Editor’s Note: This is the first issue of WriteClick™: Editor’s Choice, where we print selected WriteClick submissions previously posted online. Here, we feature Michael Swash’s comments on Michael Brooke’s farewell as Editor of the Humanities section and an exchange related to dermal nerve morphometry. We were gratified by the rapid use of WriteClick: over 28 responses in 6 days. Please keep the comments coming: submit a question, a musing, or a case of your own. For quick access, click on the WriteClick link on the home page of www.neurology.org or, if using the Neurology® iPad® app, tap the “WriteClick! Post comments now” button on any Neurology article.

—Robert C. Griggs, Section Editor

We also call your attention to important comments posted only online by Papadimas et al. and Puwanant concerning Pompe disease (Making diagnosis of Pompe disease at a presymptomatic stage: To treat or not to treat? Neurology 2011;77:594–595) and Dr. Hess on the article by Strupp et al. (Strupp M, Kalla R, Claassen J, et al. A randomized trial of 4-aminopyridine in EA2 and related familial episodic ataxias. Neurology 2011;77:269–275). The authors’ responses also merit your review.

LOVE LIES BLEEDING—THOSE WHO ARE LEFT BEHIND SALUTE YOU

Michael Swash, London: When a last communication appears, a valediction is tempting; but can it really be the last?1 Writers never stop; they just keep thinking of something else to say. So the lies component of Mike Brooke’s “last column” is easily understood. As for his affair with the English language, well, that is readily understood. Some of us brought up with British English, rather than some form of the language subtly altered by other cultures—for example, India, Africa, Asia, and the West Indies—find prose composition in the modern idiom difficult. The latter might loosely be described as Alastair Cooke land—that is, somewhere in the shipping lanes of the north Atlantic east of New York and west of Bristol. For British English speakers, the true form of the language peaked with Jane Austen; beautiful syntax, lots of commas, complex tense structures, and absolutely never an adjectival noun, and also not the overcomplexity of Henry James or his Harvard philosopher brother. The founding fathers of the American republic themselves wrote in a spare and beautiful eighteenth-century English that was the then universal style for all English speakers, before the culture was unexpectedly enriched by diversity. But still it is hard to write in that short-sentenced style that is the current norm. And the best and most mellifluous English is still that spoken and written by the southern Irish. So I suspect, Mike, you will keep on trying. We don’t wish to be left bleeding.

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MORPHOMETRY OF DERMAL NERVE FIBERS IN HUMAN SKIN

Herbert Schaumburg, Joseph Arezzo, New York, NY: “Morphometry of dermal nerve fibers in human skin”1 is the first comprehensive analysis of nerve fibers in both the dermal and the intraepidermal portions of 3-mm punch biopsies using widely available laboratory techniques. Expanding the analysis of skin biopsies to include dermal as well as intraepidermal regions might allow 1) examination of longer segments of axons in addition to measures of fiber density, 2) expansion of the range of axon types measured, including larger diameter fibers and axons that innervate mechanoreceptors and sweat glands, and 3) comparison of changes in the distal limb extreme axon terminals with those in more proximal regions.

The report provides clear evidence that the assessment of dermal nerve fibers is feasible; it uses 3 quantitative measures: length of dermal nerve fibers, the fibers per mm of epidermis, and fibers per area of dermis. The values obtained from the dermal tissue highly correlate with measures of intraepidermal fiber density. Although these findings demonstrate the feasibility of the assessment of dermal nerve fibers, the authors neither provide nor claim any direct evidence that dermal measures currently add to the

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Love lies bleeding—those who are left behind salute you
Michael Swash
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