

locations through metaphor, for example Titchener's embodiment of mind in locating empathy in the "mind's muscle"—a way of saying that we are *moved* by things.

Recall two events mentioned earlier—the sacrifice of the princes, and throwing Hector's baby son from the walls of Troy (the latter episode not in the *Iliad* but known to the audience and haunting the scene with Andromache described above). The *Iliad* is full of savagery—the killing of enemies by painful and grotesque means; boasting over the corpse; refusing to spare the life of a helpless foe. It is a small step to label those who do savage deeds as "savages", or "primitives". Yet our own killing is savage, but done by others, usually at a distance, usually unseen. In the film *Troy*, Hollywood rewrites classical mythology to avoid unpleasantness and sweeten a pill too bitter for modern audiences. In the scene between Hector and Andromache, Hector shows her a secret way out of Troy and, at the end of the film we see her and the baby escaping. Hollywood does not want to know about its heroines led off to concubinage, and babies hurled from city walls. Yet such events still happen. Even if empathy could be taught, would it be fair to our students? Would not classes in narcissism and self-interest be of greater benefit? There has been no evolution, no progress in our moral sensitivity. Pity, sympathy, empathy and compassion have been examined formally in medical education for only half a century.<sup>31</sup> The stories of Greece and Rome resonate with us still and can inform our ethical practice.

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## Correction

There was an error in the title of an article published in the December 2008 issue of the journal (Elliott C. The Best of the Belleville Literary Review. *J Med Ethics; Medical Humanities* 2008;**34**:117). The correct title of the book should be "The Best of the Bellevue Literary Review".

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