

LOST BOYS AND OTHER STORIES

I thoroughly enjoyed reading the Dean's Message in the July issue of *Pitt Med*. It is a vice of nearly all professions to compartmentalize learning in such a way as to inhibit rather than expand our overall understanding. In so doing, we impose arbitrary limits on our capacity to know.

Of course there is a place for art, literature, and even theology in the study of medicine. We cannot begin to penetrate the seemingly unfathomable secrets of our physical universe until we see a glimmer of our own place and purpose here. The following is from Brunner's *The Culture of Education*—a related but similar point:

[Education] is a complex pursuit of fitting a culture to the needs of its members and their ways of knowing to the needs of the culture.

It has been the convention of most schools to treat the arts of narrative—song, drama, fiction, theatre, whatever—as more "decoration" than necessity, as something with which to grace leisure, sometimes even as something morally exemplary. Despite that, we frame the accounts of our cultural origins and our most cherished beliefs in story form, and it is not just the content of these stories that grip us, but their narrative artifice. Our immediate experience, what happened yesterday or the day before, is framed in the same storied way. Even more striking, we represent our lives in the form of narrative. It is not surprising that psychoanalysts now recognize that *personhood implicates narrative*, "neurosis" being a reflection of either an insufficient, incomplete, or inappropriate story about oneself. Recall that when Peter Pan asks Wendy to return to Never Never Land with him, he gives as his reason that she could teach the lost boys there how to tell stories. If they knew how to tell them, the lost boys might be able to grow up.

Thank you for expressing your thoughts about art and science so eloquently. I will save this piece for future reference.

Robert J. Cindrich
United States District Judge

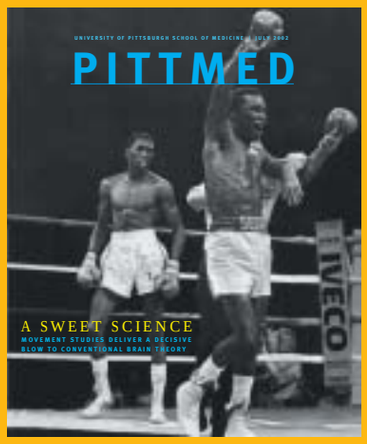
TRAFFICKING TUNNELS

RE: Definition of Carpal Tunnel [July 2002: "only tunnel in Pittsburgh that doesn't cause a traffic jam"]

What is carpal tunnel syndrome if not the biggest traffic jam to all median nerve impulses?

Seniors—hmmph.

Craig Miller, MD '59
San Mateo, CA



A KNOCK OUT

What a powerful issue! Very grabbing cover, too. You probably knew that Sugar Ray Leonard was a native DCer.

Barry Berkey, MD '61
Fairfax, VA

I am a former associate professor of orthopaedic surgery at Pitt and the proud Dad of a fourth-year med student, Kate. I just read the new *Pitt Med* and was intrigued by the work of Peter Strick. It was also great to see the photo of Lois and Tim Oliver, former colleagues, and it brought back delightful memories of my days on the admission committee with Lois.

Best wishes for continued success.

Carl L. Stanitski, MD (Res '74)
Medical University of South Carolina
Charleston, SC

NEEDLESS VIOLENCE

Most ethical physicians condemn professional boxing for its needless violence resulting in serious injury to satisfy the blood lust of its barbaric spectators. The AMA has repeatedly called for boxing to be outlawed. Therefore, I was appalled to find the cover of your July issue glorifying this violence. Like the spectators in the Colosseum of ancient Rome, you revel in Mr. Leonard's movements, and totally ignore the injuries inflicted on his opponent, "flustered and knocked off balance." There are many nonviolent forms of athletics in which motion could be studied—swimming/diving, figure skating, track, ballet, etc. I also teach medical students and would never subject them to videos of such violence.

I will get my professional information from more ethical sources.

George Bent III, MD (Res '75)
UPMC Shadyside

We gladly receive letters and photos (which we may edit for length, style, and clarity).

Pitt Med
400 Craig Hall
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Phone: 412-624-4152
Fax: 412-624-1021
E-mail: medmag@pitt.edu

http://www.health.pitt.edu/pittmed

Please send address corrections to the alumni office:

***Pitt Med* Address Correction**
ATTN: Crystal Kubic
M-200k Scaife Hall
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15261
Phone: 412-624-4152
Fax: 412-624-1021

2002 MAGAZINE HONORS

Gold Medal, Special Interest Magazines
2002 Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE)

Gold Medal, General Interest Magazines
2002 CASE District II Accolades

Gold Medal, Best Article of the Year
2002 CASE District II Accolades

Silver Medal, Periodical Staff Writing
2002 CASE District II Accolades

Honorable Mention, Magazine
Women in Communications
Pittsburgh Professional Chapter

Matrix Award, Best Article of the Year
Women in Communications
Pittsburgh Professional Chapter