

**Claire Trevor School of the Arts
University of California, Irvine
949.824.8942 Fax 949.824.2450**

Training the Clinical Gaze: Use of the Arts in Medical Education

A growing body of research on the arts and healthcare points to the critical reciprocal roles played by each discipline in providing holistic treatment for patients and a well-rounded medical education for aspiring and current physicians. On January 13, 2003, The da Vinci Center for Learning Through the Arts, UC Irvine College of Medicine, and the Claire Trevor School of the Arts co-sponsored **Training the Clinical Gaze: Use of the Arts in Medical Education**, a groundbreaking day-long conference that convened healthcare experts and arts specialists to explore the expanding roles played by the visual and performing arts in medical education and practice. Following opening remarks and a welcome by Dr. Albert Manetta, Senior Associate Dean of UCI's College of Medicine and Dr. Jill Beck, Dean of the Claire Trevor School of the Arts, the audience of university faculty, medical practitioners, and artists were afforded the unique opportunity to interact with eminent researchers from across the United States, including **Doctors Barry Duel, Irvin Braverman, Jacqueline Dolev, Karl Lorenz, Jeffery Kuo, and Dance Professor Victoria Marks**. The objectives of the conference included (1) Discussing the



*UCI Children's Hospital Patient Participates in a Drama Project
Dealing with Self-Image*

intellectual basis for inclusion of the arts in medical school curricula; (2) Identifying pedagogical strategies that successfully develop applications of the arts in medical education; (3) Exploring appropriate research methodologies; (4) Discussing new conceptual models that reformulate the fields of medicine and the arts; and (5) identifying opportunities for collaborative research in evaluation and assessment of arts-based curricular innovations as well as other aspects of the interface between the arts and medicine.

UC Irvine's Dr. Duel presented preliminary results from his applied research on the role played by humor in medical education and practice, suggesting that **humor in the healthcare setting can help to alleviate patient anxiety and provide patients with a degree of control over their environment**. He cautioned the audience to be aware of the limitations of humor in the hospital setting, and discussed the need for additional scientific studies on the topic.

Drs. Braverman and Dolev, from Yale and Stanford Universities respectively, presented findings from their four-year experimental study of the use of paintings at Yale's Museum of British Art in helping medical students to hone diagnostic abilities and observational skills. Conclusions from the study suggest

that **guided study of the paintings allowed medical students to become better observers and focus on details.** The presenters suggested that although the research design used medical students in the intervention and control groups, future applications could involve practicing physicians.

UCLA's Dr. Karl Lorenz explored the impacts of the visual arts generally and the Wit Film project more specifically in developing and maintaining empathy for patients among medical students and residents. His findings offered that **first and second year medical students tended to resonate more strongly with**



Using the Visual Arts to Enliven the Walls of the Hospital's Child Life Center

consensus was reached that the complexity of the relationship warranted further scrutiny, but that **Training the Clinical Gaze** represented a valuable step in accomplishing that objective.

patient concerns, whereas third and fourth year students and residents tended to take on a more detached and clinical perspective on patient care. Students' reflections on the film Wit—the story of an English professor dying of cancer and her medical care—highlighted **the need for utilizing the visual arts in medical education and their role in promoting empathy and humanism.** However, Dr. Lorenz admonished that the use of films like Wit and the visual arts must be part of an integrated and consistent approach to training physicians.

Dr. Jeffery Kuo from UC Irvine briefly explored the **reciprocal relationship between dance and medical education, especially with respect to visualizing the human body in both contexts.** His presentation was followed by a video by UCLA's Victoria Marks entitled **Outside In: Dance and Disability.** The video featured interpretive dance performances by able bodied and differently abled dancers and was designed to **challenge traditional notions of physicality and dance.** Dr. Marks presented the context and catalyst for the concept of the video.

Following the conference, attendees and presenters continued discourse around the role of the arts in medical education and practice during a working lunch. A