he encourages:

Between the endless rounds
the endless dyings
still beats
a poet's heart.

The doctor's stethoscope, clutched to his own chest is a touching final image that closes the book.

Having and Keeping

David Watts is a Clinical Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, and a Professor of Poetry at the Fromm Institute. His new book of poems, *Having and Keeping* (his 17th), is less about the practice of medicine, and more about the life of a poet who also happens to be a physician.

The book opens with a series of poems about Watts' family—a father who was a farmer, a mother who was a musician, and a brother who served in Vietnam and later suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder. Each of these family members has now passed, and Watts' poems are a way to:

Tie Knots in the Strings of Memory
and tighten them against forgetting.

There are several poems about love, relationships, marriage, and divorce, including "Pleasure," which is a wonderful meditation on remembering the solitary joy a past partner felt in her passion for running, and how if:

pleasure remains in the world
despite sorrows...Who should refuse beauty,
then?

"Invisible Disgusting Things" "Empty," "After Long Silence Running into My Ex at a Family Gathering," and "Affair" continue a narrative of loss and disconnection:

He didn't know how it started
but he did know that inside
the pleasure was a loneliness
he could not fill.

These are followed by poems about new love and family found, including "The Woman I Love in Mountains," "Family Bed," and "What it Was," which is a delightful poem about the mysteries of in vitro fertilization:

Well, they asked again, is it sex
if it happens in a Petri dish?

Watt's poems are wonderfully imagistic and narrative. "Perfection" is a poem about the body of a woman exercising at the gym:

Her spine pushes through her skin
like a brontosaurus erupting
from its tar pit.

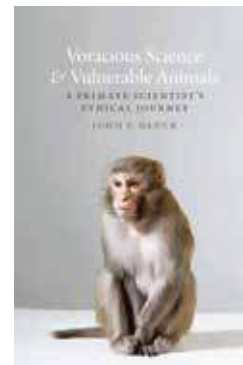
He also shows a great ear for language in a series of humorous poems made from phrases spoken by his young son, Gabrielle, "Things My Son Told Me," "Gabiellisms," "More Gabiellisms," and "Gabiellisms IV."

There is an intimation of impending decline, illness, and death in "Family Away, Empty House," and "Longevity."

Watts seems to have found a way to find joy in life, and in language, and perhaps to truly understand the difference between having and keeping.

The author's e-mail address is:
ppereira5@aol.com.

Voracious Science and Vulnerable Animals: A Primate Scientist's Ethical Journey



John P. Gluck
The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2016, 360 pages

Reviewed by Jack Coulehan, MD (AQA, University of Pittsburgh, 1969)

When I was a first year medical student, one of our physiology lab experiments dealt with cardiovascular dynamics. We performed surgery on anesthetized dogs, opening their chests and measuring cardiac function with various instruments. Afterward, the dogs were euthanized.

We worked in groups of four, so 36 dogs were sacrificed for our class to observe in situ hemodynamic processes we had already learned by lecture and textbook. As far as I'm aware, none of us questioned the ethics of this exercise. If the question had arisen, I'm sure we would have thought it obvious that the good achieved by educating 144 future physicians surely outweighed killing 36 dogs.

Not too many years later, my medical school, in one of its many curricular changes, eliminated the laboratory component of physiology. No more dog surgery. Yet, somehow students still managed to master cardiovascular physiology.

In *Voracious Science and Vulnerable Animals*, John Gluck describes an almost identical teaching protocol that went before the University of New Mexico's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) in the mid-1980s. The committee approved the protocol, but several members, including Gluck, decided to observe the cardiovascular exercise in practice. They found that the dogs were inadequately anesthetized, improper cauterizing devices were used, students were confused about proper surgical methods, and an arrogant professor seemed indifferent to all of these problems.

Was this experiment conducted in an ethical manner? Was the sacrifice of these animals morally justified? Gluck describes his growing realization, over several decades, of the salience of such questions, and his internal struggles to resolve them. He began his career as a PhD student in psychology at the University of Wisconsin in the 1960s. He studied primate behavior under the mentorship of Harry Harlow, in an era of strict behaviorism, when only observable behavior was considered worthy of study. Internal states, like feelings or intentions, were strictly out of bounds.

Dr. Harlow was famous for his studies of maternal deprivation and social isolation in rhesus monkeys, and Gluck continued and expanded this work. He worked with three groups of monkeys: six reared for their first nine months in total isolation; six reared alone in wire cages, but with visual access to other monkeys; and six reared with their mothers and physical access to peers. He carried this model of comparative deprivation to study the influence of nature versus nurture on behavior to the University of New Mexico, where he founded a primate research facility.

From the beginning, Gluck demonstrated concern for his subjects' welfare, and valued their individual personalities. He sometimes experienced moral distress when his work caused them harm, but managed to rationalize his experiments as ethical because of their potential contribution to human welfare. As time went on, he became uncomfortable with the insensitive and cavalier way some other researchers treated their animals.

Gluck's journey included several seminal milestones, each of which stimulated an ethical leap forward. The first was his clinical psychology fellowship at the University of Washington in 1977–1978. He discovered that clinicians rarely, if ever, cite animal research in their

teaching and practice. He also experienced the personal satisfaction of direct patient care. On returning to New Mexico, he explained, "I was not the same person I had been before I left."^{p177} His teaching priorities now included "promoting self reflection and compassion," and advocating a more ethical approach toward experimental animals.

A second milestone occurred in 1985 when the United States Congress passed the Animal Welfare Act that established IACUCs, which provided the authority to regulate animal care and experimentation. According to Gluck, membership on New Mexico's IACUC was one of several elements that "combined to shake up my professional life and reinvigorate my ethical reexamination process, which had in recent years been stunted by my own psychological resistance."^{p186}

IACUCs generated some forward movement improving living conditions for experimental animals, and requiring researchers to justify the level of pain to which their subjects were exposed. However, their success was diluted by negative feedback from some scientists who chose to interpret the regulations as disruptive interference.

The final milestone occurred in 1994 when Gluck embarked on a fellowship in bioethics at Georgetown University, where he studied with philosopher Tom L. Beauchamp, and physiologist F. Barbara Orlans. Orlans published *In the Name of Science*, a book on the ethics of animal research, which also became the focus of Gluck's work at Georgetown.

Gluck returned to Albuquerque, and successfully developed a multifaceted Research Ethics Service Project that featured a variety of ethics teaching and consultation functions.

Encouraged by recent cultural change, Gluck closes on an optimistic note:

I remain unreservedly optimistic about the possibility that science, and society as a whole, will come to take seriously the notions that animals are not just property, that they have rights of some kind, and that appropriating animal lives for human use should always elicit ethical analysis that leans toward abstinence as the starting point.^{p283}

Dr. Coulehan is a member of the Editorial Board of *The Pharos*, and one of its Book Review Editors. He is also Emeritus Director of the Center for Medical Humanities, Compassionate Care, and Bioethics at Stony Brook University, in New York. His e-mail address is:

john.coulehan@stonybrookmedicine.edu.