

University of New Hampshire

## University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository

---

Anthropology Scholarship

Anthropology

---

2-2017

### Empathy

Casey Golomski

University of New Hampshire, Durham, casey.golomski@unh.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholars.unh.edu/anth\\_facpub](https://scholars.unh.edu/anth_facpub)



Part of the [Medical Humanities Commons](#), [Other Arts and Humanities Commons](#), [Poetry Commons](#), [Psychiatric and Mental Health Commons](#), [Social and Cultural Anthropology Commons](#), and the [Substance Abuse and Addiction Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Golomski, Casey, "Empathy" (2017). *Academic Psychiatry*. 5.  
[https://scholars.unh.edu/anth\\_facpub/5](https://scholars.unh.edu/anth_facpub/5)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Anthropology at University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Anthropology Scholarship by an authorized administrator of University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. For more information, please contact [Scholarly.Communication@unh.edu](mailto:Scholarly.Communication@unh.edu).

4 **Empathy**

5 **Casey Golomski<sup>1</sup>**  
6

7 Received: 26 January 2017 / Accepted: 16 February 2017  
8 © Academic Psychiatry 2017

9			45
10			46
11			47
12			48
13	I met the limit of empathy	I met the limit of empathy in the limit	49
14	long after one bleary day,	of language to talk about comorbidities,	50
15	when light opaquely let itself in	bound up in an other’s drinking:	51
16	the ICU’s ten inch-	to agonal breathing,	52
17	wide window and from which	to unconsciousness,	53
18	one can only see a brick wall.	and debility.	54
19			55
20			56
21	The bays were rounded in	Do you remember us?	57
22	a half-ring. Pain	We’ve been to this unit thirteen times	58
23	cut back, for now, with	since September. We called the police.	59
24	stomach injections, respirators,	Clinically, each time	60
25	and Ativan. “No one came to see me,”	you want a verbal affirmation—	61
26	he said, wet and blinking.	“Do you feel you want to die?”	62
27			63
28	That year his psychiatrist came around	I met the limit of empathy	64
29	once every month and a half—	in the in-ability to gauge	65
30	a fellowship at Harvard, then at McLean.	the interpretive threshold	66
31	The hospitalists were many though:	of suicidality,	67
32	after every admission,	in slow,	68
33	they were different every day.	mute death.	69
34			70
35			71
36			72
37			73
38			74
39			75

41  
42 ✉ Casey Golomski  
43 casey.golomski@unh.edu

44 <sup>1</sup> University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH, USA