

Evoking the Moral Imagination: Using Stories to Teach Ethics and Professionalism to Nursing, Medical, and Law Students

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Four years ago, as colleagues in our university's law and medical schools, we designed and began offering a course for law, medical, and nursing students, studying professionalism and professional ethics by reading and discussing current and earlier images of nurses, doctors, and lawyers in literature. We wanted to make professional ethics, professional culture, and professional education the objects of study rather than simply the unreflective consequences of exposure to professional language, culture, and training. We wanted to do it in an interdisciplinary course where aspiring professionals could share their self-conceptions and their conceptions of each other, and we wanted to do it by using stories, our primary means for organizing experience and claiming meaning for it. This article tells the story of that experience: why we did it; how we did it; what we learned from doing it.

Grouped around a table are twenty-two people: eight law students, eight medical students, four nursing students, one law professor, and one medical professor. It's mid-semester, and the group is discussing that day's assigned reading, Perri Klass's novel, *Other Women's Children*, a story about a pediatrician who seems to be having more success treating her hospitalized patients than raising her own son.

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Everyone in the room has been freewriting,¹ generating images of doctors evoked by the novel, as well as images of lawyers and nurses evoked by earlier readings, personal experiences, active imaginations. As the group develops a list of images on the board, one of the medical students turns to the nurses, who, characteristically, are grouped together, and asks: "Do nurses consider themselves a profession?"

Welcome to "Images of Nurses, Doctors, and Lawyers in Literature," an interfaculty course designed as a forum for aspiring professionals to study professionalism, professional ethics, and professional culture by reading and sharing images of themselves and of each other.

This course began as a conversation over lunch the day we met. Although we have different backgrounds and experiences—one of us is a law professor who has been teaching at Queen's more than twenty years, the other a haematologist and historian of medicine new to the University and relatively new to teaching—we discovered a shared interest in using stories to reflect on our professions: where they'd been, where they were, where they might be going. We thought we could combine our interests and bring together students from both faculties to share their conceptions of themselves and of each other.

The groups seemed an ideal match for an interdisciplinary culture: appropriately similar—age profile, education, shared ideology of expertise, mutual respect and suspicion—and interestingly different—different professional languages, different approaches to interpretation and diagnosis, possibly different self-conceptions.² About to enter extremely demanding professions, everyone would be worried about how practicing those professions would affect their lives. As one legal scholar has put it (Shaffer, 1985), they would be worried whether it was "possible to be a lawyer (or doctor) and a good person."

We thought the mix of similarities and differences would create a lively, stimulating environment in which people would learn from each other. We thought it would enable us to make professionalism, professional ethics, and professional culture objects of study rather than what they often are in professional education: the unreflective results of being exposed to professional language and professional training.

In addition to thinking the environment would stimulate our students, we hoped it would work for us, too, hoped it would encourage an academic friendship across normally confining disciplinary boundaries. We wanted to learn from each other as thinkers and as teachers.

Here is the story of our experience.

METHOD/STRUCTURE

We began with stories, with narrative as a modality. As we've noted, students in professional schools are worried about how practicing their professions is going to affect their lives and their character. Stories help provide access to these fears and evoke responses to them.

Unlike other texts in professional schools, stories are specific, focused, personal. They're not about a "co-dependent neurotic man, but (about) Harry, who runs to open the refrigerator for his wife, thinking she wants an apple, when she is headed for the gas stove to light her cigarette" (Goldberg, 1990).

Reading stories means participating imaginatively in other lives; it encourages readers to construct their own stories in relation to the ones they are reading. Consequently, readers come to know themselves better, to connect who they are to what they are doing. And as students listen to and compare their classmates' stories with the ones they are reading and telling themselves, they come to know their classmates better. "Stories are the most basic way we have of organizing our experience and claiming meaning for it" (White, 1985).

Drawing on our interests and experience, and on Robert Coles's suggestive book, *The Call of Stories* (1989), as well as Joanne Trautmann Banks's bibliography of *Medicine and Literature* (1982), we produced a reading list. We used several guidelines. We preferred fiction. We wanted some stories about the medical and legal past. Because medical students would be taking the course *in addition to* their regular schedule, we decided that to encourage them to do the reading and participate we would look for relatively short pieces and typically limit ourselves to one story a week, alternating between medical and legal themes.

Our first list included Chekov, Shaw, and Ibsen. By our third year those authors had been replaced by more contemporary ones; students seemed impatient with older stories and plays, unable to connect to them. As the list changed, we also didn't adhere rigidly to our other guidelines. We included first person non-fiction accounts, as well as several long books. Our most recent list appears in Table 1.

We originally planned to organize our list chronologically, but as we did, we realized that one also could imagine the items grouping under three overlapping and interweaving themes: death, power and choice, and healing. These themes continually surfaced in our discussions.

We decided on two course writing requirements. To generate discussion and to help students think about the assigned stories, we divided the class into three cross-faculty groups and each week asked members of one group to write a "Focus Note," to choose something from the

Table 1. Images of Nurses, Doctors, and Lawyers in Literature: Class Schedule and Reading List, 1993

January	6	Introduction
	13	"A Jury of her Peers"
	20	<i>Whose Life is it Anyway</i>
February	27	"Materials on the Language of Death"
	3	"Noon Wine"
	10	<i>A Man for All Seasons</i>
March	17	"The Patient Examines the Doctor", "Of Dragons and Garden Peas"; <i>Down From Troy</i> , Ch. 13
	22	Break
	3	<i>Father, Son and CIA</i>
March	10	"Equitable Awards"; "The Fabbri Tape"
	17	<i>Other Women's Children</i>
	24	"Fat Lady"; "Taking Care of the Hateful Patient"
March	31	TBA
April	7	Conclusion

READING LIST

Auchincloss	"Equitable Awards"; "The Fabbri Tape"
Bolt	<i>A Man for All Seasons</i>
Broyard	"The Patient Examines the Doctor"
Clark	<i>Whose Life is it Anyway</i>
Gaspell	"A Jury of her Peers"
Groves	"Taking Care of the Hateful Patient"
Klass	<i>Other Women's Children; A Not Entirely Benign Procedure</i>
Porter	"Noon Wine"
Selzer	<i>Down From Troy</i>
Trillin	"Of Dragons and Garden Peas"
Weinstein	<i>Father, Son and CIA</i>
White	"Materials on the Language of Death"
Yalom	"Fat Lady"

reading that interested, or annoyed, or puzzled them, and to write a paragraph or two about it and give it to us before class. We copied the Notes for the whole class, which began with everyone reading them (dispersed groups make impossible distributing Notes before class). In addition to ensuring each week that some people are engaged with the readings, the Notes offer possible topics for discussion and reveal differing responses

to the reading, differing images of nurses, doctors, and lawyers and of their professions. This strategy also ensures that class members shape the agenda for discussion, and it allows us to begin each week with a moment of people listening to each other, a skill sometimes overlooked in professional education.

The other writing requirement in the course is a journal, in which we ask people to record their thoughts, images, responses to readings and class discussions. Unlike papers or examinations, which synthesize work done over time, distill it, and reduce it to a product, a journal is a record of responses that needn't culminate in a single conclusion or set of conclusions. Working as an inverted pyramid, it encourages writers to proliferate images and responses, to luxuriate in contradictions, and consequently, more easily to understand, accept, and work with differences.

A journal offers writers the opportunity to become participant/observers of their own lives (in the course), to describe a significant experience and to then reflect on that experience to see what they can learn from having had it. It offers an opportunity to practice education as making up and changing one's mind.

Being a participant/observer models a form of exercising judgment, one of the essential characteristics of a professional life. As Anthony Kronman describes it (Kronman, 1987), judgment requires one to move continually between sympathy and detachment, between putting oneself in someone else's shoes and (almost simultaneously) distancing oneself from the person or position one is trying to understand. The combination of reading and discussing stories and writing journals puts students into the position of regularly having to practice this aspect of professional life.

By inviting writers to record and respond to their own experiences, a journal also encourages them to connect who they are to what they are doing, to integrate personal and professional language, personal and professional judgment. It invites them to explore a dominant but often unexpressed question students have about their professional education: what does any of this have to do with me?

Finally, by inviting writers to record their experiences, their questions, and to respond to them as they want rather than according to the (imagined) standards of an (imagined) professor, journals encourage writers to take control of their own education, encourage them to understand themselves as at least contributing authors of their own (professional) stories.³

Extending the conception of participant authors to the classroom, we hoped people would generate stories and responses that overlapped

with the ones we were reading and discussing with each other. Consequently, for our weekly two hour seminar we chose unstructured discussion. We wanted to begin from the bottom-up, with people's responses, images, questions. As the course developed over three years, we moved from simply waiting silently for someone to begin the discussion to being alternately responsible for opening with a question. More on the classroom later.

RESULTS

What worked, what didn't?

Stories

First the stories. We'll mention three we used last year. We began the course with "A Jury of Her Peers," which some of you may know as the play *Trifles*. Written by Susan Glaspell in the early 20th century, before women could serve on juries, this story is about the aftermath of a murder. A farmer has been found strangled in his bed, and a group of men (sheriff, prosecutor, man who discovered the crime) go to the farmhouse to look for evidence to help them convict the farmer's wife, who has been charged with the murder.

The men take their wives along, and while they are looking for evidence upstairs in the bedroom, the women remain in the kitchen, remembering the accused woman they once knew, and talking about their connections to her life. As they talk and look around the kitchen, they find a strangled bird, which provides a motive for the murder. The story ends as the women decide to conceal this evidence.

This story offers two radically different responses to the world: how one connects to it, reasons about it, understands or diagnoses what happens in it. It constructs these responses from the men's point of view, as professional and unprofessional, strong and weak, male and female, and from the women's point of view, as simply different.⁴

Discussing the story produced its own set of differences. Class two years ago found the medical students and law students as divided as the men and women in the story. Despite the law of murder, the medical students wanted (the law students) to justify the killing, to claim it wasn't murder. On the other hand, the law students wanted (the medical students) to say that the accused woman was insane, even though she might have made an intelligible, rational choice. On one dimension these po-

sitions were identical; to achieve the results they desired, students in each discipline were prepared to manipulate the canon of the other.

Although this class produced the most startling contrast, in each year discussing this story began a semester-long conversation about differences: different languages, different diagnoses, different learning and caring styles. As the conversation progressed, it helped participants learn to hear and appreciate each other, to acknowledge and value their differences rather than to routinely rank and evaluate them.

Producing a different configuration was Robert Bolt's play about Thomas More, *A Man For All Seasons*. Here the differing responses tracked gender and religious lines: some people saw More's decision not to affirm the act of Parliament granting Henry VIII's divorce from Catherine of Aragon as maintaining his integrity and preserving his soul; others thought he was impossibly, cruelly selfish to do so, that for the sake of an overwrought devotion to truth-telling and oath-keeping he was abandoning his wife and daughter. Most of those who sided with More were men or women who were strong Catholics; most of those who sided with More's family, who wanted him to forget his religious commitments, were women. Noticing how the gender and religious differences contributed to different interpretations of the play deepened the conversation begun with "A Jury of Her Peers."

We ended the course with "Fat Lady," a story by psychiatrist Irvin Yalom about treating patients/clients one hates. Rarely in professional schools do we explore the important and pervasive problems of counter-transference, the (often unconscious) feelings that a therapist or other helping professional transfers onto a patient or client, feelings that are inappropriate to their situation. Usually these are feelings that originated out of earlier relationships, feelings that haven't been recognized or dealt with in that context, and that then get displaced onto the current situation.

In Yalom's case, when the two-hundred-fifty-pound, five-foot-two inch Betty walked into his office, his feelings weren't unconscious. He knew he "always (had) been repelled by fat people," knew he found them "disgusting: their absurd sidewise waddle, their absence of body contour—breasts, laps, buttocks, shoulders, jawlines, cheekbones, *everything*, everything I like to see in a woman obscured in an avalanche of flesh. And I hate their clothes—the shapeless baggy dresses or, worse, the stiff elephantine blue jeans with the barrel thighs. How dare they impose that body on the rest of us?" (Yalom, 1989).

Yalom knew he felt repelled by Betty, yet he accepted her as a patient and struggled with his own feelings throughout the therapy. He saw the therapy as an opportunity to help Betty *and* to work on his own coun-

tertransference. Doing the latter would help him improve as a person and make him a better therapist.

As Betty begins to lose weight during therapy, Yalom begins to like her more, to see her as a person. We never untangle, he never untangles, the relationship between the two, nor does he clarify whether in treating Betty he deals effectively with his sexism. But he lets us see his sexism and lets us see him: his commitment to Betty and his massive ego. Even at the end of the story we don't know what to make, or what Yalom makes, of the therapy. A qualified success? A qualified failure?

This story struck close to the bone for many students, evoking their own transference reactions. They responded ferociously for and against Yalom's decision to treat Betty, and argued fiercely about whether the treatment itself was appropriate and whether it worked, either for Betty or for Yalom. To those who thought Yalom should not have taken Betty as a patient, it didn't matter that Betty thought she had benefited, felt that despite his obvious dislike for her, which she had sensed from the beginning, Yalom was one of the few people in her life who had cared for her. To them it was unethical to treat a patient (client) you intensely dislike, particularly if you're treating her partly to confront (and perhaps heal) your own prejudices.

Of all the stories we've read during our three years in the course this one (and perhaps *Other Women's Children*) most starkly evoked the fears that aspiring professionals feel about being in situations that are beyond their control and in which they might become out of control.⁵ It even evoked their fears about being in situations in which *any* of their weaknesses might be exposed.

The responses to the story also indicated how difficult it sometimes is for people to live with ambiguity in relationships, to tolerate ethical complexity. Many people saw only one ethical problem: to treat or not to treat. Up front, yes or no? One choice to make, and once you've made it, everything follows.

Aspiring professionals grow up in an academic culture that emphasizes 100% final exams and provides little feedback, a culture in which making a mistake is treated as evidence of being stupid rather than embraced as an opportunity to learn; consequently, no one should be surprised that they don't want anyone to see their weaknesses. Nor is it surprising that in their professional relationships people continue to replicate the divorce of feeling and reason that also characterizes our academic culture.⁶

Yet, even if you are committed to this conception of front-loaded ethical dilemmas, what if you don't recognize your hateful feelings until you're in the middle of your relationship with your patient/client? Or

what if you recognize both positive and negative feelings, positive and negative aspects? Or what if, as Yalom believes, “[i]t’s the relationship that heals” (Yalom, 1989)?

Approaching ethics as crystallized dilemmas enforces a conception of ethics that emphasizes individual choices and leaves out interpersonal relationships, that treats professionals as isolated individuals trying to keep their hands clean by not associating with clients or patients who are dirty or corrupting. In this case Betty isn’t corrupting, but she reminds Yalom of his weaknesses, brings up his painful feelings.⁷

From this report you can see that the stories we thought most successful were those that evoked strong student, and professor, projection onto the characters. Those projections rarely were uniform, and the combination of intense but differing feelings created powerful learning moments for people to explore with each other and in their journals.

Classroom

At the beginning of this article you had a glimpse of our classroom—at an explosive moment. You may be wondering how the nursing students responded to a medical student asking them whether they thought of themselves as a profession (and by implication, as professionals). Did these confrontations typify our classroom?

To the medical student’s question the nurses responded energetically, assertively. As a group they had been exceptionally quiet, privately reporting themselves to be intimidated by the older, more assertive, seemingly more self-confident medical and law students. However intimidated they felt, this question provoked a response, almost as if the nurses felt either they had to push back or give up for the rest of the semester. And as the nurses responded, other students supported them, breaking the wall of solidarity they might have felt themselves to be facing, creating alliances across groups.

While extreme, this event was characteristic of the group experience in each of our three years. As the class began each year, the students tended to align themselves by faculty. They sat together, defended each other, tended to stereotype the other profession(s). In the opening class one year, as we went around the table introducing ourselves, four or five law students, all women returning to school from years in the workforce or from years raising children, reported themselves as suspicious of doctors, because they had been mistreated, misunderstood, or treated as objects. They were letting the medical students know they didn’t like doctors or medicine, period!

That opening set the tone for more than a few confrontations during the initial weeks. The law students didn't trust science, thought doctors were cold and manipulative. The medical students, particularly the men, didn't seem to have much use for the sociological analyses offered by the law students, nor did they seem to credit the conclusions these students drew from the stories they told.

Yet despite their mutual hostility, these people were curious about each other, and while they argued fiercely and occasionally nastily in class, they talked to each other during breaks and after class. By midterm it had become clear that they had bonded as a group. When one of the most outspoken medical students had to miss a class because of an exam, he sent Jackie with a message for his law student adversaries. "Tell Sarah and Rachel (not their real names) that I'm sorry to have to miss today's class, and tell them that I don't agree with anything they're going to say today." The good humor and affectionate tone of the message was reciprocated by the recipients, and for the rest of the year, it carried through our discussions.

Curiosity about the other and respect for differences were constant themes in student journals.⁸ People stressed that the different voices and different perspectives in Focus Notes and class discussion had helped them learn to listen, and stressed that what they'd heard had been extremely valuable in helping them clarify and sometimes even change their own thoughts and feelings.

Journals

Journals offer a place to explore how feeling and reason connect, a place to connect oneself to one's work. Students use them to try to make sense of their responses to stories and class discussions, and they often add their own stories to the ones they've been reading and hearing, attempting to explore their fears about their futures.

Journals also provide a record of those responses as they develop or change, and in so doing invite writers to understand themselves as situated, as embedded in a continuing narrative or narratives. In this way journals work against the normal academic impulse to distill, to synthesize, to reduce, to perfect. Journals invite writers to experience themselves as they are without the overwhelming pressure to present themselves as (others think) they should be.

Certainly that's what students consistently report in their journals. Journals "gave me the freedom to express myself, without you first telling me what to say;" "forced me to take a good look inside myself;" "forced

to make sense of (my experiences);” “helped me to see how I’ve changed over the semester;” helped me to “(see) things I took for granted through different perspectives.”⁹

Describing journals as “forcing” or “making” reveals the pressure that writing a journal can exert, and it hints at the resistance that some students in professional schools initially feel about revealing to themselves (not to mention to their teachers) how they feel about what they are reading or discussing, what they fear in their future as professionals.

Being forced isn’t the only metaphor that students use to describe writing journals. They write about being challenged, liberated, about having fun, about getting back to ways of thinking and writing they’d used in high school or university and had abandoned. They write about the joy of rediscovering themselves as writers *and* as thinkers, often reporting that the more they wrote and thought, the more they found themselves having energy to write and think.¹⁰

We agree. Reading journals at the end of the each year, we have found the writers to be intelligent, perceptive, imaginative, willing to take risks and to experiment with forms. These writers show up in what they’re writing, and that makes journals lively, authentic documents.

Collaborative Teaching

Reading this essay, you’d think our collaboration was seamless, that we agreed about everything and never skipped a beat. Not so. We discovered we had different teaching styles; we responded differently to some of our texts; we even disagreed about some of our course objectives.

Some of these differences we discovered as the course unfolded. Others we learned about as we exchanged letters preparing to write this article.¹¹ All the significant differences helped us learn more about each other and more about ourselves, about our strengths and weaknesses as teachers and as readers of texts. For us they constituted one of the benefits of collaborative teaching.

Just as differences among the law, medical, and nursing students helped them confront their stereotypes, so ours taught us about our own. For example, since we were jointly responsible for this course and for planning this article, when we disagreed, we had to decide what to do with that disagreement. Did we try to convince each other? Did we defer to the other? Did we acknowledge publicly that we disagreed?

Deciding what to do forced us to articulate our own conceptions or positions, helped us discover how powerful they are, how much we are committed to them. Knowing that a colleague we admire and are working

with has a different perspective made us listen more carefully, made us more attentive to what's missing in our own point of view.

Usually we found our differences interesting. Certainly that was true of our differing responses to our texts. Perhaps the starkest contrast came in our reactions to Flannery O'Connor's, "The Lame Shall Enter First," which we assigned the first two years.

The story opens with Norton, a ten year old boy, in his kitchen eating a piece of chocolate cake onto which he has spread peanut butter and poured ketchup. He is grieving for his mother. In the kitchen with him, his father is disgusted; once again his son has let him down, shown him that he never will amount to anything. Unable to grieve himself, the father cannot accept his son's grieving, can't even allow himself to *recognize* that his son is grieving. Instead, he treats his son as incompetent and irredeemable.

The father is a social worker, who imagines himself a healer. One day he "discovers" a young, teenaged delinquent, slightly older than Norton, and decides to make this boy his project. Rufus, the teenager, is intelligent but uneducated, street-smart but also a fundamentalist Christian. The father, Sheppard, will use his expertise as a social worker to educate Rufus, will open his eyes to the real world, and will bring out his essential good character. And in the process he will transform Rufus into the son he wants.

Sheppard buys a telescope so that Rufus can learn about the heavens, observe the "real" world that is to replace Rufus's warped and deluded ones. As Rufus and Norton get to know each other, they spend time at the telescope, which becomes Norton's instrument to search for his mother in heaven.

As he transfers his energy and attention to Rufus, Sheppard ignores his son; as he attempts to open Rufus's eyes, he shuts his own to everything around him. He doesn't see Rufus, doesn't see Norton, doesn't see himself. By the end of the story, unable to connect to his father, and wanting to reach his mother in the heavens, Norton has hanged himself. Rufus is in jail, having destroyed Sheppard's reputation, and having helped him destroy what remained of his family.

Mark loves Flannery O'Connor's stories and thought this one wove together many of the themes in the course: the risks of transference; the arrogance of power; the confusion of professional and personal. While not disagreeing about the themes, Jackie strongly disliked the story. She couldn't bear to read about Norton's suicide, felt O'Connor was manipulating this boy to make a point about how nasty people were. She talked, first to Mark, and then to the class, about responding viscerally to the

story as a mother of young children, and talked about not wanting to reread it.

These differing responses tracked the ones we'd already noticed in the class when we discussed *A Man For All Seasons*. Hearing that we responded differently to a story helped students accept their own differences, treat them as interesting, wonder whether both responses might be appropriate to that text. Our responses reminded all of us that as interpreters (and diagnosticians) we are situated, and that in order to trust our interpretations we need to attend to our situations.

REGRETS: WHAT WE'D DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME

We began wanting to teach aspects of the medical and legal past. The students resisted; they were intolerant of the historical contingencies in the older literature and could not forgive those authors for living in a time with different values. Feeling the resistance to history, we quickly abandoned our objective. Perhaps too quickly.

Resistances can offer useful opportunities for learning. At the moment, resistance to tradition, impatience with the past, seems to be particularly powerful in professional schools. Among the medical students, we saw it represented in their attitude toward the "new" and "old" curricula.

Queen's medical school recently has changed its curriculum, moving away from exclusively information-based lectures to a more balanced mixture of teaching styles and subject matter, including units on communications skills and problem-based learning.¹² The newer segments include more emphasis on empathizing with patients, on the affective aspects of doctor-patient relationships.

In our class this curriculum change often was represented, not as a shift in emphasis, but as a difference in kind. A few students represented the old curriculum as producing a version of the evil empire, composed of a bunch of sexist dinosaurs, who never learned how to relate to patients in medical school and consequently(!), never developed that capacity in practice. The new curriculum represented everything good in medicine: youth, compassion, the future. Missing from this ideology of empathy was any sense of connectedness to the past, any interest in understanding how the new curriculum had evolved, in what it might be rooted.

The same resistance to the past seems present among law students. Mark has noticed it in his Legal Ethics class whenever he assigns material that describes nineteenth and early twentieth century attitudes toward

professionalism and professional ethics. Many students are impatient with attitudes that to them smell of paternalism, with approaches that seem sexist. Typically, they aren't interested in trying to understand an earlier culture in its context, trying to learn how it coped with its contradictions, nor are they interested in thinking about what values from an earlier culture remain embedded in ours, or how our different values evolved from earlier ones.

This post-modern resistance and impatience students show to tradition probably reflects the fractured moral communities we live in, the condition Alasdair MacIntyre describes in *After Virtue*; it reflects a fragmented moral language, inherited from the past but cut off from its roots, disconnected from its earlier meanings.

Whatever this resistance reflects, we think it would be worth exploring, worth thinking about past images of doctors and lawyers, worth understanding why we do or don't connect to them. Rather than abandon stories from an earlier period, we could use them effectively to hold a mirror to our own condition.

We'd also like to attend more to artifice. Not being experts at literary criticism, we've tended to take our fiction straight, as if were reality. We think it would be useful to look more carefully at how our stories are put together, at how we interpret them. Doing so could lead us to constructive work comparing interpretation in literature to interpretation in law and in medicine.¹³ Another way of approaching questions about artifice might be to diversify the genres we study, to include poetry, as well as images from other media, such as painting and sculpture and film.

We also want to work at integrating the nursing students more effectively into the group, at providing more texts that feature images of nurses, at more effectively inviting them into conversations about hierarchy and power in the health professions. Since they're younger than the medical students and already partially socialized into those hierarchies, we need strategies to recognize their position while encouraging them not to recede into it.

WRAP-UP

As *Images* moves into its fifth year and its third grouping of teachers,¹⁴ we continue to enjoy it. It has a good reputation in all three faculties, and students look forward to the change of pace it offers them from their regular courses. We're delighted to be able to initiate conversations among aspiring members of three client-centered professions, and we're impressed with the quality of those conversations and the learning

moments they present. We hope they'll make future conversations easier and more constructive. We're also delighted to have been able to work together and learn from each other. Collaborative teaching breaks down the isolation that characterizes most of our academic lives; we recommend it.

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NOTES

1. Freewriting is an underappreciated skill in professional schools. Freewriting means putting your pen or pencil on paper, or fingers on a keyboard, and writing for several (say, ten) minutes without stopping. It can be unfocused (no topic) or focused; it can be private or shared. We've used it to begin a class, to generate images or ideas in response to a story or comment, to give people permission to think and feel what they need to think and feel. For two excellent discussions of freewriting see, Elbow (1981) and Belanoff, Elbow, and Fontaine, eds. (1991).
2. After the first year, we decided to add nurses to the group. Although nurses would be younger and typically without a first degree, we thought having nurses would provide useful opportunities to explore the way hierarchies are created and maintained in the health professions and would offer participants opportunities to explore and perhaps move beyond their conceptions of each other. In our second year one nursing student took the course; untypically, she already had a classics degree and entered medical school the next year. In our third year four nursing students enrolled, and this group matched the typical profile; they were younger than the law and medical students, and nursing was their first degree. For the problems this created in the course, see the section called "Classroom".
3. For discussions of using journals to teach legal ethics see, Elkins (1993); Weisberg (1992).
4. Compare the documentary movie "Brother's Keeper," about an illiterate family of four farming brothers, who live outside a town near Syracuse, N.Y. The brothers live in poverty and squalor, sleeping two to a bed. One brother is found dead, and his bedmate accused of murdering him. During the movie we see the case from several extremely different points of view: the brothers, the community, which closes ranks against the state, the defence lawyer, the prosecution, the filmmakers.
5. Another story that evoked similar fears was "Equitable Awards" (Auchincloss, 1983), in which "Ms. Storrs", a divorce lawyer, manipulates her client "Gwen" into deciding to fight her husband for every penny. Gwen is twenty years older than Ms. Storrs and from an earlier generation, which she reflects in her uncertainty about whether she wants/"deserves" her husband's business profits. As we discussed the story, many people expressed their reluctance to engage a client or patient personally, and they expressed those fears by referring to professional categories. They "didn't want/weren't qualified" to be Gwen's "psychiatrist". That wasn't their "job". Role morality encourages us to keep our distance, to keep our personal selves out of our professional relationships.
6. For an exquisite literary example, see Kazuo Ishiguro's, *The Remains of the Day*, a novel about a butler in an important English manor house who insists on rigidly separating his personal feelings from his professional life, and as a result, who participates in a plot to keep Britain out of World War II, who fires two immigrant Jewish maids, possibly causing

- them to be deported to the Holocaust, and who refuses to acknowledge that he loves a co-worker, denying himself the only meaningful personal relationship in his adult life. He maintains his "professionalism" and loses his soul.
7. For a perceptive critique of the conception that "clients corrupt lawyers" and a legal analogue to Yalom's conception that "[i]t's the relationship that heals," see Shaffer (1985). Shaffer is a committed Catholic and often uses religious imagery to persuade his audience. He writes about lawyering as a life of "ministry."
 8. Law and nursing students wrote journals. They were taking the course for credit, and their journals formed the basis for evaluating their engagement with the course. Medical students weren't receiving a grade for the course, and we decided against requiring them to keep journals. With the obvious benefits of journal-keeping, we're rethinking that decision, and next year probably will require everyone in the course to keep a journal.
 9. In a recent issue of *College Composition and Communication* Joseph Harris (1994) distinguishes "situated" writing from "confessional" writing, reminding us that although good writing always is situated, it needn't be confessional. This point also applies to journals, which encourage writers to notice how and wonder why they are situated as they are, but do not force them to be confessional.
 10. For a brilliant essay on using writing, not reading or listening, to initiate thinking, an essay on beginning any inquiry, including any class or course, with producing rather than consuming, see Elbow, P. (1990).
 11. As a method for clarifying our ideas about the course and a way of discovering our congruent and divergent thoughts about it before they became submerged in an one-voiced article, we decided to exchange letters about our reactions. We exchanged twelve letters over five months and found the process interesting, provocative, and helpful.
 12. For a more detailed description, see Duffin, J. (1994).
 13. There's a large literature comparing literary to legal interpretation. For an overview, see Elkins, J. (1990).
 14. In 1994 the course was taught by Professor Rosemary Ofei-Aboagye from Law and Dr. Neil Hobbs from Medicine. In 1995 Mark will be joined by Dr. Shayna Watson from Medicine.

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