

Special Section: Open Forum

From the Editors

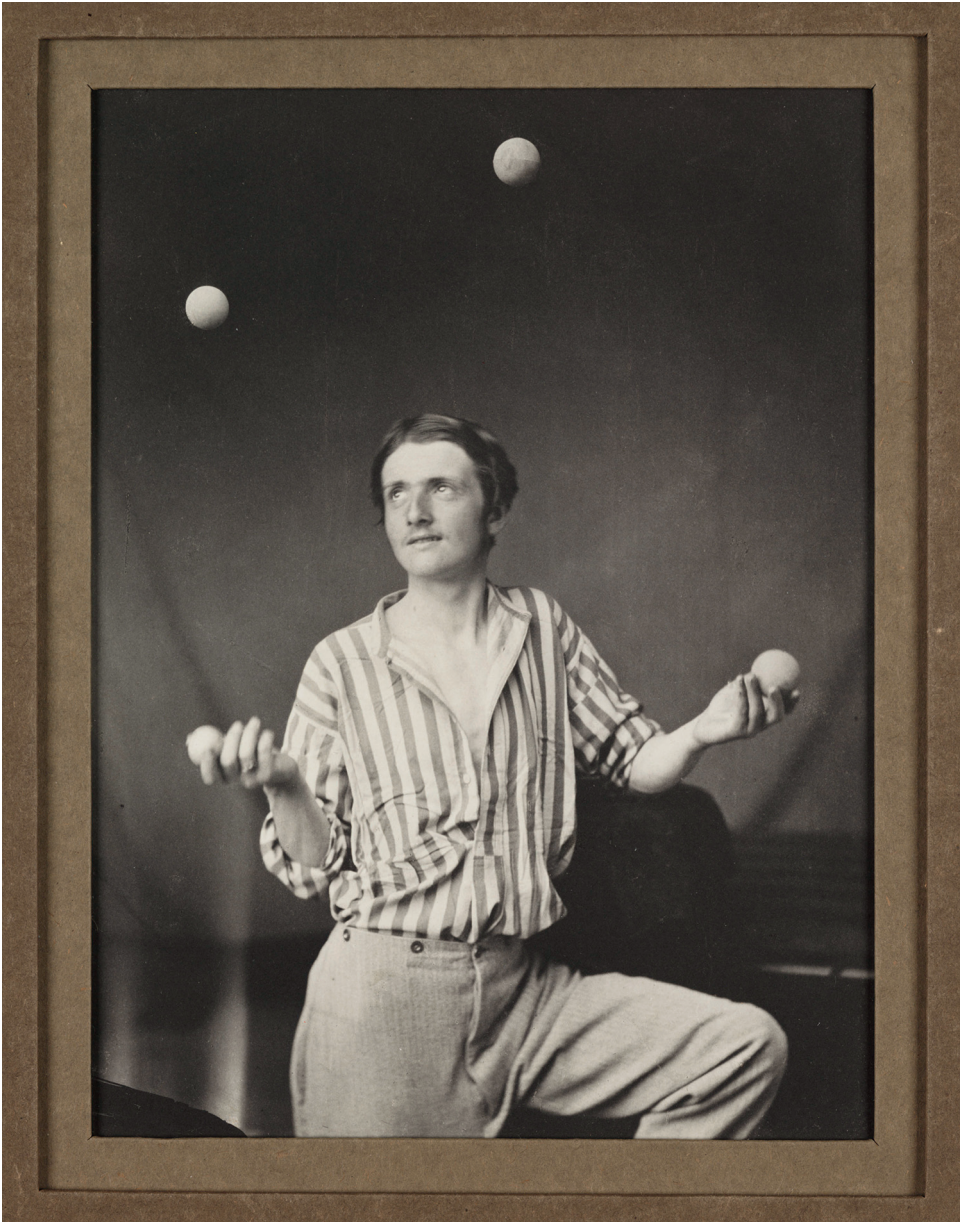
Mixing It Up

Our Open Forum Special Section makes this our “mix-it-up” issue, a cyber marketplace version of the Athenaeum of ancient Greece, where ideas and people collided. The idea of the Athenaeum was to bring people together to allow for open discussion that was discursive and dialectic. People came away having heard multiple perspectives and had the opportunity to meet face to face individuals championing particular perspectives. In this sense, the Athenaeum was the original think tank.

Similarly, our Open Forum Special Section more closely resembles a British Parliament-style arena with robust debates and intellectual fireworks rather than a meeting of ivory tower scholars. This description is in keeping with the guidelines given to *Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics* reviewers when considering submissions as to what we are looking for: “A clearly written, well-argued paper is just the first requirement—but it’s not enough. We want papers that ‘make a good read,’ . . . a paper that you would consider recommending to friends.”

Some of the provocative questions addressed in this collection of articles include: If prospective kidney donors knew of the lifetime risk of disease in their remaining kidney, would they be as willing to give it up, and, if not, what should be done about it? Should a policy of compulsive organ retrieval be implemented? How should prioritization of scarce resources be determined, in transplantation or in the intensive care unit (ICU)? Should patients who have caused their own diseases be assigned lower priority in healthcare than those affected through no fault of their own? Should prisoners be provided special protections as potential living donors? Is there a relevant difference between “selling one’s reproductive services” and “selling one’s body?” Should we—and if so how—communicate risk to potential biobank donors? Why are most legislative changes on assisted dying doomed to fail?

Despite the diversity of topics and range of approaches, these articles are knitted together by being recommended as articles that open new ways of thinking or challenge existing ones. In the spirit of the Athenaeum, we welcome your comments and challenges.



Rejlander, Oscar Gustave (1813-1875) "The Juggler," mid-19th century. Location: Royal Photographic Society, Photo Credit: SSPL/National Media Museum/Art Resource, New York. Reproduced by Permission.