



Agora Magazine at NYU Grossman School of Medicine *2024-2025 Theme*

“I am what survives of me.” -Erik Erikson

In the mid-20th century, psychologists Joan and Erik Erikson proposed a theory of psychosocial development that outlined eight distinct stages of life, each stage having a central conflict, the resolution of which would set the stage for the next phase of life. The final stage is characterized by reflecting on one's whole life and identifying points of pride and points of regret, balancing each to find meaning in the trajectory we have taken. It is in this stage, the Eriksons argued, that a person contemplates and solidifies their legacy. However, experience proves that our lives often cannot be subdivided into neat stages, and that each season grants us the opportunity to reflect on our legacy as it is and as we want it to be. As we move from one stage to the next, we leave our mark on others and likewise take the fingerprints of our mentors and supporters with us. Our legacy is fluid, dynamic, equal parts reflective and aspirational.

In the next issue of *Agora*, we hope to explore the legacies that we carry as we move through life. We invite you to reflect on the past and look towards the future, to celebrate and grieve, and to highlight the mentors, patients, and moments that have shaped your aspirations. We also invite you to consider the burden of legacy, the pressure to leave your mark on the world and leave it better than you found it. What meaning do you find in the legacies of the people who came before you? What experiences have shaped your dreams into something uniquely your own, and how has that changed over the course of your life? What do you hope survives of you, beyond you?

“Legacy” will be *Agora*’s theme for both the fall and spring semesters this year. Your submission will be considered for publication for both our year-round online publishing and our year-end print edition.

Of note, our chosen theme and focus are starting points and should not limit you. We will review all submissions exploring any facet of connection or any other theme within the realm of the medical humanities.