Life and Death Education through the HKU Body Donation Programme

不知死，焉知生：
遺體捐赠計劃帶出的生死教育

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與草木同枯
不如潔身上路
捐大體
做老師
令你身後留芳

香山亞黃設計
Outline

-value of cadavers in education and research
-why people donate their bodies
-engagement of non-academic sectors
Value of cadavers to medical education
Medical Faculty: 127 years
Body Donation: 40 years
Reflective essay by medical students:
-transformative
-meanings

“I now understand my life ahead will not be an easy one. One day, the person lying there will be a human, on the operation table. You will be responsible for their lives. Lectures made me felt my only mission was to study, while the cadaver made me realized my real job is to deal with real people.”

From the reflective essay written by a first year HKU medical student
Analysis of Students’ Reflective Essays on Their First Human Dissection Experience

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**Purpose:** Reflection is increasingly being used in higher education, but the criteria to assess the depth of reflection in student essays are difficult to define. This article tested the hypothesis that a good reflective essay contains more terms indicating mental processes.

**Methods:** The authors selected two essays written by first year medical students at The University of Hong Kong, after their first encounter with cadavers in their dissection class. The two essays were perceived by teachers as having different depths of reflection. The transitivity system in Systemic Functional Linguistics was adopted to compare the two essays in terms of percentage occurrence of different process types (mental, material, relational, verbal, behavioral, existential).

**Results:** The analysis showed that the essay with deeper reflection had a higher percentage occurrence of mental and relational processes and a low percentage occurrence of material processes. The other three processes accounted for only a low percentage of processes in both essays.

**Conclusion:** From the transitivity analysis of the two reflective essays, the hypothesis that a good reflective essay contains more terms indicating mental processes is supported. The transitivity system in systemic functional linguistics can thus be used as an objective framework for assessing the depth of reflection in written essays.

**Key Words:** Cadaver, Death, Language, Linguistics, Medical education
Value of cadavers to medical research
Surgical innovations
Value of cadavers to medical training
Body Donation in Hong Kong

- Demand is strong
- Supply is low
  - unclaimed bodies: decreasing
  - donated bodies: infrequent
Body Donation in Hong Kong

- Obstacles
  - family objection
  - religions
  - culture: Confucianism

“Our bodies—to every hair and bit of skin—are received by us from our parents, and we must not presume to injure or wound them…”

The Sacred Books of China, 1879
Why people donate their bodies
Body Donation in Hong Kong

- Interview of registered body donors
  - by medical students
  - in Special Study Module (SSM)
- Framework of interview
  - demographic background, including age, sex, educational level, socioeconomic status, living environment
  - cultural factors, including declared religion and belief, opinions of family members toward body donation
  - motivations, including experience as organ donor
  - sources of information on body donation
Voices of Donors: Case Reports of Body Donation in Hong Kong

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Body donation is important for medical education and academic research. However, it is relatively rare in Hong Kong when compared with many Western countries. Comprehensive research has been performed on the motivation for body donation in Western countries; however, there is still insufficient research on body donation in Hong Kong to provide information on how to increase the body donation rate. To understand the factors involved in the decision to donate one’s body, the authors interviewed a registered donor and the daughter of another donor in Hong Kong. The authors interpreted the information collected in light of the available published reports, which mostly focus on body donation in Western countries. Despite the consistency of some demographic factors and motivations between the participants in our study and those investigated in the published reports from Western countries, there are differences in education level and socioeconomic status between the donors in our study and those from Western studies. The authors also suggest that Confucianism and Buddhism in Chinese culture may motivate potential body donors in Hong Kong. Other important factors that influence the body donation decision may include family members’ body donation, registration as organ donors, and good doctor-patient relationships. Although case report studies have their limitations, this study allows us to explore the complexity of events and establish the interconnectivity of factors involved in body donation, which could not be achieved in previous survey-based studies.

Anat Sci Educ 00: 000-000. © 2012 American Association of Anatomists.

Key words: bequest program; body donation; cadaver; Chinese culture; Hong Kong; medical education
Ms L, registered body donor

-Demographic
- 72-year-old
- no formal education
- lives in a less-affluent district of HK
- retired (was a factory worker)
- HT, DM, heart-valve surgery

-Cultural
- no declared religion
- burns incense
- goes to Buddhist temples, worships Guanyin
- no strong whole-body-integrity belief
Ms L, registered body donor

-Motivation
  -wants to help the needy
  -contributes to society
  -dissection is essential for medical education, research, and training
  -not want to waste space

-Source of information
  -first read in newspaper years ago
  -through a friend, a registered donor
  -insufficient info available for the public
Ms T, donated

- interviewed daughter, a registered donor

-Demographic
  - 101-year-old
  - born in Southern China
  - no formal education
  - received financial assistance from Catholic nuns
  - healthy until diagnosed with acute leukemia 1 year before death

-Cultural
  - no declared religion
  - goes to Wong Tai Sin (Taoist)
  - no strong whole-body-integrity belief
  - believed body as a shell
  - children Buddhist, resistant to body donation
Ms T, donated

-Motivation
- decided in the last year of her life, because of the medical care she received
- help medical students to become better doctors
- help others (inspired by the Catholic nuns)

-Source of information
- on TV, interview of a Chinese artist talking about her body donation
- difficult finding info (internet, doctors, nurses)
Discussion

Demographic background

-age: younger more willing (Boulware et al., 2004)
-education: educated more willing (Lagwonski et al., 1998)
-income: higher income more willing (Richardson, Hurwitz, 1995)
Discussion

Cultural factors

- religion: less willing (Bolt et al., 2010)
- Chinese cultural background: Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism
- Confucianism: an obstacle?
  - whole-body-integrity as filial piety
  - Jen 仁 (or humaneness)

“The man of Jen is one who, desiring to sustain himself, sustains others.’

Analects of Confucius

Discussion

Cultural factors

-Buddhism
- four Noble Truths
  Suffering
  Arising
  Cessation
  Path
- donate body > promote medical education, research
  > lengthen life > prolong suffering?
- Mahayana Buddhism: compassion for all beings, body donation helps others
Engagement of non-academic sectors
婆婆獻「身」社會 死後供解剖

51市民 自願捐予醫學院

學生解剖前默哀 以示尊重

遺體捐贈手續

資料來源：港大醫院解剖學系
愛國影人林琳逝世 遺願骨灰灑入大海

【專題報導】記者洪莉莉／攝影林琳曾任職於《台灣新生報》、《聯合報》、《旺報》等報紙，長期關注台灣政治、時事等議題。

林琳1925年1月27日出生於上海，自小在台灣成長，從事新聞工作數十年。

林琳一生傑出，她曾執筆台灣《聯合報》、《旺報》等報紙，長期關注台灣政治、時事等議題。

林琳曾癱瘓，但她仍堅持工作，多次接受採訪，並持有台灣《聯合報》、《旺報》等報紙，長期關注台灣政治、時事等議題。

林琳的逝世，是台灣新聞界的一大損失，她的一生是台灣新聞界的一個紀念。

林琳的遺願是將骨灰灑入大海，這樣的願望已實現，她的骨灰已被灑入大海。
Mass media
剖開生死的一刀
解剖學家陳立基：感受生命的美麗
文：秀躍 圖：孫利 部分圖片由受訪者提供
今年五月，香港浸會大學成立了全港首創的「大體教授」（或稱捐贈者）基金會，並推出解剖學教授兼醫院校長的解剖學家陳立基，成為其中一名致力推廣解剖學的解剖學家。每天，他的工作就是與死亡接觸。在解剖室內，陳立基經常為大體老師做最後的準備，將解剖刀刀光熠熠，切開的一刀，他總感到一股莫名的衝擊。因爲他知道，死亡背後，總聯著一個人的整個生命。如今就這樣被呈現在他眼前。
那一刀，不僅剖開了人體的奧妙，同時也開了他對生死的看法。
梁卓偉「捐軀」悶龜位

生局副局長梁卓偉（圖）昨出席九龍城區議會頒發義工證時，強調自己會身體力行，若受傷後會用骨龜位！何解？原来他早前用活摘器官，連條腸都會捐俾香港大學醫學院解剖。認真係物盡其用，仲會捐一個龜位添。

梁卓偉自爆親現場獻器官，希望借呢個機會呼籲市民一齊簽。佢又話自己唔食煙、唔飲酒，死咗之後應該有好多器官仲有啲用，好似五臟六腑同對眼都可以捐。

佢仲唔忘問諗，話自己捐腸位後都會捐俾香港大學醫學院解剖。一一解剖完應該都係到溶溶嘅。
Mass media
香港大學解剖學系遺體捐贈計劃

遺體捐贈計劃

此計劃讓市民可於辭世後捐贈遺體以支援醫療教育及研究。

遺體捐贈可啟發學生對病人的尊敬和專業態度，因為遺體捐贈者代表了學生在訓練過程中接觸的首位病人；這位病人曾與疾病對抗，最後雖亦辭世，仍慷慨地捐出身體，支持醫療教育。通過這些捐贈，學生不僅學會人類的構造，更了解到人類的偉大和慷慨無私，這是在人生和醫療訓練過程中重要的一課。

遺體亦可供醫生用於醫學研究，例如發展新的外科技術以應付現有技術未能處理的疾病，同時亦容許醫生持續改良外科技術，以便在病人身上可以更有效地和安全地進行手術。

遺體捐贈對醫療專業的教育和研究，以及最終對改善人類的健康是非常重要的。捐贈者偉大的意願，充分表現了他們無私的貢獻，因此師生們都會很感激地接受捐贈的遺體。每年開課前師生都會一同參與一個儀式，以表示對捐贈者的敬意，更將遺體尊稱為"大體老師"。
Internet: Facebook

Body Donation Programme, The University of Hong Kong

Timeline | About | Photos | Likes

201 likes

Laura Chan, Jane Yu and 6 others like this.

Body Donation Programme, The University of Hong Kong
Posted by Lotus InPeace [?] · October 14 · Edited

[ 預告 ]

如果大家也有興趣參觀我們的人體標本室、解剖實驗室
請記下11月8日香港大學本科入學資訊日2014
我們會在解剖學系跟大家見面

https://www.facebook.com/HKUBodyDonationProgramme
Internet: YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67HhilOjiug
Public talks

Life and Death Seminar, organized by St James Settlement, 2013-12-28
Public talks

The 10th International Conference on Grief and Bereavement in Contemporary Society. 2013-10-26
Public activities: Body Donation Day
Public activities: Group donation
Public activities: Memorial service
Collaborations with Government: Internet Memorial Services

 Collaborations with Government: Green Burial booklet

**Body Donation**

Body donation is very important to education and research in healthcare professions, and eventually to the betterment of human health. You may indicate your wish to donate your body after death for the purposes of medical education and research. For details, please contact –

"Silent Mentor" Body Donation Programme, Department of Anatomy, The University of Hong Kong
Website: www.med.hku.hk/BDP
Tel. No.: 2819 9220

"Silent Teacher" Body Donation Programme, Faculty of Medicine, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Website: www.sbs.cuhk.edu.hk/BDP
Tel. No.: 3943 6050 / 3943 6816 / 3943 6854

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Collaborations with Board of Management of the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries
Collaborations with Board of Management of the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries
Responses of the public

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<td>253</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1788</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
To our Great Body Teachers,
Thank you!
更多信息:

- 28199220
- Google, Facebook, YouTube
  香港大學遺體捐贈,
  HKU Body Donation
Our sincere gratitude to those who generously donated their bodies for medical education and research

Department of Anatomy
Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine
The University of Hong Kong
Collaborations with other organizations

- Food and Health Bureau
- Hospital Authority
- QMH Pathology Department
- Board of Management of the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries
- St. James Settlement (active in life and death education)
- Leo District 303 (active in life and death education)
- Taishan Charitable Association (a cancer patient group)
- SKH Holy Carpenter Church
- The Hong Kong Chinese Christian Churches Union
- social worker leaders
- religious leaders
- well known public figures
- well known artists
- etc
## HKU Body Donation Programme

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Value of cadaver to medical education

Dissection
Value of cadaver to medical education

Respect ceremony
Value of cadaver to medical education

Respect ceremony
“Looking at the 23 noble body donators, I felt honored and grateful for these generous individuals who even after death, were about to teach me something invaluable. Not only that, I felt contented and fortunate to be around the people who contributed their time and effort to the body donation programme.”
Fig. 2: A figure-of-eight configuration of suture connecting plantar plate-flexor tendon sheath complex to extensor digitorum longus was constructed.
Value of cadaver to medical training
Discussion

Motivation
- enrich future generations by investing in the healthcare system (Gunderman, 2008; Bolt et al., 2010)
- family members
- organ donation

Source of information
- internet, newspapers, healthcare workers

## Responses

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