

tems, for example, natural selection, cell selectivity within the lifetime of an organism and differential amplification. He has covered some of this ground in prior books such as *Neural Darwinism* (1987) and *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire* (1992); this new contribution, *Second Nature*, focuses on human consciousness.

Most clinicians will not find that the ideas in *Second Nature* lead immediately to better patient care. Indeed, this book provides nothing that will help busy clinicians complete their work faster. Some of the questions raised are truly esoteric, such as on page 62, where he asks: "Is language necessary for arithmetic to be developed?" In addition, the writing contains some awfully dense sentences, such as this one on page 50: "The normative aspect of this set of proposals should not be conflated with an illicit crossing of the is-ought divide." And a bit of the wording is jargon that will be unfamiliar to most clinicians, such as when the author coins the term "brain based epistemology." Finally, the book is hardly the last word on the topic given that current neuroscience cannot yet explain free will.

However, the book has several strengths that will appeal to readers interested in neurology, philosophy or simulated brains in robotics. It's written with an element of care and circumspection often missing in clinical discourse. Many chapters provide a savvy review of Western science history that is detailed and thoughtful. In addition, the format is compact, the index is coherent and the supplementary notes are plentiful. It's also evident throughout the text that the author loves research and has an enthusiasm for the subject that he imparts to his readers. The multiple poetic quotations that appear throughout the text provide further motivation to keep reading. In a world commonly marred by haste, this book exemplifies the diligent thinking that can occur outside of the clinical arena.

Donald A. Redelmeier MD MSHSR
Professor of Medicine
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ont.

Poem

Jocelyn's choice

Jocelyn, do you know
of the mark you made
like indelible ink
on the hearts and minds
of those who cared for you?

Only 38 years to ride backhoes, climb trees...
no husband, no children
but bonds of friendship
as rich and as deep as oceans

Then invaded by cancer
overtaking the lungs, the liver
gripping the spinal cord
to squeeze the last bit
of strength from your legs
confining you to your prison bed

Dignity lost, depths of pain so vast
"Total Pain" we called it

Spiritual
Physical
Emotional
Social

what more was there to hurt?
we named it, you understood

But you found your release
power to choose, control once more
simple... medication that would blanket the hurt

Numb the pain
Allow no thoughts to creep in
... your final decision

not euthanasia, Jocelyn, I tell you... I tell myself
though death will come quicker

Decision made, freedom granted
your pain eased merely in the knowing
you call the shots again

And then, you are gone
you have let go
you will no longer be needing this drug to take away your pain
the power of choice has eased your suffering
we are awed by your journey, humbled by your strength
we are grateful to have known you.

Tara L. Tucker MD
Palliative Care Physician
Elisabeth Bruyère Health Center
Ottawa, Ont.

Jocelyn chose palliative sedation to ease her suffering
but died before it could be administered.

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