

THE POWER OF PATIENCE

THANK YOU for publishing the insightful article, “The Power of Patience,” by Jennifer L. Roberts (November-December 2013, page 40). As a minister I regularly notice how bad most of us are at aging and dying, which is the one part of life we all have in common (regardless of occupation, race, income level, age, gender, or graduation year).

I regularly look to the humanities for a deeper understanding of how to be a better human and world citizen. Yet even with my very oldest members, some raised in homes without indoor plumbing and in the days of “party” telephone lines, observations about one’s own aging and dying process are woefully absent. Regardless of the year of our birth, it seems to be in our human nature to rush away from our spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional experiences.

Eleven months is a long time to wait for feedback, but even today this is a realistic timeline. “Delays can themselves be productive.” The body and mind shift over long periods of time. Are we paying attention? Do we note when our memory

In Your Service

We salute two outstanding contributors to *Harvard Magazine* for their work on readers’ behalf during 2013, and happily confer on each a \$1,000 honorarium.

Art historian Jennifer L. Roberts—Agassiz professor of the humanities and chair of the committee on degrees in American studies—sparked wide discussion with “The Power of Patience” (November-December, page 40), her probing essay on teaching students to decelerate and to immerse themselves in their subjects in pursuit of deep learning. It is fitting that we recognize her work with the Smith-Weld Prize (in memory of A. Calvert Smith ’14, a former secretary to the Governing Boards and executive assistant to President James Bryant Conant, and of Philip S. Weld ’36,



Jennifer L. Roberts

a former president of the magazine), which honors thought-provoking writing about Harvard.

Nathan Heller ’06, a past *Harvard Magazine* Ledecky Undergraduate Fellow, now a staff writer for *The New Yorker*, crafted a richly reported and wonderfully composed feature on Porter University Professor Helen Vendler’s long collaboration with Arion Press, one of the country’s most distinguished fine-book publishers, in “A Nearly Perfect Book” (September-October, page 34)—the latest of his many excellent articles in these pages. We take special pleasure in awarding him the McCord Writing Prize, named for David T.W. McCord ’21, A.M. ’22, L.H.D. ’56, in recognition of his legendary prose and verse composed for these pages and for the Harvard College Fund.

We warmly thank both. ~The Editors



COURTESY OF NATHAN HELLER

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